



The Magazine

## Should I Quit My Job?

Answers to the Biggest Work Issue We Face Now  
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April/May 2022  
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## Live Longer, Happier!

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**THIS IS 50**

## Beating Brain Fog

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- > Making New Friends
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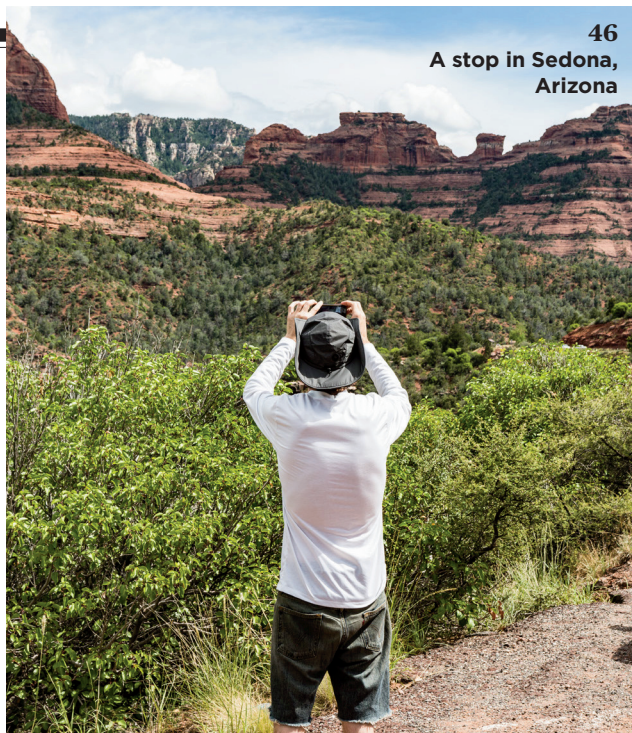
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**ON THE COVER:** Liam Neeson photographed by John Russo in New York City on February 4, 2022. Wardrobe stylist: Joseph Episcopo; groomer: James Mooney; set design: Rob Strauss Studio

## Your Most Pressing Health Questions ANSWERED

Is cholesterol still bad?  
Is fish oil still good?  
What's a “healthy” sex drive?  
Why can't I lose weight?

We surveyed readers about their top health queries ... and got experts to respond. See what we learned, page 32.

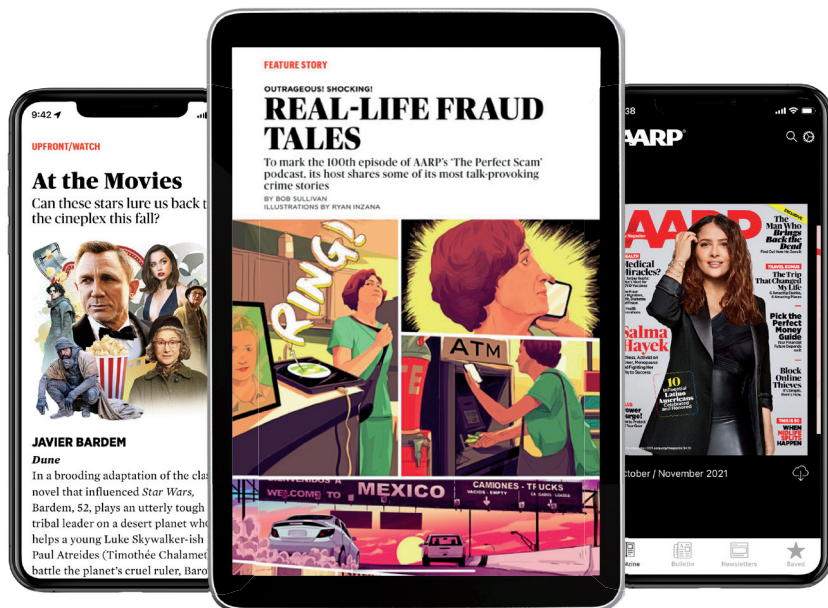
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Then take us along with you. We're good company.

Bob

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a password. (You'll need to provide the member number from your AARP card.)



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## To Your Health

**WE KNOW AARP** members are concerned about their health. In every issue of AARP THE MAGAZINE, we publish up-to-the-minute, authoritative health content under the supervision of Executive Editor Stephen Perrine. For this issue, Steve and our research team put together a national survey of 900 people to find out their most pressing health concerns, in their 50s and beyond.

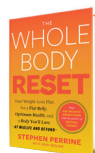


Stephen Perrine

Armed with that information, we sent out a team of journalists, led by longtime contributor Mike Zimmerman, to parse more than 100 scientific studies and talk with dozens of expert sources to learn which of these worries our readers could set aside, which they could tackle with a few lifestyle tweaks and which needed serious attention. The biggest news? In our 50s our outlook on our health is bleaker than it will be as we get older, a finding that didn't surprise researchers. So, the good news is that things will get better as we age.

Steve, whose latest AARP book, *The Whole Body Reset*, was published in March, has been author, editor or publisher on over two dozen *New York Times* best sellers, including the *Eat This, Not That!* series. He covers health and wellness for the *AARP Bulletin*, too, and oversees *The Arrow*.

Back in the day, we worked together at *Best Life* magazine, where Steve was the editor in chief, and I'm glad to call him a colleague once again. —B.L.







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**Halle Berry**  
@halleberry

Berry tweeted her February/March cover image!



**Congratulations to Halle Berry. Hard work is the key.**

*Donna Carey,  
Facebook*

**Gotta hustle to make your dreams come true.**

*Leesa Monroe,  
Facebook*

**You definitely have to go after whatever you are destined for.**

*Brown Donnie,  
Facebook*

**Right on, Halle!**

*Jimmy Hughes,  
Facebook*

## BE KIND AND CARRY ON

The advice to “Control the kids” is easier said than done [“Relearning to Fly”]. So, along those lines, I would add, “Be gracious.” I say this as someone who never had kids. I’ve seen more parents encouraged by graciousness and kindness than grumpiness or anger at their kids.

**DAWNETTE SCOTT**  
*Minneapolis, Minnesota*



## HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT

When my mom was in hospice, she told me about an envelope inside the pillow on a chair [“Where Grandma Hid Her Cash”]. I opened it and found \$3,750. I told this to coworkers and heard many similar stories about elderly aunts and grandparents who had hidden money in books, sugar jars and underwear drawers.

**FRANK D. ALMADE**  
*Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania*

## A PROBE ON POLICE CALLS

I’m a retired police sergeant and receive these calls myself [“The Truth About Police-Support Calls,” February/March]. I’ve been unable to get the callers to tell me who gets the money. People who want to support the police can contact their local police department and ask if it has a Police Benevolent Association that accepts donations. The PBA I belonged to donated money to youth sports programs, scholarships and other local causes.

**KARA ANGELONI**  
*Huguenot, New York*

## PROPER FORM

Thanks for the article on computer ergonomic basics [“Straight to Work”]. I’ve hoped for a publication to cover this since the pandemic began—so many home work spaces are inadequate. More tips: 1) Place documents on a holder in front of (but below) your monitor; 2) instead of craning your neck, due to using standard bifocals, get computer

glasses; 3) choose a keyboard tray with room for your mouse. Also, a towel can provide lumbar-spine support; a phone book can be a footstool.

**ERIN PERLOW**  
*Walnut Creek, California*

## NOT READY TO AGE OUT

Loved your article about pickleball [“Pickleball for Life”]! My 95-year-old mother has been playing the sport for 10 years. She has macular degeneration, so she uses black balls because she can see them better than yellow ones. Last year she tripped (not on the court), but now she’s back to normal—bowling, walking and pickleballing.



**KIMBERLY RICE**  
*Blue Springs, Missouri*

## BOOKWORM

I always look forward to flipping through AARP THE MAGAZINE, especially the page about books. In the latest issue, I enjoyed the article on the collaboration between Dolly Parton and James Patterson [“We Wrote a Novel!”]. I hope I speak for other seniors when I say we would like even more information about books, such as a guide to book blogs.

**ANDY AMBRAZIEJUS**  
*New York, New York*

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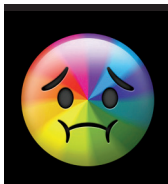


BEST-SELLER  
BONUS



**> A MOTHER'S DAY TRIBUTE** Claire Hanlon Brown gave up her career in the 1950s to raise kids. Now her son, a noted journalist, reflects on what her long life meant.

**> MORE TECH**  
Dealing with cybersickness; the way that fall-detector personal technology works



PLUS

**> MORE FOOD**  
Twelve surprising uses for a lemon, and fascinating facts and tips about one of America's guiltiest pleasures—bacon



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# Upfront The A List

## 7 Things Selma Blair Suggests Doing Now

### 1 Face Facts

When I was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 2018, at age 46, I realized I had probably been having symptoms for years. There had been times after my son was born, in 2011, that I couldn't move, because the pain in my joints was so intense. I blamed myself; I thought I had failed at childbirth. After I finally got the diagnosis, I was able to seek the right help.

### 2 Be Yourself at Any Age

The MS has caused some pre-frontal brain damage. When I sat down to write my new memoir, *Mean Baby*, it came out as if from the 8-year-old I was when I first wanted to write a book! [Laughs.] But being a baby writer is beautiful, and I hope to help other little Selmas with my story.

### 3 Keep Going

I've always been a talker, so even if my voice falters or goes into a spasm, I talk through it. I'm learning not to give it a rest!

### 4 Reach Out and Touch Someone

I don't like not being able to do certain things, but I'm finding such a connection with people. If I see an arm offered, I grab it. That's new for me, and it makes the day more like a game.

**"We have to get it out in the conversation that seeking caregiving is not giving up—it's getting help to get better and live your best life."**

—Selma Blair, 49

### 5 Flaunt Your Assets

I never had bad balance before, but the cane has become my dance partner. My days of heels are nearly gone, so my long-cane days might be over, too. Those canes will have to be cut down for the Air Jordans I will now be wearing.

### 6 Find Closure

My mother was a harsh critic, and I always wanted her to edit my book, to really clean it up. Then she died of cancer. I felt such a profound sense of grief and loss.

But when I started down the path of embracing life and writing about it—and also of participating in a documentary about my MS treatments—everything I was doing became very rooted in my mother. The film is a love letter to her, as I'm trying to let go of her.

### 7 Embrace Change

I realized that if I'm lucky, I could reach 85, MS or not. Our abilities are always fleeting, but when they fail, it's treated as a tragedy. How do we enter a chaotic shift in our life without feeling it's an end to something? We just have to adapt.

—As told to Bobbi Dempsey

Selma Blair is a popular TV (*American Crime Story*) and film (*Legally Blonde*, *Hellboy*) actress. The new documentary *Introducing, Selma Blair* (Discovery+) chronicles her recent stem cell transplant, a difficult treatment that has put her multiple sclerosis into remission. Blair's new memoir, *Mean Baby*, will be available May 17.



# A Toast to Mom

At Miss Shirley's Cafe in Baltimore, making French toast is an art. Corporate Executive Chef Zuri Coles shares Mother's Day brunch ideas

## THE BASICS

Each recipe serves 2.

**> Bread:** Use 4 to 6 slices. Dense breads soak up batter best, with fluffy results. One to try: challah, an egg bread of Jewish heritage.

**> Batter:** Mix 4 large eggs, ½ cup heavy cream and up to 2 tablespoons sugar. Flavor with vanilla, almond or maple extract, plus spices such as cinnamon or cardamom.

**> Skillet skills:** For crispy-outside, gooey-inside French toast, set your burner at medium high, get your pan hot, and grease with butter or cooking oil before adding batter-soaked bread slices. When the bottom is golden brown, flip. Cook until both sides are of similar color and doneness.

—Kelsey Ogletree

## SUNDAY SIP

### GRAPEFRUIT CRUSH

Add 6 ounces fresh, chilled grapefruit juice and 2 ounces grapefruit vodka to a tall glass filled with ice. Top off with a splash of soda water; garnish with fresh mint.

See our mobile edition for Chef Coles' Hot-Chocolate French Toast recipe and how to make the Wake-Up Call, seen above.



Wake-Up Call



## 1 Savory Toast

Coat dipped brioche slices in panko, cook, and layer with Swiss cheese and ham. Melt cheese in oven. Serve with mustard aioli.



## 2 Dessert French Toast

Batter and cook thick-sliced lemon pound cake or marble cake. (Turn carefully; slices will be soft.) Top with fruit, whipped cream or hot fudge sauce.



## 3 Croissant

**French Toast** Halve a croissant sandwich-style; dip it in batter and cook. Serve with whipped cream, toasted nuts and berry compote.



## 4 French Toast for a Crowd

Multiply ingredients as needed. Spread cubed bread in a greased casserole; soak thoroughly with batter. Refrigerate overnight. Bake for 30 minutes at 425°F. Serve with chocolate, syrup or fruit.



Grapefruit Crush



## 5 Stuffed Coconut-Cream Toast

Blend cream cheese, mascarpone, shredded coconut, honey and vanilla to taste. Put half-cup in slit in each 4-inch-thick challah slice. Batter, cook, then finish in oven (350°F for 5 minutes). Serve with berries.







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	\$10,000		\$50,000		\$100,000	
Issue Age	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
45–49	\$10	\$12	\$23	\$36	\$39	\$62
50–54	11	14	29	45	52	79
55–59	13	18	38	65	69	116
60–64	17	24	58	94	108	171
65–69	21	31	81	128	154	236
70–74	33	42	141	184	272	342

**Tobacco or nicotine users within the last 12 months will pay a higher rate.** Premiums above are the rates New York Life currently charges. Your initial premium is based on your age at issue; premiums increase as you enter each new five-year age band and will be based on the current rates at that time. Age bands begin at ages 45–49 and end at ages 75–79. Coverage ends at age 80. Premiums are not guaranteed; however, your rates may change only if they are changed for all others in the same class of insureds. If relevant statements of age or facts are not accurate, New York Life will make a fair adjustment of premiums and/or insurance. Residents of FL: Jason Montgomery is a licensed Florida agent for service to Florida residents. Residents of MT have rates different from those shown. An alternate product with different rates is available in NY. Please call New York Life for details and higher coverage options.

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\*\* Ratings as of 9/30/21. A.M. Best (A++) Highest Rating, Fitch (AAA) Highest Rating, Standard & Poor's (AA+) Second-Highest Rating, Moody's Investors Service (Aaa) Highest Rating.

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The licensed life insurance agent is Jason Montgomery (Arkansas #611214, California #0B93302)



## Auto-Sweep

**Robotic vacuums, now 20 years old, are getting better with age**

**ONCE THE STUFF** of science fiction—remember Rosie on *The Jetsons*?—robot cleaners have been roving floors for two decades now. What to know if you're considering one:

- You'll need some light tech skills. The vacuum connects to your Wi-Fi, and using a phone app will help you manage it.
- You shouldn't get rid of your current vacuum. Robots are best for maintaining cleanliness between regular vacuuming sessions, says Consumer Reports' Susan Booth.
- They won't run into your things. Vacuums with obstacle detection sense furniture. Some have LIDAR, a laser system that creates a digital layout of your home. —J.G.

# More Power for Your Flowers

*Give your Mother's Day blooms a boost with these tips*



**W**HEN IT COMES to flowers, Mother's Day is one mother of a holiday. According to the Society of American Florists, it is second only to Valentine's Day in sales. If you are receiving or giving cut flowers this Mother's Day, try these tricks to help keep them looking beautiful for as long as possible.



### GIVE THEM A TRIM

Cut stems at a 45-degree angle, which maximizes moisture intake. Cutting at varying lengths creates "textural diversity," says Andrew Gaumond, a horticulturist and editorial director of Petal Republic.



### BREAK UP BOUQUETS

Your home might benefit from a few smaller arrangements instead of one large one, Gaumond notes. If you have a mixed bouquet, you can separate colors and match them to different rooms.



