Due to coronavirus (COVID-19) concerns, the Dick Eardley Senior Center remains closed until further notice. If you have any questions during this time, please call us at 208-608-7580.

December

fun facts

In a holiday tradition meant to make learning about the economy fun, PNC Bank offers an annual calculation of the cost to purchase all of the gifts named in the song “The 12 Days of Christmas.” In 2019, the total was $38,993.59. Last year, anyone who bought a partridge in a pear tree enjoyed a 4.5% decrease in cost from the year prior. PNC explained, “The partridge stayed stable in 2019, but the pear tree price was pruned from $199.95 to $189.99, creating an overall change for the set.” Now you know.

Dec. 29 is National Pepper Pot Day. It commemorates a dish that has historically been referred to as “the soup that won the war.” At Valley Forge during the winter of 1777, Gen. Washington asked the Continental Army’s chef to prepare a meal that would boost morale and warm the soldiers. Authentic recipes of the soup can be found online and include tripe, herbs, vegetables such as celery and leeks, and ground peppercorn.

MERRY CHRISTMAS, FRIENDS. WE’RE THINKING OF YOU

With the holidays upon us, we want to take this opportunity to wish each one of you health, happiness, and the comfort of friendship and family.

It has been important to Senior Center staff that we remain available during the center’s closure to answer questions, provide resources, and be a friendly voice and a listening ear. We are available by phone M-F, 8-5. Please don’t hesitate to call us at 208-608-7580 if there is anything we can do to make your life a little easier. That’s why we’re here.

Merry Christmas!

ALONE VERSUS LONELINESS: MY PERSONAL STORY

By Marilyn Fredricks, RN, BS

I was born a twin. At 18, I went to college and had roommates. At 21, just before graduating, I met my husband. We were married 49 years until his death. This left me alone.

Having spent 71 years inhabiting with someone, I found myself alone. I thought I would be afraid, especially at night. Not really. I secured my home with cameras, changed the locks, and got a book and slept well. I handled the daily chores. For the last 30 years, I had handled our business and financial responsibilities. Therefore, financial insecurity wasn’t a concern. If being alone and finances and budgeting is a challenge, I suggest a financial advisor.

It’s been three years. The first time I really felt alone was when I became ill. I had to be hospitalized three times. My daughters have families, so they couldn’t be there 24-7.

Between home health services and hiring a helper, I solved the problem of being ill and alone, and not being able to drive. I also subscribed to a satellite health alert system. I felt secure.

But I still needed something to look forward to. After my husband passed, a friend suggested a trip to Greece. Yikes. I would have to fly to and from Athens, Greece, by myself. Well, I’d flown to and from the U.S. Virgin Islands many times alone. What would be a few more hours! I met friends and a tour group when I landed. For months before the trip, when I felt sad or alone, I would watch videos on Greece. YouTube is a wonderful source for travel site information.

On my return, I was given a voucher to sleep and eat at a hotel. The maître d’ sat me at a table for one. First time in my 71 years I had ever been one.

ALONE continues on page 2
ALONE, continued from page 1
I went to the room and cried and cried. I did not want to be one! I read an article and took some hints for when this situation should occur again: Tell the waiter you may be expecting someone, look for someone sitting alone and ask if you can join them, or sit at the bar.

Humans are social creatures. There is a need for a social network. Isolation, recently imposed on us by COVID-19, can affect both mental and physical health. Studies show this can result in serious health conditions, such as depression, malnutrition, and change in blood pressure. It is important to keep doctor appointments or call health professionals if you experience changes in your health status.

SOME OF MY SOLUTIONS TO COMBAT LONELINESS

Get a pet: If you have the space and the ability to care for one, get a companion animal. Often, caring for or tending to a dog or cat can be helpful.

Hobbies: I took up sewing again. I can walk away and come back for short intervals. I also do wood projects in my garage. Scrapbook, or arrange photos in an album.

Change your routine: Get up earlier, go for a walk.

Be in nature: Go camping when weather allows, visit parks, listen for nature sounds. Start seeds or plant flower starts. Gardening is gratifying, getting into the dirt and the satisfaction of seeing a seed flourish to a flower.

Spruce up a room: Paint or rearrange the wall decor. Clean closets and drawers.

