

SeniorHOTLINE

Volume 11, Issue 1

Senior Series

A partnership between
Ohio State University Extension and
Ohio Aging Network professionals



Leisure Exercise: Activity That Can Be Fun!



Can exercise be leisurely and fun? Of course! Our fitness programs need to give us stimulation and enjoyment. Do you remember when you used to hop on your bike and ride to your friend's house with

the wind blowing across your face and the sights from nature dancing before your eyes? Very likely, you were not monitoring your speed or your heart rate; you were just enjoying yourself! What a great concept!

In order for exercise to provide lasting health benefits, it needs to be performed regularly. Understandably, it is sometimes difficult to take that first step toward living a life complemented by a consistent fitness program, but it is possible. You are worth it! Exercise can provide increases in muscular strength and endurance, enhance flexibility, reduce the risk of heart disease and other health disorders, and increase stamina while decreasing weight and stiffness. You can easily identify those individuals who include exercise into their daily lives. These people look better; they're more vibrant, energized, and full of life. You can be certain that they are enjoying a higher quality of life!

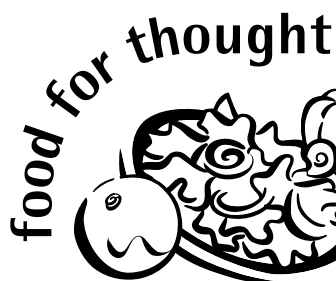
How can you provide yourself with these lasting benefits? Let's begin with the fact that researchers agree being unfit is reversible. Always

check with your medical doctor before beginning any exercise program. After this important step is completed, begin by enjoying moderate recreational activities. Take time to think about what gives you pleasure. Do you enjoy being outside? Do you enjoy exercising with someone? Moderate activity might include dancing or gardening or simply walking the dog. How about taking up a hobby, picking berries, window shopping, tossing a ball, bird watching, or raking leaves? The trick is to move. We are a society of couch potatoes, and it is time to get off the couch and reap the benefits of big health gains. Abandon the sedentary lifestyle and begin a moderately active one. You will be amazed by the additional energy you experience. It is not necessary to train for a marathon; all that is necessary is to decide which activities you find pleasurable to your body and your mind.

Enjoy as many leisure activities as possible; most adults can safely pursue active leisure exercise daily. Finding pleasure through movement will improve your personal health, your mental health, and your enjoyment of living. Life is a gift. The greatest way in which to show appreciation for this precious gift is to enjoy life and stay healthy! Be good to yourself; you have the power!

By Lisa Marie Gibson, Ohio State University Extension, Franklin County. Reference: Clark, J. (1992). Full Life Fitness: A Complete Exercise Program for Mature Adults, Human Kinetics Publishers.

Is Your Blizzard Bag Ready?



What is a "Blizzard Bag"? It's a collection of items to keep on hand for when a blizzard, other natural disaster, or minor illness (like the flu) keeps you home-bound.

Any food that can be stored without refrigeration and eaten without being heated can be in your "Bag." Keep enough food for three or four days. Make sure you include foods from a variety of groups. Foods should be packaged in amounts that can be eaten at one meal. You won't have reliable storage for leftovers if the power is out!

Include cans of your favorite meats and meat spreads. Don't forget canned juices: tomato, orange, etc. Juice packs are an expensive, but acceptable, alternative. Buy 100% juice, not juice drinks, which have little nutrition and extra sugar. Canned fruits and prepared puddings make welcomed treats. Jars of peanut butter and jelly will be a must for most. Include boxes of crackers, dried fruits, and packages of cookies—especially nutritious whole grain crackers and oatmeal cookies. Have lots of bottled water and a box or two of fortified dried milk. Include flavored milk mixes (chocolate, strawberry, banana) if you don't enjoy dried milk. Don't forget candles and matches (or flashlights with batteries) and a non-electric can opener!

Keep your Blizzard Bag in an easy-to-reach place that is out of the way of everyday activity. Don't dip into it for everyday use, but try to use and immediately replace food items before they become stale or reach their use-by dates.

If you have a Sterno stove, camping stove, or propane grill, you can include a greater variety of foods in your Bag. Practice cooking on your stove before an emergency happens. Otherwise, you could complicate an already stressful situation! Store the stove in a safe but easily reached location. It's a good idea to have a safe alternative heat source for these times, as well. Again, practice using the heater before you really need it.

Hopefully, you will never need to use your Blizzard Bag. However, you will certainly feel better, just knowing it is there.