### PICK THE RIGHT FLOWERS

These should last about two weeks: carnations, chrysanthemums, lilies, zinnias, gerbera daisies, clematis, freesias and alliums. These are quick to fade: peonies, ranunculus, dahlias, gladioli, tulips, poppies and irises.



### HAVE FUN WITH FRUIT

In a clear vase, Anna De-I, owner of the Blum Bar flower shop in Irving, Texas, likes to add clementines, lemons or grapefruits to the water, to include another visual element.



### VARY THE VASES

Clear glass vases have a timeless appearance, but try using another type of vessel. A teapot, for example, makes the display more interesting, says De-I. —Jenna Gyimesi

## STAGE YOUR HOME ... TO LIVE

Make your house so inviting that you won't want to move

**ANYONE WHO** has sold a house may remember that when it was "staged," they thought, *Wow, my house looks so nice now—maybe I should stay.* And so we asked some professionals: What secrets of home staging can we apply to homelife?



**Set the tone.** "An entryway should be clutter-free and bright," says Savannah, Georgia-based interior designer Elizabeth Demos. "Avoid letting this area become a dumping zone."

**Keep things fresh.** "Move your furniture around, take away some of your collections, or switch out pillows

and throws to change up the color mood of a room," notes Robin Mayer, an interior designer in New York City. "A quick sprucing up of our surroundings can be very uplifting."

**Lighten up.** "Brighten walls and pare down furnishings," Demos says. —Marie Proeller Hueston







## Yellowstone at 150

America's first national park, by the numbers

10,000

thermal features, including geysers, mud pots, hot springs and fumaroles

**67** mammal species, such as moose, bears, elk and wolves. Yellowstone is considered America's Serengeti.



**5,000**

free-roaming bison, the largest public U.S. herd

**900 miles**

of trails, including those you can hike to the spectacular Fairy Falls

**3**



states have portions of Yellowstone's nearly 3,500 square miles. Wyoming is home to most of the park, but it stretches into Montana and Idaho.

**4 million**

Yellowstone visitors in 2019 (approximate number; before the pandemic). In 2020, the number dropped to about 3.8 million.

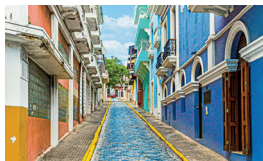
## STEP INTO HISTORY

**NOT OF A MIND** to stand shoulder to shoulder with strangers in a museum? Go on a walking tour instead. Free (or tip-based) tours are booming enterprises



### Music in Harlem, New York City

Learn about the popular "breakfast dances" at the former Smalls Paradise, how to boo performers at the Apollo and where to find classic soul food; [freetourbyfoot.com](http://freetourbyfoot.com).



### Sights in San Juan, Puerto Rico

Visit landmark forts San Cristóbal and El Morro, plus the narrowest house in Puerto Rico—just 5 feet wide—and the bar that claims to have invented the piña colada; [civitatis.com](http://civitatis.com).



### A market experience in Seattle

See fishmongers sling salmon at the historic Pike Place Market. Snap a photo of the original Starbucks, and add to the colorful Gum Wall; [seattlefreewalkingtours.com](http://seattlefreewalkingtours.com). —Veronica Stoddart



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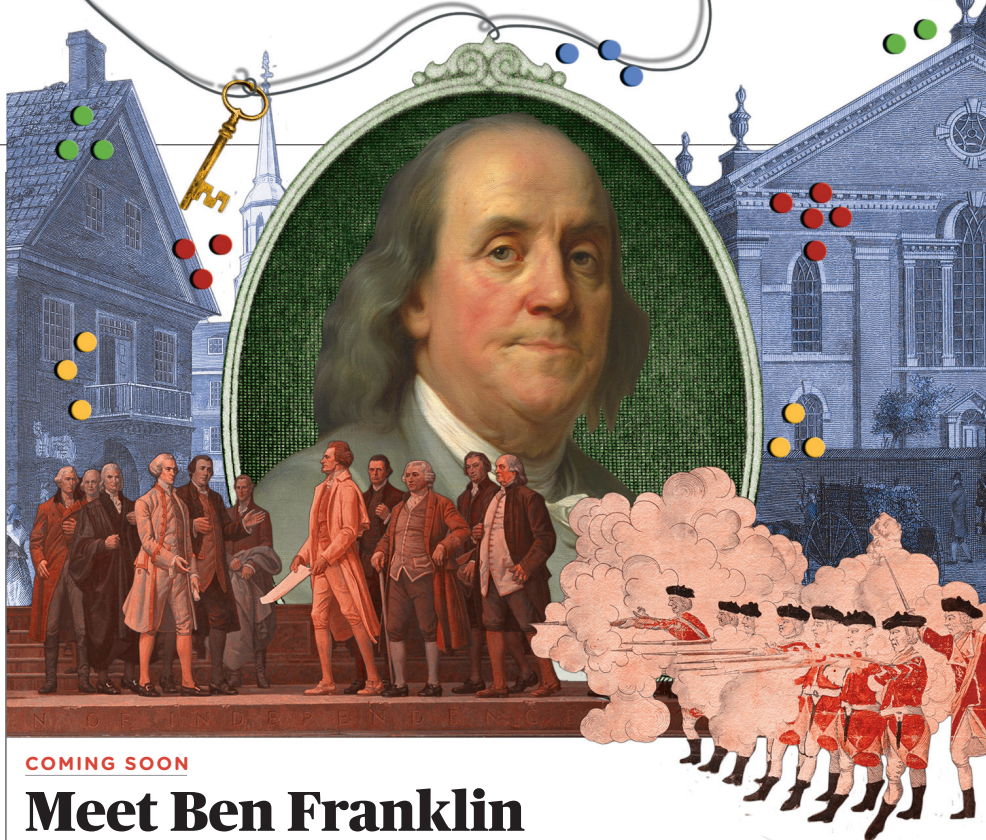
## ANTHONY ANDERSON, 'LAW & ORDER' MAN

ANTHONY ANDERSON, 51, rose to fame playing the role of conservative-minded Manhattan detective Kevin Bernard on NBC's *Law & Order* from 2008 to 2010, then gained greater fame as a prosperous L.A. family man on *Black-ish* (2014–22). The Critics Choice Association named him 2021's television producer of the year for co-executive producing that sitcom. Now, to many people's surprise, Anderson is again reading suspects their Miranda warnings on *Law & Order*. Why did he leave socially relevant comedy to rejoin *Law & Order*, the ripped-from-the-headlines show that's back after a 12-year absence? "I say, 'Why not?'" Anderson told *Entertainment Tonight*. "It's the opportunity to reprise my character and have a little fun in the dramatic space for a little while. Full circle is what it is, and it's a good thing."

—Lisa Kennedy



Anderson on the set of *Law & Order*, now in its 21st season



COMING SOON

## Meet Ben Franklin

Ken Burns reveals the founder's contradictory soul

**W**HY WATCH Ken Burns' riveting *Benjamin Franklin* (PBS, April 4–5)? "He is the most compelling personality in America in the 18th century, and a scientist of Nobel quality," says Burns, 68. "He wrote the second-greatest sentence in the English language, right after 'I love you': 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.'"

Franklin changed Jefferson's original phrase, "sacred and undeniable" truths, to "self-evident" truths, like the electric result of his

key-and-kite experiment. "That's a scientist's addition," Burns notes.

Franklin was also a hot mess who betrayed his wife, son and ideals. "He could be generous yet calculating, broad-minded yet deeply prejudiced. He became an abolitionist, but not before he himself enslaved human beings," Burns points out.

Franklin's world can sound rather modern. "In a film that seems so distant, there are vaccination questions," Burns says. "There's nothing new under the sun." —Tim Appelo

Photo credits on page 74

## The Champ From Auschwitz

**IN *THE SURVIVOR*** (HBO, April 27), director Barry Levinson, 80, tells the true story of Harry Haft (Ben Foster), who was forced to box 76 other Auschwitz prisoners to entertain SS officers, who executed the losers. Haft escaped, moved to America and fought Rocky Marciano. Despite the hardness of his life, "there are uplifting, inspiring aspects of Harry's story," Levinson says. "He was not just a survivor. He was able to finally find contentment." In regard to Levinson's telling of the story, USC Shoah Foundation executive Stephen Smith calls the movie "one of the best contributions to Holocaust filmography since *Schindler's List*." —T.A.





# Now Playing *Our critic's movie recommendations*



**THE NORTHMAN**  
(In theaters on April 22)

► In a movie based on the Danish legend that inspired *Hamlet*, Amleth (played by Alexander Skarsgård, *Big Little Lies*), a 10th-century Viking, hunts the man who killed his father, King Aurvandil (Ethan Hawke, 51), and abducted his mom (Nicole Kidman, 54). Björk, 56, depicts a witch. Willem Dafoe, 66, says his court jester character is “nefarious.”



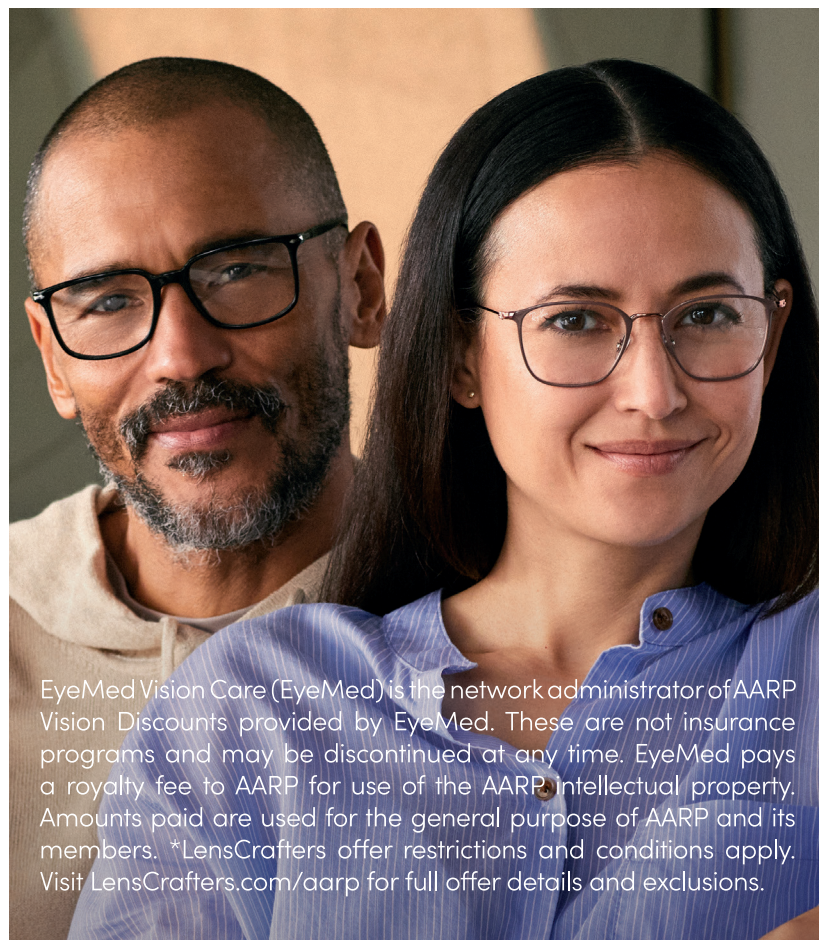
**THE UNBEARABLE WEIGHT OF MASSIVE TALENT**  
(In theaters on April 22)

► Nicolas Cage, 58, who blew \$150 million and hasn't made a blockbuster in years, plays two characters: a desperate actor named Nicolas Cage, who takes \$1 million to appear at a fan's birthday party, and the actor's alter ego, Nicky Cage, who berates Nicolas for doing little art films. This one could be a big art film.



**DOWNTON ABBEY: A NEW ERA**  
(In theaters on May 20)

► Most of the viewers of 2019's \$238 million hit *Downton Abbey* were over 55. In the sequel, Cora Crawley (Elizabeth McGovern, 60) tries to give her daughters new freedoms—it is 1927, after all. “*Downton* appealed to people nostalgic for a simpler time,” McGovern says. “Now they’re nostalgic for the way the world was when they first watched *Downton*.” —T.A.



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## A New Life for Old Media

What you need to preserve movies, music, photos and more







**GOT A BOX** of VHS home movies? Or a bunch of family photos on an old floppy disk? In our constantly evolving digital world, it's a good idea to get that ancient media transferred to modern formats. Here's the path to save those memories and that important data. —Chris Morris



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	<b>VIDEOTAPES</b>	USB video converter + computer	Digital video files in MP4, AVI or WMV format to play on your computer
	<b>DVDs</b>	Computer + DVD drive + video software	Digital files in MKV or MP4 format
	<b>FLOPPY DISKS</b>	External floppy disk reader + computer (and maybe an adapter)	New files on your computer hard drive



## ASK THE TECH GURU

**Question:** I sometimes have the word “queued” come up on my texts. I don’t know why this happens or what it means, but I don’t think those messages get sent to their intended recipients.

—Cindy Nugent, St. Louis

This can happen on Android phones. “Queued” means your phone isn’t connected to a cellular-data network, and so the text is being placed in a queue to be sent later. Check to make sure your phone is not in airplane mode. Or you may be in a cellular dead spot. If a connection is reestablished within two hours, texts in the queue will get sent. But after two hours, messages expire. So, when you get the “queued” message, keep checking to see if your text eventually went through. —Jason R. Rich, author of AARP tech books

Have a question about using your computer or cellphone? Send it to [personaltech@aarp.org](mailto:personaltech@aarp.org). Our guru may answer it in an upcoming issue.

## SAY WHAT?

Movie dialogue can be hard to hear on your TV. What to do about it



DO YOU ever struggle to understand the dialogue when watching a movie on television? It may not have to do with hearing loss but rather with how that audio was created. In theaters, different sounds play through different speakers, with the dialogue projected from a center channel for clarity. Most TVs aren’t built like that. Some ways to hear better:

**Turn down the bass.** According to the tech website CNET, bass “is the enemy of understandable speech.”

**Compress the volume range.** Some TVs feature a “night mode,” which reduces the difference between the loudest and softest parts of the audio. Keep yours on this setting all the time. Some TVs refer to it as dynamic compression.

**Invest in a soundbar.** A slim soundbar, placed below the TV, contains many small speakers. Each plays a unique channel.