Focus on yourself: Try writing a journal, an autobiography, or short stories of your family life.

FACING ALONENESS DURING THE HOLIDAYS

My husband passed at the end of November. Hospice asked me about holiday plans. I was so sad, I told them I was going to skip them. But, the grandkids were planning on coming to grandmother’s Christmas Eve, and my home is log, and has a fireplace; it’s called the “Christmas house.”

How do you cope and plan for a happy event when your heart is so sad and the loved one that was a big part of “the traditions” is no longer with you?

Let the other family members plan the food, activities, and decorations. Get online and order Christmas gifts. Throw a bow and a name on each box. The whole dinner can be pre-ordered at a grocery store. Get a jar and have everyone put a memory of the departed family member in the “Memory bottle” to be read next year. Go spend the night with a family member, so you won’t be alone Christmas morning. If this isn’t possible, sleep on the couch under the tree. Drive around and look at Christmas lights. Changes are hard, but life goes on, and Christmas is just one day.

Now, here is what happened Christmas eve at my house. One daughter brought a “Charlie Brown Tree.” It was a little skinny, poor excuse for a tree! It was tied to a curtain rod for stability and sparsely decorated. One daughter brought Japanese lanterns, and after dinner, seven of us got into a van and drove to Discovery Park. There were 3 inches of snow and it was snowing and blowing. Lanterns were lit. They did not go straight up into the heavens. They blew right toward and into a stand of dry trees. The group all dashed, galloped, and plowed, and slipped through the snow to keep from having the fire department called. Laughing, we reminisced how our departed one would have been yelping at the fire danger we were imposing. The sadness was replaced by a snowy, funny lasting memory.

In conclusion, no one can get you out of the hole of loneliness. Take baby steps; make a commitment, like sewing masks or volunteering in other ways. Call a friend. They may need to hear a friendly voice, too. You will feel needed and have purpose, and happily climb out of the hole of lonely.

Marilyn Fredricks is a retired nurse with education in mental health and experience in caring for and supporting seniors.

2020 has been a challenging year and yet I can’t help but be optimistic about the future. To help make things joyous this Holiday Season as we carefully gather with loved ones, you might want to just play games and avoid conversations about politics and money 😉. If you really want to talk about your money, then give me a call. I will do my best to help ensure that your Holidays are as happy as can be both now and into the future.

May there be Peace on Earth!

Merry Christmas! and a safe Happy New Year!

208.982.8800
Wesley Brinkman
INSURANCE & FINANCIAL SERVICES

"Financial Strategies for Life and Legacy"
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Rice and Pecan Casserole

Ingredients
1 lb. mushrooms, sliced
4 green onions, sliced
1 clove garlic, minced
1 cup unsalted sweet butter
2 cups uncooked brown rice
1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
1 teaspoon turmeric
1 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
1 1/2 cups pecans, chopped
6 cups beef stock or broth
Whole pecans
Green onions, tops only, sliced

Directions
Heat oven to 400°F. Sauté mushrooms, onions and garlic in large Dutch oven until onions are golden, 5 to 7 minutes. Stir in rice; cook, stirring with a fork, until rice is hot, about 3 minutes. Add thyme, turmeric, salt and pepper. Stir in chopped pecans. Pour in stock. Heat to boiling.

Bake until liquid is absorbed and rice is tender, about 1 hour 20 minutes. Adjust seasonings; garnish with whole pecans and onion slices.

Recipe reprinted with permission from food-recipes-free-online.com.

MORE WAYS TO BORROW LIBRARY MATERIALS

Not everyone can make it to the Senior Center’s curbside library hour on Wednesdays, so we’ve reached out to the Boise Public Library to learn how to help Boise seniors take advantage of the services they offer.

Homebound Services
Library staff regularly take library materials to homebound people in retirement apartments, nursing homes, public housing, and individual residences in Boise. This service is provided without charge to residents of Boise who are physically unable to get to a Boise Public Library facility. Participants must have no other means of receiving library service (such as delivery through family members or friends). To find out whether you, a friend or family member are eligible, call 208-972-8213 to speak with a library staff member. Materials requests can be made by phone or during drop-off visits. At this time, all deliveries and returns of materials are contactless.