By Joyce J. Brown, Extension Educator, Family and Consumer Sciences, Ohio State University Extension, Athens County. Source: "Overcoming Obstacles: Shopping and Cooking," Staying Well—Teaching Tools for Older Adults, Developed as a collaborative effort by the Ohio Department of Aging, the Ohio Department of Health, Ohio State University Extension, and Ross Products Division of Abbott Laboratories, 1997.



"A Man to Remember"

by Esther Hofferbert

After Max Marion Hofferbert died in July of 1999, his wife Esther asked family and friends to share their memories of him with her. The response was terrific, and she compiled 71 pages of testimonies and photos into a self-published book dedicated to his memory.

Max, indeed, was a man to remember. Described by his friends as a man with a gruff exterior, but with a heart as big as all outdoors, Max was a man of many talents, a loyal friend, and loving husband. Max owned several kinds of heavy equipment and worked in construction all of his adult life. In addition to excavating, he built houses, the Fairborn Cement plant, and a tool shop.

Along with Esther, the love of his life, he shared a passion for vintage automobiles and motorcycles. Max, it seems, was a master restorer of old cars. He could do complete restorations, not just the motor or body work. The book contains several photos of the many vehicles that Max restored. Their interest took Max and Esther to car shows in several states where they showed their cars and purchased some more. During their travels they formed many friendships with fellow vintage auto buffs that would last a lifetime.

While the book chronicles Max's skills and talents, it also gives testimony to his character. He was a hard-working family man, devoted to his wife, loyal to his friends, and helpful to those he met throughout the course of his life. Max Hofferbert, a man to remember, is well remembered by the many people whose lives he touched.

Review by Judy Hardy, Ohio Department of Aging.

My Widowed Senior Friends



For this newsletter issue, I have not written about a specific senior friend but my many senior friends who are widowed. As the advisor for a widowhood support group for the past 14 years I have received many lessons about life, loss, and living again from these courageous seniors. I believe they are the bravest, hardest working people I know.

What does bravery and hard work have to do with the widow-

hood journey? Bravery is being willing to persevere and having the courage to face challenges without giving up. I have learned from my widowed friends that the beginning of the journey can be a scary, lonely place. There may be loved ones around you, but ultimately you are experiencing this journey by yourself. Grief from any loss must be acknowledged and worked through; the loss of a spouse or partner is no different. It takes hard work to survive a loss like this, and taking advantage of any resource around you is very important.

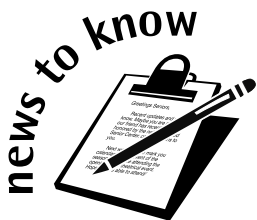
My widowed senior friends tell me they turned a corner on their

journey of personal grief when they began to reach out to others who were also hurting. The energy and willingness to help others in the same situation is part of the healing process. Sharing a good laugh as well as a good cry is much easier when done in the company of someone who understands the pain of your loss and is willing to share their own.

My friends are fortunate to have each other for those times when they need to share with someone else.

By Kathy Oliver, OSU Extension, Hardin County.

Special Help with Medication Purchases for Income- and Medicare-Eligible Ohioans



If you or someone you know is living on a modest income from Social Security or a pension, Medicare-approved drug discount cards offer a special benefit. You can receive \$600 annual drug credit if your individual income is less than \$12,569, or \$16,862 as a couple.

Medicare's Transitional Assistance program provides eligible individuals with a \$600 drug credit for use in 2005. When the drug discount card is used, the cardholder is charged either 5% or 10% of the drug cost at the pharmacy, with the balance being paid from the drug credit. All Medicare-approved drug discount cards offer this benefit.

For folks who exhaust their drug credit for the year, 24 of Ohio's 49 Medicare-approved drug cards offer special "wrap-around" programs that provide drugs at a very low cost (less than \$15 per month per prescription). Eight different manufacturers are working with the drug card sponsors to provide this assistance, though the number participating on each sponsor's card varies.

If you qualify for these benefits, the Ohio Department of Aging recommends the no-cost Medicare-approved Golden Buckeye drug discount card. This card provides three important features not found on most other cards:

1. "Wrap-around" assistance from seven drug makers.
2. No drug formulary—all drugs are available at discounted rates.
3. Use the card at any Ohio pharmacy.

If you are aware of individuals living just on Medicare or other modest incomes, let them know about this valuable program. Note that the \$600 credit is pro-rated, meaning that the longer you wait to enroll in 2005, the less credit you will receive.