**Get a good pair of headphones.** Viewers can often hear dialogue more clearly with headphones. For convenience, some streaming boxes offer headphone jacks in the remote control. —Gabriel Baumgaertner



# A Better You This Spring

New books to help boost your body, mind and soul

## The Invisible Kingdom: Reimagining Chronic Illness by Meghan O'Rourke

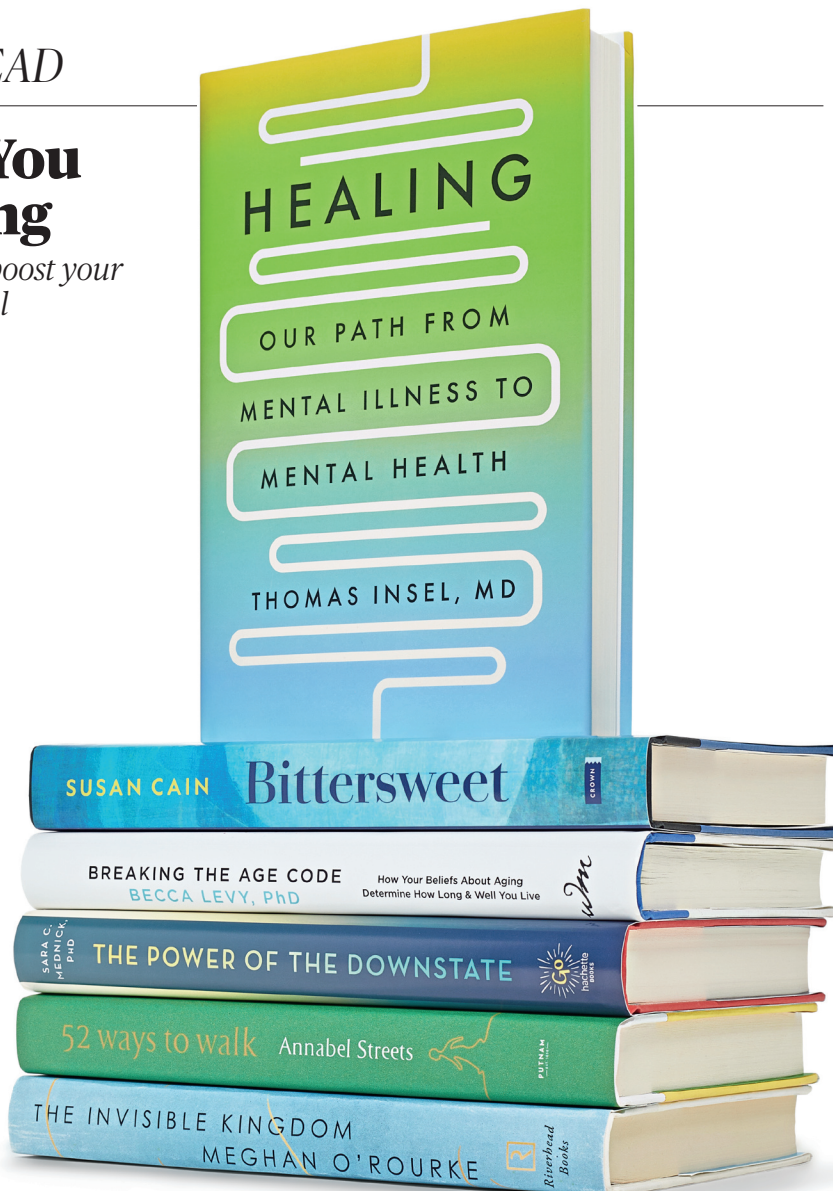
The author vividly describes living for years with undiagnosed, debilitating symptoms—while facing skeptical physicians—before being told she had Lyme disease. The millions of Americans silently struggling with such hard-to-label illnesses, including autoimmune disorders, will relate to her frustrations at “living at the edge of medical knowledge.”

## 52 Ways to Walk: The Surprising Science of Walking for Wellness and Joy, One Week at a Time by Annabel Streets

This short, enthusiastic guide extols walking's mental and physical benefits, and will motivate you to get outside and move, step by step, all year.

## Bittersweet: How Sorrow and Longing Make Us Whole by Susan Cain

Why do some of us love sad, yearning music? The author of the best seller *Quiet Power*, a celebration of introversion, poignantly explores melancholy as an authentic “response to the problem of being alive in a deeply flawed yet stubbornly beautiful world” and as an inspiration for connection and creativity. (April 5)



## Breaking the Age Code: How Your Beliefs About Aging Determine How Long and Well You Live by Becca Levy

Yale researcher and aging expert Levy sees rampant ageism in the U.S.—a sharp contrast with the widespread respect for elders she's observed in Japan. She argues that if we can learn to view aging as a natural, often wonderful, part of life, we can be happier and healthier in our later years. (April 12)

## Healing: Our Path From Mental Illness to Mental Health by Thomas Insel, M.D.

Those with mental illness and their families will appreciate this passionate call for a new way to address our country's mental health crisis. Insel, a former director of the National Institute of Mental Health, suggests a heavier focus on prevention and a more holistic approach to recovery, and presents the problem as a human rights issue.

## The Power of the Downstate: Recharge Your Life Using Your Body's Own Restorative Systems by Sara C. Mednick

Cognitive science professor Mednick explains how embracing the Downstate—giving your brain and body rest “from the rigmarole of living”—both day and night, can help you avoid burnout, regulate your emotions and reenergize you for the turmoil of the Upstate. (April 19)

—Christina Ianzito



Join AARP's The Girlfriend Book Club for fun book talk, giveaways and free monthly livestreamed author interviews. Nita Prose, author of *The Maid*, will be our guest on April 19 at 7:30 p.m. ET; [thegirlfriend.com/bookclub](http://thegirlfriend.com/bookclub).

## ALSO OF NOTE



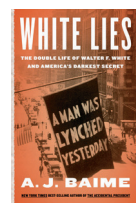
**BIOGRAPHY**  
**Queen of Our Times: The Life of Queen Elizabeth II** by Robert Hardman (April 6)



**NOVEL** **Booth** by Karen Joy Fowler



**MEMOIR**  
**Finding Me** by Viola Davis (April 26)



**HISTORY**  
**White Lies** by A.J. Baime



**NOVEL**  
**Memphis** by Tara M. Stringfellow (April 5)



# Jean Smart

*The actress on being kind, getting naked on-screen (she won't!) and honoring the ones you love*

## Using college wisely

I decided in high school that I wanted to act, and to major in theater in college. But I didn't know anyone who did that for a living. My mom thought it was frivolous. She and my dad grew up during the Depression and saw college—they'd both attended—as a privilege, not to be wasted. As soon as my mother started seeing me in shows, though, she said she started thinking, *Oh, maybe she's onto something here.*

## Being an 'it' girl, again

*Designing Women* was a hit, but the reaction to *Hacks* has been just enormous. The attention is lovely, but it's kind of baffling. The advice I would give to other actors is, you know, just don't go away. Eventually they'll find you again. [Laughs.]

## Ignore (most of) the naysayers

I try not to read all reviews. It's not healthy. But if I get a great review and someone sticks it under my nose, I'm very happy to read it!

## Drama or comedy?

If I had to do one or the other, I would probably pick drama, because you can always be funny in your personal life. And if you're funny all the time at work, maybe ... you're more of a drama queen at home? [Laughs.]

## The reason she won't get naked

God bless people who are that uninhibited. But when I had the opportunity to do that, I thought, *How could I face my poor father? He'd be embarrassed in front of his friends.* Although I've thought a couple of times recently, *Well, maybe I could have briefly gone topless.* I mean, they still look good—not as good as they did, but pretty good!

## Everyone needs to feel seen

My children get frustrated with me because I talk to strangers. They'll be, like, "Mom, my God, just walk away!"

But I can't. I can't imagine anything worse than being on the streets

and people walking by you, literally as if you're not there. I said to my kids when they first went to New York City, "Even

if you can't give money, don't walk by someone like they're not there." Just say, "No, I'm so sorry—I can't today," or "Hello," or anything. Just to acknowledge their presence: You see them. You hear them.

## Plastic surgery for all (but not me, not yet)

I don't take care of my skin. I'm terrible. But I'm just lucky—I've got good skin. I've done a little Botox, because I tend to scowl. I can't look angry on camera all the time. I tried filler once, and it was not pleasant. I didn't get the results I wanted. Now I'm dying to get my eyes done—but I'm terrified!

## People I want to work with

Sarah Paulson. Joaquin Phoenix. Oh, and Anthony Hopkins. I've been in love with him since high school. And I just worked with two others on my list, Margot Robbie and Brad Pitt, in *Babylon*, a movie out later this year. Brad Pitt!

## Celebrate the people you love while you can

I've been trying to decide what to do with my husband's ashes. [Actor Richard Gilliland died of a heart condition in 2021.] He was of Irish descent, and I thought I would scatter the ashes in Dublin last summer, but it was too soon for the kids. A year before he died, though, I threw him a big surprise party for his 70th birthday. Everybody who was near and dear to him was there, and it was really, really great. Oh, God, they roasted him mercilessly! So, I haven't had any kind of a service, because I thought, *I can't top that.* —As told to Judith Newman

Jean Smart, 70, stars in the hit HBO Max comedy *Hacks*, which is currently streaming, and the upcoming movie *Babylon*.



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Whole life insurance actually builds cash value over time. And most claims are paid within 24 hours.<sup>3</sup> So your loved ones have the cash they need — when they need it most.

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The amount you pay today is the amount you'll pay for as long as you keep this coverage — right up to your 120th birthday.

	\$5,000.00		\$10,000.00		\$15,000.00		\$25,000.00	
Age	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
64	\$33.50	\$24.55	\$66.00	\$48.10	\$98.50	\$71.65	\$163.50	\$118.75
65	\$34.75	\$25.50	\$68.50	\$50.00	\$102.25	\$74.50	\$169.75	\$123.50
66	\$35.90	\$26.35	\$70.80	\$51.70	\$105.70	\$77.05	\$175.50	\$127.75
67	\$37.05	\$27.25	\$73.10	\$53.50	\$109.15	\$79.75	\$181.25	\$132.25
68	\$38.70	\$28.95	\$76.40	\$56.90	\$114.10	\$84.85	\$189.50	\$140.75
69	\$39.75	\$30.60	\$78.50	\$60.20	\$117.25	\$89.80	\$194.75	\$149.00
70	\$43.85	\$32.45	\$86.70	\$63.90	\$129.55	\$95.35	\$215.25	\$158.25
71	\$45.60	\$34.25	\$90.20	\$67.50	\$134.80	\$100.75	\$224.00	\$167.25
72	\$47.70	\$36.00	\$94.40	\$71.00	\$141.10	\$106.00	\$234.50	\$176.00
73	\$50.90	\$38.95	\$100.80	\$76.90	\$150.70	\$114.85	\$250.50	\$190.75
74	\$53.50	\$41.85	\$106.00	\$82.70	\$158.50	\$123.55	\$263.50	\$205.25

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<sup>1</sup>Ages 50 to 75 in NY. <sup>2</sup>Once your application has been received with your first month's premium, we will review and accept it. <sup>3</sup>Based on 12 months of rolling data for policies \$2,000-\$25,000 after all required documentation is received; excludes claims made within 24 months from policy issue date.





# MoneySaver

## Going, Going, Sold!

Online auctions for collectibles are a bustling business. Here's a sample of what some everyday attic finds recently fetched once the e-gavel fell

By GABRIEL BAUMGAERTNER



**\$1,800**

**SCHWINN  
STING-RAY BIKE**



**\$196.**

**GUMBALL  
MACHINE**



**\$11,243**

**DUCK HUNT  
VIDEO GAME  
FOR NINTENDO**



**\$261**

**VINTAGE COLEMAN  
GAS LANTERN ♦♦♦**



**\$750**

**TIN CIRCUS  
CLOWN ROBOT  
← CAR →**

**\$191.50**

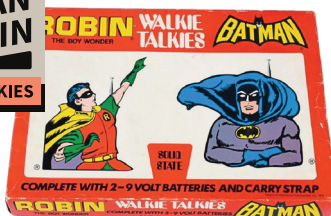
**SMITH CORONA  
STERLING TYPEWRITER  
IN CASE, CIRCA 1956**



**\$330**

**BATMAN  
& ROBIN**

**WALKIE-TALKIES**



## The Road to Sell

Want cash for your treasure? Take the advice of Timothy Gordon, a professional appraiser.

### → Check the competition

Look at auction sites such as LiveAuctioneers and eBay, and do a general internet search for past sales of your item to get an idea of its worth. If it's less than \$500, try selling it on eBay, the biggest auction website. "It's instant money," Gordon says.

### → Find expertise

"If what you have is super special, or there's a possibility of it, call in a pro," he adds. That may mean getting a professional appraiser, or consigning it to an auction house. Both will cost you—an auctioneer may charge 20 percent of your sales price—but chances of getting top dollar are greater.

### → Match with the right auctioneer

You'll profit most by going with an auction house that specializes in whatever you're selling, whether it's signed art, '50s furniture or old baseball cards. "Get to the right people who have developed that specific clientele," says Gordon. ■





BROUGHT TO YOU  
BY MARCUS BY  
GOLDMAN SACHS

Welcome to the first entry in a four-part series guiding you through common and challenging dilemmas that can have a lasting impact on your financial and overall well-being.

# Your Next Big Work Decisions

*Go solo? Make a move? What the pros suggest* BY KAREN HUBE



## CHOICE #1 I've just been passed over for promotion for the second time—again to someone 20 years younger than me. Should I make a stink about age discrimination or move on?

**THERE'S A** much better option: Build a case for why you should be considered for a promotion and present it to your boss in a calm, professional manner, says Jim Peacock, founder of Peak Careers Consulting in Waterville, Maine: "You definitely don't want to go in with boxing gloves on. There's no way you can win that way."

To prepare, make a list of at least five ways you add value to your organization, each with an example of its impact, Peacock says. As you do this, consider assumptions your boss may have about you so you can counter them. "Your boss might have age biases buried deep and not even realize it," he says, like assuming that older workers will depart soon and have

trouble adapting to new technology.

Hit on each assumption with a positive twist, Peacock says. "You might say, 'I am always eager to improve my technology skills. I've never shied away from learning and keeping up with new software or systems.'"

Don't underplay your strengths. You might assume they are obvious, but often they are not, Peacock says.

After presenting your case, ask your employer for input, he says. "Say, 'I am concerned I'm being overlooked for advancement. What can I do?'"

If you continue to be overlooked and truly believe age is a factor, only then should you consider booking an appointment with your human resources department.

## CHOICE #2 I've gotten a great job offer, but it's 300 miles away and I can't work remotely. Should I uproot my household in order to take it?

**TO ANSWER** this question, which affects not only your career but also your family's entire life, Rebecca Michel, an associate professor in the counseling program at DePaul University in Chicago, recommends a decision-making ladder that includes your values and your preferences.

On the first rung, detail all the financial benefits or drawbacks of relocating, beyond the obvious salary and benefits, Michel says. Are housing costs higher or lower in the new location? Would your spouse or partner have to find a new job?

Next, consider your family's situation. "If you're in the sandwich generation helping both parents and young children, this gets more complicated," Michel says. The ripple effects of moving—finding caregivers, changing schools, switching health coverage—can be deal breakers.

Next, evaluate your preferences for location and community, and your adaptability to big changes. If you are part of a faith community or civic group, see if there are similar options in the new place, Michel says.

Still unsure? You may need more information to make a decision. Ask to meet with your future colleagues. "A big unknown is often the people you'll be working with," Michel says. "You want to be sure you like them."



Illustrations by Ryan Johnson, Top, Peter Komierowski



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## MoneySaver



**CHOICE #3** I've gotten tired of going through the same daily grind with the same people for a large organization I can't really influence. I've been thinking that I'd be happier if I left the corporate world and went freelance. Is this the right move?

**THE PANDEMIC** may have given you a taste of what freelancing could be like—a flexible schedule, no dress code, a pet-friendly office and perhaps the freedom to pick and choose the projects you work on.

“But there’s a danger in romanticizing the freelance life. There are plenty of potential drawbacks,” says Sharon Givens, a psychotherapist and founder of Visions Counseling & Career Center in Columbia, South Carolina. She suggests you weigh the following factors.

► **Finances** It’s often not enough to match your current salary, because your expenses as a contractor can be significantly higher. “If you have to pay for your own medical insurance and any travel expenses, upgrade your home office—these are significant costs you have to budget for,” Givens says. Plus, your taxes may go up, since you don’t have an employer paying half your Social Security taxes.

What’s more, freelance income can be highly irregular, so you’ll need to have a cushion of at least a few months’ expenses.

► **Clients** Who will hire you? For a comfortable freelance life, a broad network is critical, so you should have that in place before you take the plunge. You’re likely not ready if you have only one or two potential sources of work. Aim to secure a contract before leaving your corporate job.

► **Responsibilities** Freelancing means not only performing your typical professional role but also taking on new duties, such as marketing and accounting. And when your computer acts up, a corporate IT staff isn’t going to swoop in and help you out. These additional tasks can cost you time, money, peace of mind—or maybe all three.