Curbside Hold Pickup
If you have a Boise Public Library borrower card (we can help you get one!) you can reserve materials from any of Boise’s five library branches and pick them up when they are available. When you receive notification that your materials are ready, drive or walk up to one of the designated pick-up spots, call or text the number on curbside signage, and library staff will bring your materials out to you.

Senior Center staff can assist you with acquiring a library card, using the online hold system to reserve materials, and selecting the library branch that is most convenient for you. Give us a call at 208-608-7580.

ENIGMA CRYPTOGRAM

“NLXSSOHA LEEGQ LTGO NHTOJCQFTI, WBQS LTGO X RELN LEEGQ LTGO X CEZ.”

— XBSFEH BJJGJERJ

SOLUTION: “Every Life Leaves A Legacy”

Thanks to our monthly puzzle sponsor!

Can you find a mistake in this month’s issue of the Dick Eardley Senior Center Newsletter? Despite our best efforts to be error-free, it is possible that we overlooked something. If you can find an error, point it out to us and receive a mini candy bar at the front desk (upon our reopening). It’s our way of saying thanks for your interest!

Serving the Treasure Valley since 1911, the staff of Summers Funeral Homes has a long-lasting commitment to serve with understanding and compassion while providing a variety of funeral and cremation services. Summers also offers pre-planning services to give you and your family peace of mind for the future.

For more information call 208-922-7865 or email boise@summersfuneral.com
TOOTH TRUTHS

FLUORIDE

Delta Dental of Idaho article series, featuring Heather Brown, RDH, MPH

What is fluoride, and what is it used for? That’s a question we probably need a lot more time and space to answer, but in a nutshell, fluoride is a naturally occurring mineral found in water, soil, plants, and rocks. People use it because it helps prevent cavities by strengthening the hard outer layer of enamel on our teeth. But why do we need to strengthen our teeth?

When plaque builds up on a tooth’s surface, think of it as a demolition zone where millions of bacteria are hard at work drilling through the enamel. When the acid those bacteria produce begins to eat through the enamel it’s called demineralization, and can lead to a cavity. Depending on the progression, fluoride can sometimes re-mineralize those weakened spots and can reverse the demineralization process to help prevent cavities.

There are two ways of fluoridating your teeth: systemic and topical. Systemic is when fluoride enters our bloodstream, usually through drinking water that’s had fluoride added to it. In 1945, after years of research, Grand Rapids, Michigan, became the first city in the world to fluoridate its water supply. Essentially they became a test city and after only 11 years researchers discovered that tooth decay among children born after fluoride was added to the water, dropped more than 60%. Today, cities all over the world add fluoride to their drinking water. In fact, community water fluoridation is considered one of the greatest public health achievements of the 20th century by the Centers for Disease Control. If you drink water from a private well though, you may not be getting any fluoride, in which case your dentist may prescribe a supplement. However, since fluoride is a naturally occurring substance, well water also has the potential to contain too much, so contact your local Department of Environmental Quality to have your water checked.

The other way of getting fluoride to your teeth is by topical application. That’s when you apply fluoride to the tooth surface by brushing your teeth with a fluoridated toothpaste, or maybe with a fluoride varnish received at the dentist.

Through years of research, fluoride has been proven to build a strong foundation of tooth structure that helps strengthen teeth and fight cavities, so it’s important to use it. If you’re not sure about your fluoride use, talk to your dentist. Stay healthy!

SOURCES: https://www.healthline.com/health/what-is-fluoride
https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm4850bx.htm
THANK YOU FOR THE SELFIES!
The Senior Center had fun receiving your selfie photos over the past few weeks. Thanks for sharing a little bit of your day with us. If anyone wants to keep this “Selfie Section” going, send us your picture and tell us what you’re up to. We’ll print them in upcoming newsletters.
Email selfies to SeniorCenter@CityofBoise.org

BIRTHDAY CORNER

Happy birthday to everyone who celebrated a November birthday!
• Camille Stockton
• Mary Lou Hay
• Rose Sanchez
• Donna Abrams
• Carol Hushbeck

Celebrate your special day with us on the last Wednesday of every month. Cake is served with all curbside meals. Are you celebrating a birthday this month? **Give us a call by Dec. 15** so we can add your name to next month’s newsletter, 208-608-7580.