For further information about the Medicare-approved Golden Buckeye Drug Discount Card, call toll-free **1-866-301-6446** or visit **www.GoldenBuckeye.com**. Information about other methods of saving money on drug purchases for people with any income is available at **www.GoldenBuckeye.com/benefitscheckup**.

By Gary Panek, Ohio Department of Aging.

Hanging Out the Laundry: A Birthday Gift



I wracked my brain when trying to decide what gift to get my grandmother, who turned 91 this year. I wanted to give her something very special because of all she means to me.

I have so many fond memories of the times we've spent together. When recalling them, I realized, I'd never told her how much I treasure her and those memories. And so I decided, that that would be my gift to her: a written account of one or more of those special memories.

Choosing my favorite memory was easy. It was doing laundry. That's right, laundry. Grandma had this ringer washer that made loud swishing sounds as it washed. After she'd put the clothes through the ringer, it was my job to put them in the laundry basket. Then we'd head out to the clothesline, to carefully hang up each piece. It was such a special time; just us, talking, laughing, and standing between the wet clothes.

Besides the wet clothes, I remember, too, the sound of the wind blowing through them. It was magical! Maybe that's why, to this day, I've always had a clothesline.

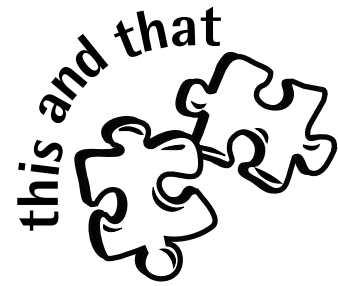
When I asked my daughter what her special memory was, she said that Grandma had always cut the crust off of her toast. I never knew that! It was something special between Grandma and her great-granddaughter.

Thus the written accounts of doing laundry and the crustless toast along with some other memories became the book we presented to my grandmother on the occasion of her 91st birthday. The gift from us all had become a gift to us all and we have Grandma to thank for that.

Perhaps, the next time you are trying to decide how to celebrate a birthday of an older relative or friend, you'll consider creating a memory book like we did. Letting someone know that they made a difference in your life is a very special gift.

Until her 91st birthday, my grandmother didn't know that whenever I hang clothes on the line, I think of her and our special time ... hanging up laundry. I'm glad I finally told her!

By Teresa Cook—AAA 5.



Thomas Hardy

Molly and the Christmas visitor cat
Are both gone now

The house was empty
My eyes were full

Then along came Thomas
A pre-named stray

He's white with a black beret
Jauntily covering an ear and eye

His tail is grey and black
Bought at a yard sale I'm sure

He came with a bullet in his side
And a chronic Urinary Tract Infection

The bullet's gone
So's the cancer that caused the UTI

At least for now ...
Thomas is full of vim and vigor

There is one thing though ...
He's shown no literary inclination!

Perhaps, more surgery's needed
To remove his writer's block.

A cat, after all,
Should live up to his namesake!

Don't you think?

By Judy Hardy, Ohio Department of Aging.

SeniorHOTLINE

Volume 11, Issue 1

Senior
Series

A partnership between
Ohio State University Extension and
Ohio Aging Network professionals



For More Information

For more information, other Ohio State University Extension resources, and links to your local Extension website, visit (without the www): <http://ohioline.osu.edu>

Address editorial comments to:
Senior Hotline Newsletter
151 Campbell Hall, 1787 Neil Avenue
Columbus, OH 43210-1295
e-mail: hdfsext@hec.osu.edu

Issue Editors:

Christine A. Price, Ohio State University Extension State Gerontology Specialist
Kirk Bloir, Ohio State University Extension Associate, Human Development and Family Science
Judy Hardy, Ohio Department of Aging
Cindy Oliveri, Ohio State University Extension South Center Specialist

OSU Extension embraces human diversity and is committed to ensuring that all educational programs conducted by Ohio State University Extension are available to clientele on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, age, gender identity or expression, disability, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, or veteran status.

Keith L. Smith, Associate Vice President for Agricultural Administration and Director, OSU Extension

TDD No. 800-589-8292 (Ohio only) or 614-292-1868

Mention of a proprietary product, trademark or commercial firm in text or figures does not constitute endorsement by Ohio State University Extension and does not imply approval to the exclusion of other products or firms.

Copyright © 2005 Ohio State University Extension. All rights reserved.

The Ohio Department of Aging, The Aging Network, The Ohio State University,
The United States Department of Agriculture and County Commissioners Cooperating.

The Ohio
Department
of Aging