► **Solitude** As a freelancer, you’re usually a team of one. “You have to really know yourself and what drives you. If you are motivated by sharing goals with colleagues and having that social interaction throughout the workday, freelancing may not be the right choice,” Givens says. “It can feel very isolating.” ■

*Karen Hube is a veteran financial writer and a contributing editor for Barron’s.*



**Jean Chatzky**  
TO THE RESCUE

# Torn Between Two Mortgages

*A careful couple find themselves short on cash. They're ready to borrow against their home's value ... but how?*



## THE PROBLEM

The subject line in an email I received from Chris Ouellette, 71, a medical assistant, and her husband, Bob, 72, a retired cement contractor, read “House Poor.” But they shouldn’t have been. They had made smart financial decisions and held \$150,000 in retirement savings. They received \$2,500 a month in Social Security. Chris still earned about \$3,000 a month. And they lived modestly—no credit card debt and a car payment of just \$200. The albatross? Their \$1,500 mortgage payment. And they needed about \$50,000 in renovations to age in place. What to do? “Bankers tell us to refinance,” they wrote. “A reverse mortgage company will try to sway us toward a reverse mortgage. Please help.”



## THE ADVICE

Listening to Chris and Bob, I was sure that they faced another issue along with their question about borrowing: cash-flow management. Over the years, I’ve done a number of what TV producers call “money makeovers,” which often revolve around helping people spend less, save more and pay down debt. So I start with a direct order: Track your spending—every penny—for a month.

In our first call, Chris and Bob laid out their spending in incredible detail: \$30 a month on a dental policy, for example, \$80 on water and sewer, and \$15 on the newspaper. But

the modest spending they described seemed out of sync with the straits they were in. So I told them to track.

Within two weeks, Chris had the “aha!” moment I’ve seen before. “I have been tracking expenditures and it’s amazing to see how some of them just seem to get forgotten! 😊,” she wrote. The culprits were common ones: food (“We take our grandsons out to eat”) and online shopping. Just being conscious of these spending leaks, I explained, would help the couple shut them down.

That brought us to their house, which they valued at about \$425,000. Refinancing their \$210,000 mortgage and pulling out cash was possible,

and would even trim their monthly payment by about \$150 a month, thanks to low interest rates. But they’d still be left with the mortgage payment that was dragging them down. A reverse mortgage would eliminate the payment. They were wary of a reverse mortgage; closing costs would run nearly \$20,000. But they decided to apply for one and go through the independent counseling process mandated by HUD.

“The counselor went over everything in detail,” Chris said. The couple would still have to pay taxes and insurance, and if they fell behind, they could well lose their home. And the loan would have to be repaid if they moved out for more than a year. “It’s more counseling than when you buy an actual home,” she said.



## THE OUTCOME

The couple decided to go with a reverse mortgage. Their timing was good: Their home appraised for \$600,000, and then-low interest rates helped boost their loan amount. Out of the \$336,000 reverse mortgage proceeds, \$210,000 paid off their conventional mortgage and \$18,000 covered their closing costs, leaving them with a \$108,000 line of credit, some of which they’ll use to renovate the kitchen. The biggest relief, Chris explained, is not having a mortgage payment. (The bank gets paid in full, plus interest, when the house is sold.) They’ll still have to pay property tax and home insurance bills, however.

As for tracking expenses, it’s a habit they’re keeping—especially as Chris looks to retire soon. “The everyday expenses—telephone, television, gas, work clothes—I’ve even played out how those things are going to change when I’m not commuting 45 miles a day,” she says. “We feel pretty secure.” ■

**Want Jean Chatzky’s help in sorting out a financial problem? Send an email to [rescue@aarp.org](mailto:rescue@aarp.org).**



# This Is 50

FINDING  
FOCUS P.25

ACHING  
BACKS P.26

ANGSTY  
WEED P.27

MEET NEW  
BROS P.27

## LOUD, HOT SUMMER!

Get ready to rock out:  
Live concerts are back



### ROCK ★

- **Bon Jovi**, *April*
- **Foo Fighters**, "Live in the USA Tour," *April-August*
- **Journey**, "Freedom Tour," *April-May*
- **Megadeth and Lamb of God**, *April-May*
- **Mötley Crüe**, "Stadium Tour," *June-September*
- **Red Hot Chili Peppers**, "Global Stadium Tour," *July-September*

### ALTERNATIVE/INDIE ★

- **Bikini Kill**, *April-September*
- **Goo Goo Dolls**, *July-September*
- **Matchbox Twenty** with the **Wallflowers**, *May-August*
- **Rage Against the Machine**, "Public Service Announcement" tour, *July-August*
- **Tears for Fears**, *May-June*

### R&B/HIP-HOP ★

- **Cypress Hill**, *May-June*
- **Maxwell**, "The Night Tour" with **Anthony Hamilton** and **Joe**, *April-May*
- **New Edition**, "The Culture Tour," *April*
- **Ice Cube**, *April-May*
- **Snoop Dogg**, "B.O.D.R. Tour," *April-June*
- **Salt-N-Pepa, En Vogue**, "The Mixtape Tour," *May-July*

### COUNTRY/AMERICANA ★

- **Garth Brooks**, "The Garth Brooks Stadium Tour," *April-May*
- **Tim McGraw**, *April-August*
- **Robert Plant and Alison Krauss**, *June*
- **Darius Rucker**, *April-August*
- **Shania Twain**, Las Vegas residency, *June, August-September* —Brennen Jensen

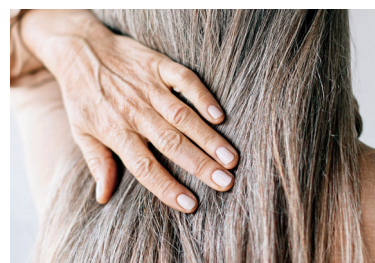
**50** The average age for becoming a first-time grandparent in the United States.

SOURCE: AARP NATIONAL GRANDPARENTING SURVEY

## YES, WE CAN

Tinned fish puts on the ritz

**CANNED SEAFOOD** is beloved in Portugal and Spain, eagerly devoured at wine bars. Lately, U.S. eateries and fisheries have gotten on board. We're not only talking about tuna, either. These metal-encased morsels include baby eels, calamari in ragout, and cockles. They're pricey: The tiny tins can cost \$40 or more. But they're worth it, fans say—and still less expensive than fine caviar. —B.J.



## SOMETHING WILD A NEW WAY TO GROW IN YOUR GRAY

**TIME WAS**, quitting hair dye meant hiding your roots under hats—or paying to recolor your tresses gray. But now there's a third option: "grombré." A play on ombré, the salon term for blending one hair shade into another, grombré refers to openly letting your roots grow out. Tempted to try it? Check out the Instagram account @grombre for role models. —B.J.

# Banish Distraction

*Brain changes in your 50s can make it harder to focus. Here's how to build concentration*

**A**T 55, MY FOCUS started to fray. I had to ask my teenage daughter to stop chatting during tricky highway merges. I penciled “COUNT!!!” across my community orchestra music, to avoid getting lost in long strings of repeated notes. I wrote multiple to-do lists and forgot new neighbors’ names. Turns out, I was completely normal—and there was something I could do about the problem.

Aging shrinks the brain by about 5 percent between age 45 and age 60, says brain researcher Ted Zanto, associate professor of neurology at the University of California, San Francisco. Sounds small, but it could help explain why the ability to pay attention and tune out distractions begins to decline before age

50. Around then, your brain also has to start coping with the full catastrophe of midlife. Rebellious kids! Aging parents! Work! Money! Menopause! Throw in constant interruptions from our digital devices and “you might start feeling overwhelmed,” says neuroscientist Denise Park, director of the Park Aging Mind Laboratory at the University of Texas at Dallas.

Luckily it isn’t all bad news. The brain has a wondrous plasticity, and you can help it adjust and refocus by taking up a few simple, healthy habits.

➔ **Get a move on.** Couch potatoes who started getting 30 to 40 minutes of aerobic exercise—think treadmills and exercise bikes—four times a week improved their executive function, a 2019 Columbia University study

found. The volunteers in their 40s, 50s and 60s were the ones who got the biggest benefits. And scans showed that the cortical thickness in exercisers’ brains had actually increased after six months. “It has convinced me to build exercise into my schedule,” says lead researcher Yaakov Stern, chief of cognitive neuroscience in the Department of Neurology at Columbia.

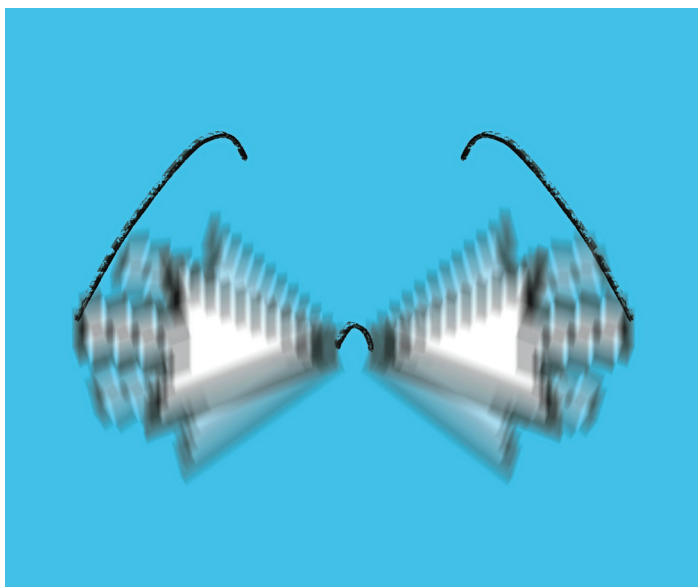
➔ **Prioritize sleep.** Insomniacs have a tougher time ignoring distractions than normal sleepers, according to a 2019 Australian study—and the worse their sleep, the worse their ability to concentrate. According to another study of more than 5,000 participants over five years, those who started sleeping less than six to eight hours

a night demonstrated a drop in thinking skills equal to four to seven years of aging, compared to study subjects who were still getting their z’s. To help protect your brain from such a slowdown, make a point of getting to bed on time, and get treatment for any sleep disorders that may arise, such as obstructive sleep apnea.

➔ **Re-center with meditation.** Chronic stress can shrink connections between brain cells and even reduce the size of the

hippocampus, a brain area involved with memory. The antidote? Daily mindfulness meditation, says Julia Basso, an assistant professor in the Department of Human Nutrition, Foods and Exercise and director of the Embodied Brain Lab at Virginia Tech. In her 2018 study, adults who meditated for eight weeks saw improvements in working memory and attention. As little as 10 minutes a day shows a benefit. Smartphone apps that teach you to meditate include Calm, Headspace and Insight Timer.

➔ **Banish multitasking.** “A big part of the reason people feel scattered, forgetful, in the midst of some sort of cognitive decline is our multitasking, technology-rich, distraction-laden existence,” says Maura Thomas, a productivity expert based in Austin, Texas, and author of



To younger ears, some Gen-X terms sound outdated.



**THAT ROCKS!**  
This sign of approval is about as fashionable as hair metal. Kids say: “That’s lit.”



**VIDEOTAPE**  
When you’re shooting moving images on your smartphone today, you are *filming*.



**KEEP IT REAL**  
The phrase came out of ’90s hip-hop culture. Today’s update is “Keep it 100.”



**TOTALLY!**  
As a head-nodding interjection, Gen Z prefers: “Bet!” —David Hochman



**Attention Management: How to Create Success and Gain Productivity—Every Day.** Juggling two or more activities that require concentration isn't a time-saver, especially for a midlife brain, notes Zanto. "There's a cost to task switching," he says. "If your phone rings or email dings, it disrupts your train of thought." Getting back on track takes significantly longer than if you hadn't been interrupted. Thomas suggests turning off notifications on your devices for scheduled chunks of time during the workday so you can focus. Let people know in advance. "What's the boss going to say—don't focus, don't get your work done?" Thomas asks.

## Meditation Strengthens Memory



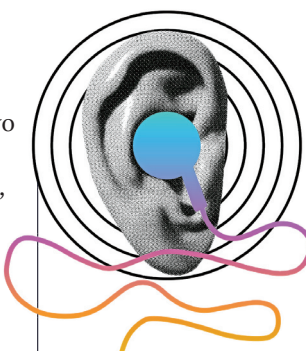
**18%**

**Improvement** in working memory scores after 8 weeks of daily, 13-minute meditations.

M.D., director of the Women's Mental Health Research Program at the University of Illinois Chicago. Other research shows that hot flashes interfere with attention and disrupt sleep. When these symptoms go on for a decade or longer, "it's a chronic stressor to the brain," Maki adds. If hot flashes are disrupting your life, she recommends talking with a health care practitioner trained in menopause care (find one at [menopause.org](http://menopause.org)).

As for me, I've been able to manage my new distractibility by staying well rested and practicing mindfulness, particularly when it comes to taking in new information. I have also accepted that my brain is going to need an assist every now and then. So I'll keep writing "COUNT!!!" on my sheet music. —Sari Harrar

Follow us on Instagram for inspiring stories about Gen Xers: [instagram.com/aarp](https://www.instagram.com/aarp).



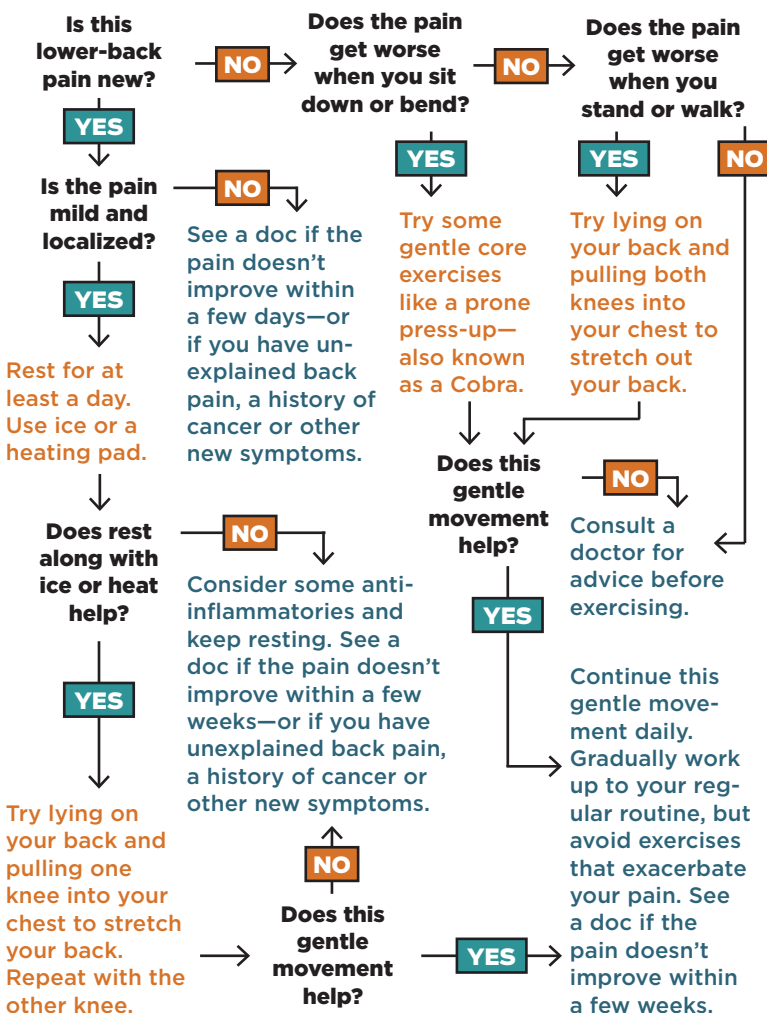
## Keeping the Cord

Plugged-in is in again

**REMEMBER WHEN** wireless earbuds were cool? Like, yesterday? Well, if you never went wireless, you're in luck, because wired earbuds are hot with trendsetters, including supermodel Bella Hadid and actress Zoë Kravitz. Why go (or stay) wired? Because plug-ins cost way less and are harder to lose. Also, they're harder to hack; that's why veep Kamala Harris swears by hers. —B.J.

## SHOULD YOU WORK OUT WITH LOWER-BACK PAIN?

**SOME KINDS** of lower-back pain improve with exercise. Others require rest—or even medical attention. So how do you know whether it's OK to exercise? We asked sports doctor Mary Iaculli and physical therapist Tarik Chase for guidelines. Note: See your doctor if the pain is the result of a significant injury, if it's unusual or prolonged, or if you want to start a new exercise routine and haven't worked out in a long time. —Cari Shane





## MY FIRST TIME ...

### BUYING MEDICAL MARIJUANA

pills were giving me creepy dreams.

"You need marijuana," a friend suggested.

I'd tried pot once, the summer before college. I took one puff, had a coughing fit and never tried it again. But there I was, at 55, standing in front of the dispensary with my medical marijuana card, literally shaking from nerves.

I HADN'T been sleeping, thanks to menopause and chronic pain from an accident. Sleeping

What if I did or said something wrong?

That I did, starting by stepping around a rope line. "Ma'am, you can't go that way!" a man-bunned clerk told me. Two more faux pas—and two "ma'ams"—later, I realized I was the only ma'am in the joint. Everyone else was at least 30 years younger than me. But they were so helpful. After an afternoon of mild embarrassment, I was finally able to get a good night's sleep. And I had discovered that dispensary workers are not there to judge you. They're there because they really love to talk about weed. —C.S.



## HOW TO MAKE NEW GUY FRIENDS IN YOUR 50s

The delicate art of adult male bonding

**THREE DECADES** ago, most men had at least six close friends, according to the Survey Center on American Life. Today, it's down to three. Nearly 1 in 7 report having none at all.

The solution for lonely dudes: Find a group activity you like, such as a road biking club or a basketball league, and *keep meeting up with the same group*. It takes between 40 and 60 hours of interaction to form a casual friendship, a recent study found.

—Tom Vanderbilt

## Seeding Your Start-Up

Smart ways to fund a new business venture

**G**REAT NEWS for the entrepreneurially minded: Your 50s are a prime time for a new venture. A business

started by a 50-year-old is nearly twice as likely to succeed as one begun by a 30-year-old, according to a 2018 study. But funding a new enterprise can be tricky. How much of your savings can you wisely risk? We asked experts for some rules of thumb.

- **Set a realistic budget.** Determine your operating expenses and how much you can afford to lose, advises Shakenna K. Williams, executive director of the Center for Women's Entrepreneurial Leadership at Babson College in Wellesley, Massachusetts. Set milestones and make a backup plan in case you don't meet them.

- **Build a financial cushion.** You'll need both operating capital and money to live on, notes Norm Sherman, a certified mentor for the Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) in New York City. Plan for the business to produce a positive cash flow within one year and to be self-sustaining within two years, he recommends.



- **Keep your day job—at first.** Besides generating money for your business, being employed can make it easier to get a business loan. Hang on to your paycheck until you have to let it go.

- **Tap a 401(k) only as a last resort.** An IRS process called Rollover as Business Start-up (ROBS) lets entrepreneurs withdraw from their retirement accounts. And many employers allow workers to borrow against their 401(k) balances. But before you consider either step, consult a financial planner, to avoid surprises. —Sharon Waters

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# Liam Neeson, Actually

At 69, the Irish American action hero cuts a fearsome figure. But behind the tough-guy image of his movie roles we found a philosophical and compassionate soul

By Allison Glock PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN RUSSO

**L**IAM NEESON is nothing if not paternal. I learned this in 1998, as a young woman in my 20s, when I met the actor in Los Angeles for an assignment. Neeson gamely went shopping at trendy boutiques, folding his towering frame into tiny dressing rooms—a good sport about every ask. We ate lunch and dessert. Then, as the day wrapped up and the work concluded, he asked me about myself, something celebrities rarely did, most of them eager to leave the journalist behind as quickly as possible. As we waited for the check, I briefly lamented my current romantic entanglement. Neeson leaned back, listened and, when I was done whining, offered piercing counsel about my unsuitable suitor.

“Well, Allison, it sounds like he’s not the sort you’d want to be raising babies with.”

As he drove me back to my hotel, Neeson spoke lovingly of his wife, actress Natasha Richardson (who, in 2009, would die from a skiing accident), of the poetry to be found in a marriage, of the capabilities of strong women, of his three brilliant sisters and his steadfast mother, and of the long tradition of generations of women compromising for men who don’t deserve it. By the time I got out of the car, my would-be boyfriend was toast.

Neeson has been acting since age 11, when he accepted a part in a school play to impress a girl back in his native Northern Ireland, and he has always baked compassion and attention into everything he does, from performances to personal relationships to parenting. He was raised to believe that everyone matters and by showing someone your humanity, you pay yourself the best compliment. On top of that, he says, “there was a war





going on where I lived for 30 years.” As a result, Neeson is not a person who half-steps or shrugs or takes any kindness for granted.

Tall, with hands as big as bread loaves and a gravel-bed brogue of a voice, Neeson could enter any space and make others uncomfortable for sport. Instead, he does the opposite. He strives to create solace in his orbit, to embrace, to help—holdovers from his modest, working-class roots, where getting by required ceaseless effort without complaint. It’s little surprise that, over the decades, Neeson has played every variety of father figure on offer: all men who do their level best to stand up and lead as they reckon with their onerous, flawed humanity. There was Holocaust hero Oskar Schindler (which netted him an Academy Award nomination in 1993, for best actor); Scottish folk hero Rob Roy; the tormented and tenderhearted Jean Valjean of Victor Hugo’s *Les Misérables*; and Jedi Master Qui-Gon Jinn (the first Jedi in the *Star Wars* universe to manifest consciousness after death). Neeson has even voiced the animated lion in *The Chronicles of Narnia* series, playing no less a paternal figure than God himself. He has also portrayed Zeus (*Clash of the Titans*, 2010).

And then there’s *Taken*—the revenge thriller in which Neeson becomes a stand-in for all righteous-warrior dads who’ve ever fantasized about doling out justice on behalf of their wronged daughters and wives. It’s a film turned franchise that, thanks to Neeson’s committed, elevated performance, lifted what could have been a standard B-movie run-and-gun to the action-film canon and gave birth to a whole fresh genre of geri-action movies—a development that tickles Neeson no end.

“If I’m sent an action script,” he tells me, “I’ll say to my agent, ‘There’s seven fight scenes. I kill a bunch of guys that need to be killed. Do the producers know my age?’”

Which is not to suggest that Neeson

**“They’re still sending me scripts. Some are interesting, some not, but I’m still getting work. I’m very blessed.”**

intends to retire. When you come from a place where strife is the norm, where circumstances remind you every day that life is cruel and random, you don’t quit when you’re ahead, even if you’re entering your 70s. His own brush with death in 2000—after a hellish motorcycle accident that broke his pelvis and had doctors not expecting him to last the night—only reinforced what Neeson has always known: You seize the day, and you do it with the awareness that you are less special than lucky.

**Where are you right now?**

New York City. I just drove down from upstate.

**I’m not sure if you remember, but I interviewed you a long time ago, in 1998.**

Oh, my God.

**We met in Los Angeles, and you gave me very wise, as it turns out, dating advice.**

My God. Seriously? I gave you dating advice?

**I was involved with an actor you knew, and you sort of—**

Names! Please, give me a name.

**I can’t. But you warned me about him in a very gentle way, and you were right to do so.**

Well, listen, Allison, seriously, when we meet up, whisper me his name, will you? Just to jog my memory. Seriously.

**Memory is exactly what I wanted to talk about with you. It’s also the title of your latest film [out April 29], in which you play a professional as-**

**sassin. A fellow assassin says to you, “Men like us don’t retire.” Do you think about slowing down at all?**

Allison, are you saying I’m too f----- old to be acting, is that what you’re getting at? Come on, tell me the truth.

**I would never. But the stunts, the physicality—it’s a lot for anyone.**

The stunts I leave to the stuntman. The fighting I do myself, and I keep reasonably fit for that. You know, we made *Taken* 14 years ago, this tiny little European thriller, which I thought was going straight to video—but I think it came out number 3 over the weekend when it released, and it became very successful. Hence, *Taken 2* and *Taken 3*. And because of that, they’re still sending me action scripts, you know? They wanted me to do one with Jackie Chan, which when I read it, I thought, *Well, this would be tough for a 22-year-old, let alone a 69-year-old who’s going to be 70 this year.* That’s the only one I turned down.

**Your hit man in *Memory* is suffering from the beginning stages of dementia. In the first scene, we see your character misplace his keys after deftly garroting a man in a hospital.**

When I first read it, that scene grabbed me immediately. I thought, *This is going to be very interesting to play*, you know? I did quite a bit of research on Alzheimer’s. It was very hard to watch the TV documentaries

## SAVIOR, JEDI, DAD, HERO

*AARP’s chief film critic traces Liam Neeson’s path*



### 1993 SCHINDLER'S LIST

Neeson nabbed an Oscar nomination for his role as Oskar Schindler, who risked all to save more than 1,000 Jews.

and read the books I read. My elder sister, she has a very close pal who is suffering from dementia, and he cannot remember stuff from 5, 10, 15 minutes ago. So, in *Memory*, I work in little bits of stammering or clumsiness that grab people in the audience who know someone who's suffering from it, from dementia or Alzheimer's. But I wanted to keep it very, very subtle, because it could become jokey if I overdid the dementia. This film is supposed to be a piece of entertainment, so hopefully there's a few thrills and spills. But there is a deeper story to be told.

### What are your most vivid memories from childhood?

I lost my mother recently. She was 94. She'd worked 34 of those years as a dinner lady in a girls school. I think about her every day, and it's always a different memory. Tiny little things. Gestures. The way she would look at you. I was an amateur boxer as a kid, from the ages of 9 until 17. There's guys I boxed with who died tragically during the Troubles in the north of Ireland. I remember them. This past January was the 50th anniversary of what is known as Bloody Sunday, when British paratroopers murdered 13 of our people in the streets of Derry, in the north of Ireland. And I remember the next day, when everything was incredibly quiet and very, very sinister.

I lived in Belfast during a lot of that. And I think back on it now. Why did I survive that?

### If you're raised in those circumstances, surrounded by potential political violence, it must really shape you, lodge in the bone.

It does. When I was growing up, in these little terrace houses, I remember hearing our neighbor next door being beat up by her drunken husband every weekend. He's dead now, but that's a memory I am still coming to terms with. I'm talking 50 years ago. It's kind of a post-traumatic stress disorder. I don't know if it has scarred me, but it has definitely formed something of my character. Maybe you're right—maybe even when I play these violent roles, I'm trying to bring some quality of redemption or justice.

### It seems like you dance between brutality and benevolence.

I try to. People say, "Oh, you were a boxer. You must be used to violence." With boxing, there was a referee, there were judges. We trained three to four days a week with this big Irish priest. There was respect, especially after a fight. You'd go and hug your opponent, and he'd hug you. Yes, you're trying to punch each other's head off with gloves, but there's something else, too, dare I say it: the word "love," ya know?

### When's the last time you were afraid of anything?

When you're young, you think, *Oh, nothing will ever happen to me*. When I think back on that now, the stuff I did—I wasn't a rebellious kid, by any means, but I loved acting so much, I used to hitchhike up to Belfast after I finished a day's work as a forklift driver, just to rehearse a play. Just crazy. Why did my parents let me do that? [Laughs.] Now I'm a father of two sons [Micheál, 26, and Danny, 25]. As a parent, you're always thinking, *They should've been back 10 minutes ago—what's happened?* My dear friend Meryl Streep came up to visit Natasha, my late wife, and myself when Micheál was 6 months old. He was lying on his cot, asleep, arms above his head, and she said, "That's good. He's not curled up. He's comfortable and feels at home." And I said, "Thank you, Meryl. That's very sweet." And then, as we were heading down the stairs, she added, "You both realize you're hostages for the rest of your life, right?" [Laughs.] And she was absolutely correct.

### How do you unplug?

I have a few acres upstate with a walled garden where we grow vegetables. I have three apple trees. Sometimes these trees decide to bear fruit. Then they'll take two years off and say, "F--- you, (CONTINUED ON PAGE 71)



### 1999 STAR WARS: EPISODE 1—THE PHANTOM MENACE

As Qui-Gon Jinn—like Yoda, a mentor to Obi-Wan Kenobi—he gives his life to fight the Sith Lord. Though there's talk of his revival!

### LOVE ACTUALLY

Neeson poignantly portrays a grieving widower who helps his shy stepson court a classmate—and who finds a new love himself.



2003



2008

### TAKEN

His retired CIA character hunts the kidnappers of his teen daughter. This film and its two sequels grossed almost \$1 billion at the box office: Neeson now rules the action-flick genre.

### ORDINARY LOVE

As a husband supporting his wife through a year of cancer treatment, he crafted an immortal portrait of romance that will not die.

—Tim Appelo



2019



Based on AARP's  
Exclusive Survey on  
Health and Aging

Can my  
back be  
fixed?

Do keto  
diets really  
work?

Should I  
try fasting?

Which  
vitamins?

Is cancer  
inevitable?

Is walking  
enough?

Is my  
heart OK?

Will my  
libido ever  
come back?

Why am I  
so tired?



HEALTH SPECIAL 2022  
**THE 50s EDITION**

# YOU ASKED WE ANSWERED.

**You told us exactly what health concerns worry you most. We dug into the science and consulted the experts to answer your questions—and help you live longer, healthier and happier**

By Mike Zimmerman,  
with Leslie Goldman and  
Jessica Migala

**ANXIETY** is practically a way of life these days. But who'd have thought that people in their 50s are the most anxious when it comes to their health? In fact, that's what emerged when AARP surveyed 900 older Americans this past winter. That's pretty remarkable: We're in year three of a pandemic that's been particularly brutal for those who are 70 or older, yet it's people our age who are the most freaked out about their well-being.

"I would call this anticipatory anxiety," says Manfred Diehl, a professor of human development and family studies at Colorado State University. "That is when people become increasingly aware they are aging." And indeed, there's nothing like encountering your face on a video call and seeing your grandparent. But being anxious about your health just isn't good for your health. So, we found some real solutions to the real issues gnawing at 50-something minds, based on what you told us in our survey. It's time for some answers....



# Eating Well, Living Well

## 1 I'm in my 50s, but honestly, I feel like I'm still young. At what age should I get serious about my health?

Right now would be a good start. Longevity researchers study a phenomenon known as future time perspective. The more time we perceive we have, the more we're able to ignore the fact that we're overweight, may have elevated inflammation levels and don't know what our basic health numbers look like. If you haven't had a checkup in the past year, start there. Get your blood pressure, blood glucose and cholesterol numbers checked, and make sure that keeping them under control is a top priority.

## 2 Wait—I heard doctors don't worry so much about high cholesterol anymore. Is that true?

No. High cholesterol, particularly LDL, or "bad" cholesterol, is still a marker for a higher risk for heart disease. And preliminary results from a 2022 study of more than 750 older adults found a link between high cholesterol levels and elevated dementia risk. So, stick to those statins, if that's what your physician suggests.



## 3 Does all this 'healthy living' stuff really help me live longer? My uncle ate bacon every morning and lived to age 87.

It's not just about how long you live; it's about how well you live. A 2019 *BMJ*

(*British Medical Journal*) study that had followed more than 110,000 people since the 1980s found that those who adopted healthy-lifestyle habits such as controlling their weight, exercising and not smoking lived disease-free for far longer after age 50 (30-plus years) than people who didn't adopt those habits (23 years). Science still hasn't explained Keith Richards, however.

## 4 What's the best antiaging diet? Is it keto? Paleo? G-free? Do I need to live on acai and buttered coffee?

Healthy-food rule number one: no fad diets, no weird plans, just common sense. A recent analysis of 1,995 people showed that those who ate greater amounts of fruits, vegetables, nuts, legumes, whole grains and low-fat dairy—and lesser amounts of red and processed meats, sugar-sweetened beverages and sodium—slowed their aging at a cellular level.

"Foods like sugar and highly processed flour can trigger inflammation in your body and are usually calorie dense as well," explains registered dietitian Maryann Walsh, a certified diabetes educator and the founder of Walsh Nutrition Consulting.

## 5 I've heard that keeping calories down is linked to longevity. Does that mean I should be fasting?

Multiple studies have shown that long-term calorie restriction can reduce metabolic func-



## 6 I KNOW WHAT I'M SUPPOSED TO EAT, BUT HOW CAN I KEEP EATING WHAT I ENJOY?

In most cases, you can eat anything you want, Walsh observes. You just can't eat as much as you want. And you have to include the fruits, vegetables, nuts, legumes, whole grains and fish you need to lower inflammation and keep your calories in check.

tion and slow the cellular aging process—in rats! Human trials have been limited. A 2019 study in *The Lancet* showed that people who reduced their calorie intake by 12 percent had lower blood pressure and cholesterol, increased insulin sensitivity and lower inflammation. The problem? The study covered only 238 people over two years, and the oldest among them were 50. Plus, calorie-restriction diets can cause muscle loss, which in turn can result in rebound weight gain and other unhealthy outcomes. Your best bet: Don't fast, and don't go on crash diets; just try to

eliminate the junk calories you eat and turn to more healthy foods, especially fruits and vegetables. A good starting point is to reduce snacking out of boredom, anxiety or habit. Instead, stretch or walk.

## 7 Skipping breakfast is the new diet trend. Good for me?

Bad for you. Breakfast is important for a number of reasons, and one of the big ones is fiber intake. A 2021 *Journal of the American Board of Family Medicine* study found that breakfast eaters who ate more than 25 grams of fiber a day had a 21 percent lower





## 8 DO I NEED ALL THESE PRESCRIPTION MEDS?

One in 5 adults age 40-plus takes at least five Rx's. The risk comes when you have multiple docs all writing prescriptions with no reliable communication between them, says Amie Taggart Blaszczyk, division head of geriatrics at the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center School of Pharmacy. Keep a written list of every prescription and over-the-counter drug and supplement you're taking, how often and the dose. Cross-check this list with each of your doctors.

risk of all-causes death than breakfast skippers did. And a meta-analysis of studies showed that for every day of the week you skip breakfast, your risk of diabetes grows.

### 9 **How can I eat a healthy diet when I'm on a budget?**

"Hit the freezer section," Walsh says. Frozen fish and vegetables are generally less expensive than fresh, come in convenient serving sizes (no more tossing half-full containers of spoiled spinach) and keep for weeks.

### 10 **I have, like, a billion different vitamins in my cabinet. Isn't that enough?**

Nope. Studies show over and over again that pills don't work the way foods do. Example: A 2019 study of more than 30,000 adults found that healthy levels of vitamins A and K and the minerals magnesium and zinc may be associated with a lower risk of death—but only from food, not pills. We don't fully understand why, though it may have something to do

with the way the nutrients in food interact with one another.

### 11 **You mean vitamin pills are useless?**

For someone in their 50s? There's skepticism, with this exception: vitamin D. Vitamin D deficiency in older adults has been estimated at anywhere from 20 to 100 percent. Sunlight and food clearly aren't enough to get many people to the 600-IU-per-day recommended minimum, so ask your doctor if D3 supplements may be a good idea for you.

### 12 **What about my fish oil pills? I read they may not prevent heart attacks, after all. True?**

It's not clear. A 2020 JAMA study of more than 13,000 people with high heart disease risk (average age: 63) compared groups taking a common omega-3 formulation or a placebo and found no benefits to the fish oil. Other research, however—including a 2019 analysis of more than 127,000 people—showed that taking omega-3 supplements derived from fish oil reduced the risk of heart attacks and death from heart disease. Bottom line: Eat more fish and omega-3-rich foods such as nuts and seeds, and talk with your physician about an omega-3 supplement.

### 13 **Is there a secret to making sure I get great medical care?**

Find great doctors you like and stick with them for life. Continuity of care is linked to fewer ER visits, better adherence to medication and longer life.

### 14 **OK—more healthy foods, a good doctor and watch the pills. What's another lifestyle change I can make today that will help the most?**

Go for a walk. Being sedentary, with low overall fitness, raises your mortality risk as much as, or more than, smoking, high blood pressure and heart disease. An analysis of studies on people ages 54 to 65 found that binge-watching TV for four-plus hours a day may make you 35 percent more likely to develop blood clots in the thigh and lower leg.

### 15 **Is that all I need for exercise—a long walk?**

Yes and no. Research has shown that moderate activity such as walking has



excellent health benefits, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity activity each week. Just over 20 minutes of brisk walking each day gets you there. “Doing the same activity every day over time has benefits, but changing it up could have more benefits,” notes Jordan Metzl, M.D., a sports medicine specialist at New York City’s Hospital for Special Surgery. “Doing a variety of activities, particularly as you get older, will challenge your body, lead to greater fitness and health benefits and help you avoid injuries.” He recommends swapping in weight training, swimming or biking, and yoga.

**16 I hate gyms, loud music and sweaty people. What else can I do to preserve mobility?**

Play tennis or pickleball. “Mobility is all about the lower body, and your entire lower body is interconnected,” Metzl says. Unlike, say, running or biking, tennis moves you in every direction, challenging your hips, glutes and legs from a variety of angles. Basketball is another option. Plus, first thing in the morning, do some multidirectional lunges (forward, side to side, and backward).

**17 Hmm, still a little sweaty. What’s a 100 percent sweat-free way to improve my health?**

Floss your teeth every day. According to the 2019 Global Burden of Disease survey, untreated oral diseases caused people ages 50 to 74 worldwide to suffer a collective 8 million years of life “with disability” in 2019.



# Maintaining Power

An AARP Exclusive Survey on Health and Aging



**18 What’s a worthwhile fitness goal for people in their 50s?**

If you dream of running a marathon, that’s great. But there’s a simpler goal within such big goals as well, Metzl says: “Just start exercising, and don’t stop. Build a foundation, and keep building with the next 30 years in mind. Then you can set more specific goals.”

**19 I’ve been exercising but haven’t lost any weight. It feels pointless.**

Weight loss comes primarily from eating healthier food and fewer junk calories. What exercise does is dramatically lower your risk of age-related health issues, from bone loss to heart disease to back pain, Metzl explains.

**20 My joints ache after exercise. Is arthritis setting in?**

Exercise soreness goes away after a day or two. With osteoarthritis, you’ll most likely be dealing with joint pain, swelling and limitations on motion, Metzl says. “Because we’re talking pain, people often think, *I have arthritis—I need to baby it*. The opposite is true.” Building up muscles around your joints will improve any arthritis symptoms you currently have and prevent more of them in the future.

**21 Are fitness watches worth the expense?**

A military study involving 1,500-plus soldiers is underway to test a theory that smartwatches can help soldiers manage

stress and train more effectively. While definitive results aren’t in, if something can motivate and protect you, it might be worth a look.

**22 I’ve had back pain for years. Do I have to learn to live with it?**

No, just the opposite: You need to learn to live without it. Recent trials have shown that when some people suffer chronic pain for a long time, their brains can still generate pain signals, even though the problem has healed. A new treatment—pain reprocessing therapy—teaches the brain to stop



sending those signals. In a 2021 clinical trial, two-thirds of those who used the therapy for four weeks were pain-free or nearly so, and brain scans showed reduced activity in pain processing.

**23 What else can I do for my bad back?**

Plank exercises, Metzl advises. Lie facedown on a mat. Bend your elbows, and bring your hands together under your chin. Now lift your knees, hips and torso off the floor, so your weight is on your elbows and toes. Keep your back straight, and don’t let your belly or hips sag. Hold this position for as long as you can. Repeat twice. →







# Keeping Up Appearances

An AARP Exclusive Survey  
on Health and Aging



## 24 What's a 'healthy' sex drive for someone in their 50s?

If your current sex drive makes you happy, it's healthy, notes gynecologic oncologist Elizabeth Poynor, M.D. If it's low and that's upsetting to you, it's time to look for the root cause of your sluggish libido and address it. "Not everybody has to have lots of sex to be healthy and happy," Poynor adds. "It's highly individualized."

## 25 I'm just not enjoying growing older. What's wrong with me?

"How old do you feel?" asks Diehl. Research shows that feeling younger is associated with better mental and physical

health, cognitive function and satisfaction with life. A study that followed nearly 3,600 people for 10 years found that those who started out with a higher subjective age and depression ended up with more physical health issues later on. If you're depressed and "feel" older most days, seek help.

## 26 What can I do about the stress in my life?

Aggressively rethink how you react to daily dramas. A 2020 study showed that people experiencing "unbearable" stress lost nearly three years from their life expectancy. Always remember that



stress isn't a demanding boss, a struggling child or lousy daily news headlines; it's your reaction to them. You have two choices: Remove the stressor, or learn how to react to it in a healthier way.

## 27 I try to 'stay young' in how I live and think. Am I being ridiculous?

Nope, you're just taking advantage of the way we're redefining aging. People in their 50s to 70s today "were the first cohorts that grew up with better education, better health care, and developed different lifestyles," Diehl says. That has translated into older people looking and behaving much younger than people their age in previous generations. Embrace it!

## 28 I'm thinking about doing some surgical 'freshening up,' but is cosmetic surgery safe?

The fact is, we're surrounded by people who've had cosmetic surgery: There were 2.3 million procedures in 2020, and surveys show that about 90 percent of patients are satisfied with their results. And, in general, cosmetic surgery is safe. A study of more than 26,000 cosmetic procedures found that only about 1 percent of patients experienced complications in the 48 hours that followed surgery.

## 29 My husband refuses to talk about his health or go to the doctor. Is he hiding something?

Half of men admit that they don't talk about their health, a Cleveland

Clinic survey showed. "Not knowing there's a problem may be preferable to the discomfort of learning there is one," says Harvard clinical health psychologist Natalie Christine Dattilo. Forget guilt-tripping and nagging; you'll only cause resentment. Try to give off calm, supportive and loving vibes. Be a good role model and take care of yourself in the meantime.

## 30 How do I shake this chronic exhaustion I've picked up during the pandemic?

Eat nourishing foods. Drink lots of water. Change out of your pajamas. (Yes, every day.)

And exercise—moving your body on a daily basis builds the physical and emo-



tional resilience you need to make it through yet another variant. These are all what we might call "the self-care basics," notes Barbara Hannah Grufferman, author of AARP's *Love Your Age*.

## 31 I had COVID last winter, and I still feel off. Is this 'long COVID'?

Data suggests that more than half of COVID survivors wind up with post-acute COVID-19 syndrome. It's marked by extended breathing problems, brain fog, headaches and joint pain. Studies show that the virus may persist in the heart, brain and spinal fluid for months after the initial infection has run its course. If you have persistent post-COVID health problems, see your doctor.

**32** I don't feel as sharp at work as I used to.

**What can I do?**

Consider different ways to reinvigorate your career. That might mean moving to a new division, pursuing a promotion or pivoting to another field entirely. Updating your skill set can also organically boost energy levels at work. Become active on social media channels that are relevant to your career, take a class, or freshen up your LinkedIn profile or create one if you haven't yet done so.

**33** How do I prevent myself from becoming a caregiving nightmare to my kids?

Start a conversation now. "Tell them, 'My passwords are located here; here's my financial situation; these are the medicines I'm on,'" explains certified care manager Amy Cameron O'Rourke, author of *The Fragile Years*. Make these issues part of an annual family meeting, because what you want at age 55 in terms of, say, end-of-life wishes may be different once you're 75.

**34** A loved one and I are estranged because our values just don't align. How do I reconnect?

Some 27 percent of American adults are estranged from a family member, according to a survey by Cornell University sociologist Karl Pillemer. Whether your rift was caused by politics, unresolved childhood baggage or something else, move toward healing by reaching out and saying, "My relationship with you is more important than the topic we are disagreeing on," O'Rourke suggests. Mending your family feud will do more than resuscitate your relationship; it may make you healthier. →



## HOW ARE YOU FEELING?

A new AARP survey seems to suggest that your life is going to get (a lot) better

**WHO'S MORE** worried about their health, you or your aging parents? Turns out it's probably you. Americans in their 50s are more concerned about age-related health issues, from arthritis to cancer, than folks in their 60s and 70s are, an exclusive AARP/Interloq survey has found. The reason may stem from how we view aging itself, experts say.

"As people get older, their attitudes about aging become more positive

because they realize, *It's not as bad as I thought it would be*," observes Manfred Diehl, who researches psychology and aging as a professor of human development and family studies at Colorado State University.

But science shows you can "shape your own aging," he adds, by viewing it as an opportunity rather than a death sentence. Here are some takeaways from AARP's January survey of people ages 50 to 79.

### The older we get, the better we feel about our health

Eighty-four percent of those ages 70 to 79 said their health is good, very good or excellent; 74 percent of those ages 50 to 59 said this.

People who rate their health as good, very good or excellent, by age

#### PHYSICAL HEALTH

50-59: **71%**

60-69: **77%**

70-79: **81%**

#### MENTAL HEALTH

50-59: **79%**

60-69: **88%**

70-79: **94%**



### Women feel worse about their health than men do

Across all age groups, 70 percent of men rated their mental health as very good or excellent, compared with 54 percent of women. Females worry more about joint pain and sleeping problems, too.



### We're more worried about weight gain than life-threatening diseases

Back pain, lack of energy, memory loss and arthritis also scored higher than stroke, heart disease or cancer.

#### TOP LIFESTYLE CONCERNS AMONG PEOPLE 50 TO 59

Back pain	<b>33%</b>
Weight gain	<b>33%</b>
Lack of energy	<b>32%</b>
Memory loss	<b>30%</b>
Arthritis	<b>30%</b>

#### MOST-FEARED DISEASES AMONG PEOPLE 50 TO 59

Stroke	<b>29%</b>
Heart disease	<b>29%</b>
Cancer	<b>27%</b>
Alzheimer's	<b>27%</b>
Diabetes	<b>25%</b>

### We're so not vain

Survey respondents aren't clamoring for Botox and hair weaves. Only 18 percent said they were very or extremely concerned about thinning hair. The next highest appearance concerns were hair loss (17 percent) and wrinkles (15 percent), though those worries were higher among women.



### Our biggest fear: being unable to care for ourselves

A majority of respondents ages 50 to 79 said they're afraid of losing their mental or physical faculties, becoming a burden to their families and having to give up their independence. As one participant wrote of Alzheimer's disease, "It terrifies me to think of losing myself."







# Resisting Disease

## 35 I HAVE HYPERTENSION. ARE BLOOD PRESSURE CUFFS WORTH THE MONEY?

Yes. A 2021 study, over 10 years, of 11,502 people ages 45 to 60 showed that those with the lowest cumulative systolic BP readings lived 4.1 years longer and delayed heart disease by 5.4 years. Measuring your blood pressure frequently reminds you to do the things needed to keep it in a healthy range.



## 36 What's the first sign of heart disease?

It's plural: unusual fatigue, sleep problems, shortness of breath, indigestion and chest pain, says Suzanne Steinbaum, an osteopathic preventive cardiologist. Take special note if the latter three happen when you're active and go away when you're at rest.

## 37 I love my nightly glass of wine. A little bit of vino is good for my heart, right?

Maybe not. Several organizations, such as the Mayo Clinic, still endorse that idea. But the American Heart Association doesn't recommend drinking any form of alcohol to gain health benefits. Research is beginning to coalesce around the idea that light or moderate drinking may



not help to prevent heart disease—so much so that the World Heart Federation declared in 2022 that “no level of alcohol is safe” for your heart health.

## 38 How about marijuana? Is it safe?

Not as safe as it used to be. A meta-analysis of studies found that pot potency—its THC level, specifically—rose 24 percent from 1975 to 2017. A *JAMA* review of studies of more than 1,400 people 50 and older found that higher doses of THC were associated with a higher incidence of thinking and perception issues (not the good kind), as well as dizziness.

## 39 I have the occasional cigarette. Does that really matter?

Yes. A review of 141 studies

showed that people who smoke just one cigarette a day still have half the heart disease risk of people who smoke 20.

## 40 Does ‘prediabetes’ mean you’re definitely going to get diabetes?

There are no guarantees, but there's a lot of evidence that making lifestyle changes now can dramatically reverse the direction your health is headed in. For example, preliminary results of a 2022 study of more than 8,700 people showed a strong relationship between cardiorespiratory fitness and new-onset type 2 diabetes: The higher the fitness level, the lower the type 2 incidence.

## 41 What’s a simple, tech-free way to measure my health?

Waist-to-height ratio.

Strive for a waist circumference that's less than half your height.

## 42 How much should I worry about cancer in my 50s?

The median age for a cancer diagnosis is 66, meaning half of all cases occur in those who are younger. These are especially important years to pay attention to cervical cancer (median age at diagnosis: 50) and breast cancer (median age at diagnosis: 63). The good news is that cancer mortality rates have fallen about 32 percent since 1992, with an overall five-year survival rate of 68 percent.



## 43 So, if cancer runs in my family, I should get screened regularly?

The U.S. Preventive Ser-



# Remaining Sharp

vices Task Force recommends screening for several types of cancer, including breast, cervical, colorectal and lung. There is evidence showing that screening tests can catch these cancers early and make a difference in treatment and survival.

## 44 What about prostate cancer? Should I get a PSA test?

Yes. Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men besides skin cancer, and 40 percent of cases hit men before age 65. Nearly 99 percent of prostate cases, however, are treatable if they are caught early. And don't panic if your PSA is elevated. Most men who have an elevated PSA don't have cancer, and only 25 percent of prostate biopsies find cancer, according to the National Institutes of Health.

## 45 My mother was legally blind when she died. How do I protect my eyes?

Pop in to see the eye doctor for a dilated-eye exam every year, says Kenneth Dickerson, a doctor of optometry at the University of Rochester's Flaum Eye Institute. Most eye diseases, such as macular degeneration, are silent sight stealers; without a doctor's inspection, you don't know you have a condition until it's at an advanced stage.

## 46 Speaking of senses, what can I do about my damn tinnitus?

There are no sanctioned treatments. Still, ask your doctor about neuromodulation, in which a device simultaneously delivers electric stimulation to the tongue and auditory signals to both ears. A 2020 study found that this type of therapy reduced tinnitus symptoms over a 12-week period.

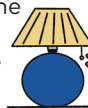
## 47 What's the number one thing I can do to help prevent dementia?

Be in bed by 10 p.m. "The earlier you get to sleep, the more slow-wave sleep you'll get," says Sara Mednick, a professor of cognitive science at the University of California, Irvine, and author of *The Power of the Downstate*. Slow-wave sleep (SWS) supercharges brain health, clearing away toxins and other buildup that cause dementia, as well as developing connections between areas of the brain to create stronger memories. But SWS also abides by nature's circadian clock and peters out at around 1 a.m., so you need to hit the sack

early to maximize your time there. In short, you can't close your eyes at midnight and still expect to net three hours of memory-protective SWS.

## 48 Yikes! I'll try to go to bed earlier, but I notice I sleep less now that I'm in my 50s. Is that normal?

Yes, it's totally normal. In your 20s you needed about eight to nine hours of sleep every night. More mature you needs about an hour less, notes Nalaka Gooneratne, M.D., a sleep medicine physician and geriatrician at the University of Pennsylvania's Perelman School of Medicine. You know



you're clocking enough if you're alert during the day; sleepiness or brain fog signals a possible medical issue, such as sleep apnea, that you'll want to get checked out.

## 49 About that nightly wine: It's still good for my brain, right?

No. No, it's not. A study of more than 25,000 people in the U.K. showed that any alcohol consumption at all had negative effects on brain volume and structure—and that those who binge drink or who are overweight with high blood pressure are more susceptible. The study's key takeaway: "No safe dose of alcohol for the brain was found."

## 50 WHAT ELSE CAN I DO TO PROTECT MY BRAIN?

There's no miracle pill for brain health, though one of the most important things you can do is keep your weight stable. A 2021 meta-analysis of data found that being significantly overweight increased the risk of dementia. Surprisingly, however, being underweight was also a risk factor. (Turns out you can be too thin, if not too rich.) Plus, getting exercise is important to cutting your risk. ■



Mike Zimmerman is a frequent contributor to AARP THE MAGAZINE and AARP Bulletin and the author of more than a dozen books on health, nutrition and fitness, including The 14-Day Anti-Inflammatory Diet.



# 1972

A LOOK BACK AT AN AMAZING YEAR

From 'Rocket Man' and Watergate to Mr. Coffee and *The Godfather*, many world changers appeared 50 years ago. Here are 50 of them

By Joel Stein

Additional reporting by Gabriel Baumgaertner

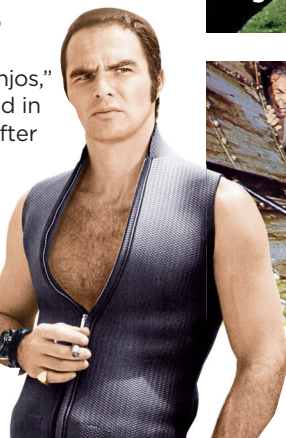
## Big Flix



***The Godfather*** Would it still be considered one of the greatest and most influential films ever made if Paramount had had its way and swapped in Robert Redford for Al Pacino (Michael Corleone) and Danny Thomas for Marlon Brando (Vito)?

### ***Deliverance***

The song "Dueling Banjos," which soared in the charts after appearing in this dark Burt Reynolds film, was also used on a 1963 episode of *The Andy Griffith Show*.



***Fist of Fury* and *The Way of the Dragon*** Martial arts star Bruce Lee had a busy year, losing out to David Carradine for the lead role on TV's *Kung Fu* but releasing two legendary films—and having sweat glands under his arms removed to avoid staining.



### ***The Poseidon Adventure***

Eight years later, Leslie Nielsen would pivot from his dramatic turn as

the captain of a capsized ocean liner in this big-hit disaster flick (also featuring Ernest Borgnine and Shelley Winters) to play the hilarious doctor in *Airplane!*



***Last Tango in Paris*** Actress Maria Schneider, then 19, said she was bullied into performing the rape scene with Marlon Brando in this film, which got an X rating yet was compared by an eminent critic to Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*.



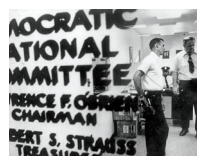
# History Got Made



**Nixon visits China** When Patricia Nixon mentioned to Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai, over dinner, that she liked pandas, he sent two to America, starting “panda diplomacy.” Nixon’s return gift? Two musk oxen.



**Mark Spitz conquers the Munich Olympics** The swimmer not only won all seven gold medals he competed for that year and set a new world record in each event, he also was accepted to dental school.



**The Watergate is broken into** The perps worked for the aptly named Committee to Re-elect the President, or CREP.

## Wall Streeters Wondering Of Future as Dow Hits 1000

**The Dow hits 1,000** It took 76 years, and *The New York Times* likened the number to “the breaking of the four-minute mile and the first moon landing.” (The Dow on March 1, 2022: 33,295.)

### American Bobby Fischer beats Russian Boris Spassky

Chess phenom Fischer, far right, went to high school with Barbra Streisand before he dropped out; 13 years later he won a great Cold War victory, ousting world champ Spassky in Iceland to become the first non-Soviet chess champion since 1946.



## On the Playlist



**‘The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face’ —Roberta Flack** The biggest song of the year had been recorded by the Kingston Trio, Gordon Lightfoot, and Peter, Paul and Mary.

**‘Rocket Man’ —Elton John** Bernie Taupin based the lyrics on a Ray Bradbury short story about space flight becoming drudgery.



**‘I Can See Clearly Now’ —Johnny Nash** Nash was not, as was widely thought, a reggae singer from Jamaica but a Texan who had performed on Arthur Godfrey’s shows for seven years.

**‘Brandy (You’re a Fine Girl)’ —Looking Glass** In 1971, “Brandy” was the 353rd most popular girl’s name; in 1973, it was 82nd. (See also Kurt Russell’s hilarious send-up of the song in *Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2*.)



**‘Lean on Me’ —Bill Withers** “It’s a rural song that translates across demographic lines,” the West Virginia native once said. His version hit number 1, as would a 1987 dance cover by Club Nouveau. →





## TV Debuts



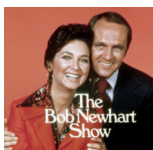
**The Waltons** President George H.W. Bush said America needs to “make American families a lot more like the Waltons and a lot less like the Simpsons,” but John-Boy actor Richard Thomas called the characters foolish and hotheaded.



**HBO cable network** For the first nine years, until Showtime started to air 24/7, the channel showed only about nine hours of programming a day.

### The Bob Newhart Show

Newhart left a successful stand-up career to pursue this sitcom about a shrink with zany clients. “For 12 years I’d been on the road,” he said. “I wanted a normal life where I could be home with my family.”



**Sanford and Son** The hit comedy show—dubbed *Sanford and Son* after Redd Foxx’s real name, John Sanford—was adapted from a British TV series, *Steptoe and Son*.

**Maude** A couple of months into this darkly humorous show revolving around a self-described “women’s libber,” Bea Arthur’s 47-year-old character had an abortion (two months before *Roe v. Wade*).



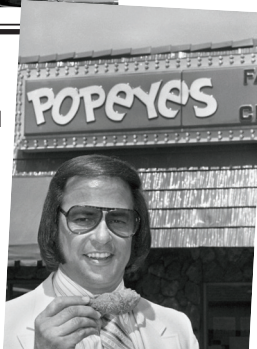
## Foodstuffs

**Egg Beaters** This product—99 percent egg whites in a box—transformed breakfast prep.



### Popeyes

Al Copeland founded it in a New Orleans suburb. He joked he was too poor to afford the apostrophe.



# Products We Can No Longer Live Without



**Honda Civic** Soon to be ubiquitous, this tiny auto turned a company known for motorcycles into a car brand. Sales of the reliable, fuel-efficient vehicle spiked as oil prices soared.



**Mr. Coffee drip coffee maker** In 1973, a company cofounder got Joe DiMaggio’s unlisted San Francisco phone number and convinced him to be the pitchman, despite his taste for Sanka.

**Silly String** The U.S. Army sprayed this party favorite in Iraq to spot trip wires on explosive devices.

## BOGGLE

The game’s creator, Alan Turoff, and his future wife called in an alarm when they spotted smoke at New York City’s FAO Schwarz toy store. They were later married inside the dollhouse there.



**CT scanner** Thanks to its sales of Beatles records, EMI (Electric and Musical Industries) financed a long-shot research project to develop this brain-imaging device.



**Pong** Atari created the first hit arcade video game by letting players imagine what it might be like to play table tennis.



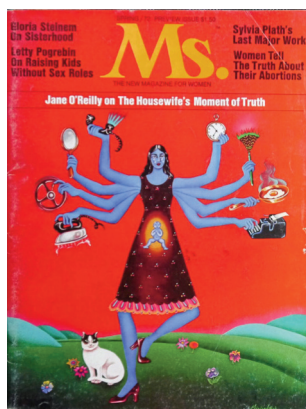
**Yellow tennis balls** Tournament balls were white until optic yellow was OK’d for play; research showed the bright color was more visible on TV.



**Ruby Tuesday** Founder Sandy Beall wasn’t a Rolling Stones fan but went with the name after one of his coinvesting college fraternity brothers suggested it.



## Culture-Shaping Launches



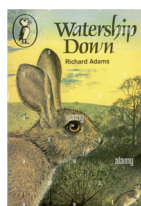
**Ms. magazine** Other names Gloria Steinem considered for her *New York* magazine spin-off included *Sisters*, *Sojourner*, *Lilith* and *Bimbo*.

### Carnival Cruise Line

The company started with only one ship and enough fuel to make it from Miami to San Juan. But not back.

### 'A Mind Is a Terrible Thing to Waste'

Vice President Dan Quayle famously mangled this United Negro College Fund slogan while addressing the organization in 1989.



### Watership Down

Richard Adams, a civil servant with the U.K. Ministry of Housing, made up this ultra-popular story for his two daughters while on long family car trips.

**ABBA** The band was called Björn & Benny, Agnetha & Anni-Frid until they created the acronym (which was also the name of a Swedish canned-fish company).

### The Joy of Sex

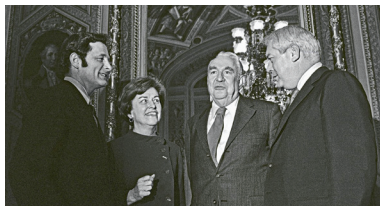
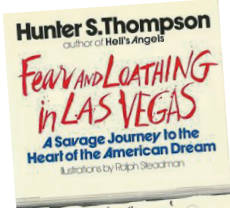
It spent 11 weeks on top of *The New York Times* best seller list (and another 70-plus weeks in the top five). A 2009 review noted that the rather furry illustrated male "bears a side-splitting resemblance to the GEICO caveman."

**'I Can't Believe I Ate the Whole Thing'** The line from an Alka-Seltzer ad is what Homer Simpson put next to his yearbook photo.

### Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas

Hunter S. Thompson's 250-word caption assignment for *Sports Illustrated* was rejected for being too long, then made

its way into *Rolling Stone*, a book—and counterculture history.



### The Equal Rights Amendment

Both houses of Congress passed it, but Phyllis Schlafly spent the next 10 years fighting to prevent state legislatures from ratifying it, claiming women would be drafted.

## Beginnings

### Gwyneth Paltrow

Friends call her G.P., which led to the name of her lifestyle company, Goop.



### Dwayne Johnson

The Rock's father, wrestler Rocky Johnson, jumped into the ring to defend his son in WrestleMania 13.

### Shaquille O'Neal

The likable NBA star has done everything to tout his personal brand, including driving a Zamboni at a New Jersey Devils game.

### Cameron Diaz

The actress went to

high school in Long Beach, California, with Snoop Dogg and thinks she may have bought weed from him.

### Maya Rudolph

Her parents, Minnie Riperton and Richard Rudolph, wrote the hit song "Lovin' You" in tribute to her.

**Did we miss one of your faves from 1972?** Let us know what you think at [facebook.com/aarp](https://www.facebook.com/aarp).

## Endings

**Apollo program** Eugene Cernan, Apollo 17 mission commander, was the last man on the moon.



**Bewitched** In its eighth season, it was getting crushed in the ratings, running in the same time slot as *All in the Family*, then the most-watched show.

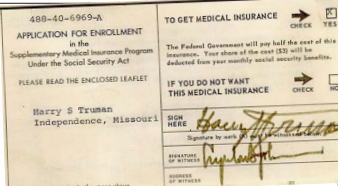


### J. Edgar Hoover

He ran the FBI for 48 years, through eight presidents, from Coolidge through Nixon.

**Roberto Clemente** His last regular-season at-bat, before his death in a plane crash, resulted in his 3,000th career hit.

**George Carlin's 'Seven Words You Can Never Say on Television'** We can't say them here either.



**Harry S. Truman** A big supporter of Medicare, he was its first enrollee.





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7  
ROUTES

## A ROAD TRIP FOR

VISITING VERMONT'S BREWPUBS BY BICYCLE

**WHO DOESN'T APPRECIATE** winding drives through lovely countryside? But for a truly memorable road trip, choose a location and route that aligns with your passions. To help, we asked some well-known travelers to put together itineraries for specific interests, from a car enthusiast's outing (your guide: Michael Strahan) to a spiritual journey (Deepak Chopra) to a biker's odyssey (environmentalist and author Bill McKibben). Find a journey that matches your tastes, and get planning!



1

**FOR THE NEWSHOUND**  
(WITH A NOSE FOR ROSÉ) ...

WHO'S DRIVING?

**Lesley Stahl**

80, correspondent for CBS' *60 Minutes*

WHERE TO?

A loop through history and good taste in  
**Southern California**

**TALES FROM THE ROAD** When Ronald Reagan was president, I was CBS' correspondent at the White House, and part of the press corps that followed him on vacation. Reagan usually went to his ranch in the mountains

around Santa Barbara, and we stayed in town, along the ocean.

In those years, my husband, young daughter Taylor and I drove along the Pacific Coast Highway, stopping at, for instance, San Simeon, where William Randolph Hearst built a sumptuous castle. Once, we got out of the car and walked down to the beach to watch massive sunbathing elephant seals with their fabulous floppy noses.

Years later, Taylor got married at the beautiful

Foley vineyard in Santa Ynez, and her husband now makes his own wine. She and her family continue our tradition of exploring the Pacific Coast.

**ITINERARY** You might start a trip in Los Angeles at Television City, where shows like *Three's Company* and *The Carol Burnett Show* were filmed, and where CBS News used to have a bureau. While there, you could line up to be a contestant on *The Price Is Right*.

You might then head north along Highway 1





# EVERYONE

As told to David Hochman

FINDING PEACE IN ARIZONA'S SONORAN DESERT



**Clockwise from right:**  
a lifeguard stand; a street  
scene in Solvang; Stahl  
with granddaughter  
Chloe; Green Valley Road  
near Cambria, California



to overnight in Santa Barbara. Consider visiting the botanic garden, with its authentic Japanese teahouse. It might be fun to drive into the Montecito hills, where Oprah and Harry and Meghan live.

Spend the next morning exploring San Simeon and Hearst Castle (make sure you reserve a tour ticket well in advance). Stop along the way for glassblowing classes in tiny Harmony or, my favorite, whale watching along Moonstone Beach in Cambria.

Loop back through San Luis Obispo and Pismo Beach to Lompoc, gateway

to Santa Barbara wine country. Overnight in Solvang or Los Olivos (near where my daughter got married!).

President Reagan's Rancho del Cielo, where he spent most of his vacations horseback riding, is closed to the public. But Young America's Foundation offers students and supporters the opportunity to visit the property.

Back in Santa Barbara, you can also visit the Reagan Ranch Center Exhibit Galleries—which house the president's blue Jeep Scrambler—before heading back to L.A.



2

FOR THE URBAN DWELLER  
CRAVING A SPEEDY ESCAPE ...

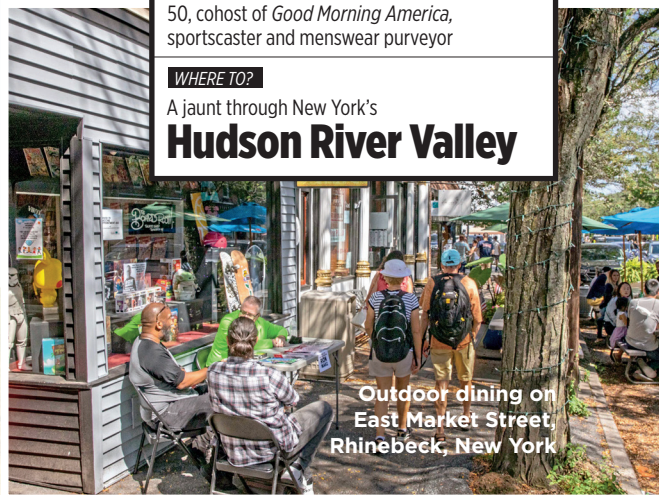
WHO'S DRIVING?

**Michael Strahan**

50, cohost of *Good Morning America*, sportscaster and menswear purveyor

WHERE TO?

A jaunt through New York's  
**Hudson River Valley**



Outdoor dining on  
East Market Street,  
Rhinebeck, New York

**TALES FROM THE ROAD** My buddies and I do car rallies to clear our minds from city life. It's our kinda manly hangout time. I'm a car guy. Driving's my thing. I've got a Ford GT, a Porsche Carrera GT and a 1971 Ferrari Daytona, so I love winding around cliffs and single-lane highways. Point your car north from New York City, and you'll find some beautiful open roads.

**ITINERARY** We'll head off from Manhattan at 7:30 or 8 a.m. and take the long, scenic way up the west side of the Hudson River past Bear Mountain State Park to West Point. Bear Mountain is incredible. The views of the Hudson are spectacular, especially when the leaves change colors, and you can hike part of the Appalachian Trail (and I do mean "you," because I'm definitely not a hiker). The military academy has a visitors center and tours, and I've been there a few times; we did an *NFL Fox Sunday* broadcast there one Veterans Day. Even on a quick visit, it's obvious our nation is in good hands.



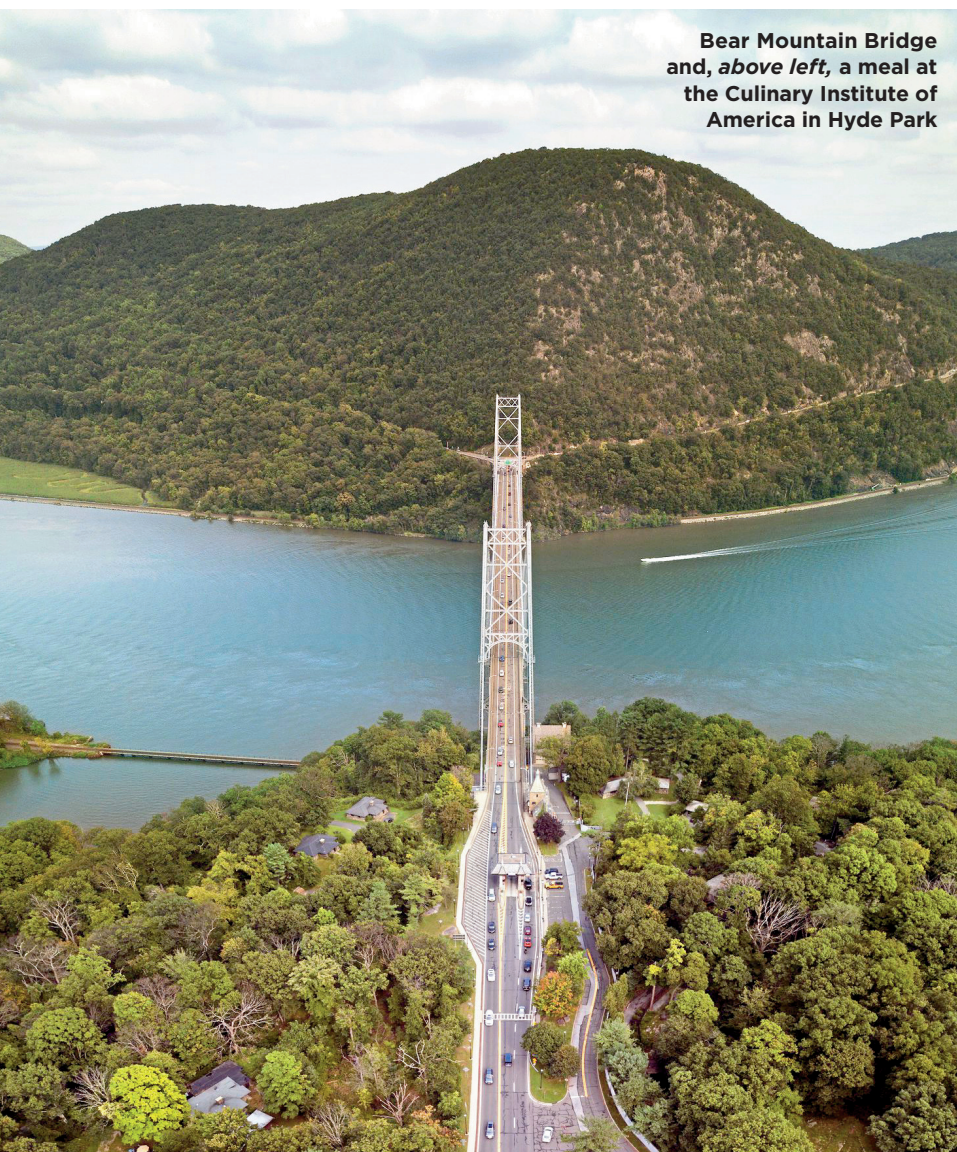
You can spend a day exploring the Hudson Valley or a week—it's up to you. Sometimes I'll head a few hours north to the little towns like Hudson, which is bustling with coffee shops and historic homes and even has a jazz festival. People are starting to call it the Brooklyn of the north. Heading south along the river, you'll find Rhinebeck, home to one of the oldest operating inns in America, the Beekman Arms and Delamater Inn.



Hyde Park is home to the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum, with all kinds of objects from his life, and the opulent Vanderbilt Mansion. The town of Beacon has a famous modern art museum (Dia Beacon), and Storm King Art Center in New Windsor is a vast open space on rolling hills with acres of outdoor art by some of the most influential artists and sculptors.

It takes a lot to get me out of the car, but we'll stop along the way at some random diner—the Eveready Diner in Hyde Park is a classic. I've also been known to sneak in a lunch at the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park—which, let me tell you, is a delicious way to spend an afternoon—before heading back to the stresses of life in the big city.

**Bear Mountain Bridge**  
and, *above left*, a meal at  
the Culinary Institute of  
America in Hyde Park



3

FOR THE FAN OF THE OLD WEST ...

WHO'S DRIVING?

## Wes Studi

74, Cherokee actor whose film credits include *Dances With Wolves* and *The Last of the Mohicans*



WHERE TO?

## Panhandle country

in Texas and Oklahoma, from a start in Santa Fe

### TALES FROM THE ROAD

My favorite drive is when you don't see another car for an hour or more. That's why I love heading north-east out of Santa Fe, where I live, and rolling up to where the panhandle of Texas meets the panhandle of Oklahoma. I used to drive a big Cadillac Eldorado, which is a heavy car but fun on those long open roads. Today, I have a hybrid that gets much better gas mileage. What I love about this part of the country is the lack of humidity, the mountains and, above all, the light. A person definitely needs a good pair of sunglasses out here.

**ITINERARY** Leave Santa Fe on the high road to Taos. That brings you through the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, passing sites like El Santuario de Chimayo, which has a church where people go





to get healed. Carson National Forest gives you stunning mountain views.

Taos has art galleries and design shops, but ancient places still exist, like the Taos Pueblo—it's one of the oldest continuously inhabited communities in the country, going back a thousand years. Leaving town is where the road gets interesting. U.S. Highway 64 snakes through steep canyons alongside the Cimarron River. I'll usually find a turnout where I can marvel at the 50-foot boulders on either side of the road. You can spend the night in Cimarron. There's a hotel there called the St. James, where Annie Oakley and Buffalo Bill used to stay. I usually have breakfast with the resident ghost.

We're in Santa Fe Trail country now, and what I love, as you travel through towns to the east, is the distinctive northern New Mexico cuisine. The green chiles, the sopaipillas, the chile colorado. It's a combination of native foods and Hispanic flavors and pioneer flavors that have developed over the centuries.

At that point, the road flattens out as you hit the long stretch that gets you to Clayton. The Hotel Eklund is haunted, too, I think. It's been there since the 1890s. Farther east you hit the Oklahoma border, with those two famous panhandles bumping into each other.

There's not much on these roads: electric poles, fence posts, a herd of elk now and then. What I like is the sense of freedom. It's a good time for planning, for reflecting, for thinking deeply about where you've been and all the places you still want to go.



**From top:** El Santuario de Chimayo; an artisans market in Santa Fe; local cuisine at Santa Fe's Taco Fundación; the St. James Hotel in Cimarron



McCurry, left, with Paul Theroux at William Faulkner's house

4

FOR THE SHUTTERBUG ...

WHO'S DRIVING?

## Steve McCurry

71, photographer whose most well-known photo is the striking 1985 *National Geographic* cover image of an Afghan girl

WHERE TO?

A small-town photo journey through

## The Deep South

**TALES FROM THE ROAD** My grandparents lived in South Carolina, and as a kid I'd visit every summer from Philadelphia. I loved the Sunday lunches with fresh corn on the cob, and sweet tea on the porch. I've always found people in the South open and easy to talk to, and that's great if you're taking photos. A few years ago, I photographed small towns along back roads in Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi and Arkansas, and I fell in love with the South all over again.

**ITINERARY** A few hours south of Atlanta, taking rural highways through towns like Texas, Georgia, and Bacon Level, Alabama, you come to Auburn, Alabama, the home of the university. It's a good place to spend the night and take great portraits of people. Nine times out of 10 people are thrilled to have you photograph them, but you have to open your door, get out of the car and strike up a conversation. "Is that your cow?" "Is that your car?" Then say, "I'm collecting an album on my travels and, you know, it'd be great if I could include you, because I think this place is really special."

If you see a wedding or a parade, definitely stop and see what's happening. But you don't need an event. So many

small towns have a town square, old churches or a town hall where people congregate. There's usually a mom-and-pop store or an old movie theater, and a place that all the locals know is the best spot for breakfast. I met a reverend in a barbershop in Greensboro, Alabama, who was so charismatic, we could have hung out all day. But keep moving; there's so much to see.

Spend a night in Tuscaloosa and you're bound to stumble on a high school game like I did. Kids were having a football pep rally, and a moment like that is a photographer's dream. Remember that humanity lies in a person's face, so you actually have to get in close, especially if you're shooting with your phone. To make people comfortable, share a few experiences with them first—"I'm driving the back roads" is usually enough—and keep talking while you take your shot. You want to catch people when they're relaxed, not posing.

The Mississippi River has an energy all its own, and you feel it in a town like Vicksburg, Mississippi. Spend time down by the banks. Sometimes you find the most when nothing's there. Arcola, Alabama, is a ghost town where there'd once been a plantation.

What I love most is the feeling of getting lost. GPS doesn't always work, so you actually have to stop and ask someone for directions. That usually ends up with a photo and a memory that you won't soon forget.



A mural honoring bluesmen in Leland, Mississippi, above, and the Brown Chapel AME Church in Selma, Alabama





5

FOR THE NEW AGE SEEKER ...

WHO'S DRIVING?

## Deepak Chopra

75, mindfulness guru whose latest book is *Abundance: The Inner Path to Wealth*

WHERE TO?

The healing energy spots of

## Arizona's Sonoran Desert

**TALES FROM THE ROAD** I'm mostly in New York City these days and I enjoy walking my 10,000 steps, but it's noisy, and the crowds can trigger anxiety if you're not self-aware. In Arizona, I feel the calm inside and out. The desert areas have been a sacred space for centuries for Indigenous populations, and you can still experience the mind-body power of those rituals and ceremonies in whatever way you choose, even if it is simply by driving and really noticing what's around you.

**ITINERARY** The area around Sedona, to me, looks like it's not on planet Earth. The towering red and orange rock formations have the same kind of cosmic energy and ability to uplift the spirit as sacred sites that attract spiritual travelers and pilgrims at places like Glastonbury or Stonehenge in England. Sedona is



Chopra at a retreat near Scottsdale; below left, Amitabha Stupa and Peace Park in Sedona

natural, though, not built, and driving around there is almost like visiting a vast open-air cathedral. You will find people meditating at different spots near Sedona. Airport Mesa, Cathedral Rock, Bell Rock and Boynton Canyon are the most popular.

It is two hours from Sedona to Phoenix, with beautiful desert scenery. In the area of Carefree, where my company has a mind-body center, there are desert gardens where you can see native plants of the desert. The ancients, and those who follow their practices today, used herbal medicine and psychedelic mushrooms to reach higher states of consciousness. If that calls to you, great. But you can achieve these altered states through other contemplative practices as well: observing the senses, observing your thoughts, observing

your surroundings and recognizing that, ultimately, reality is within yourself as much as it is out there. Whether you're in Manhattan or Phoenix, the one thing that stays continuous is inside you. It is consciousness.

6

FOR THE BUCKET-LIST MAKER ...

WHO'S DRIVING?

## Patricia Schultz

69, author of *1,000 Places to See Before You Die* and *Why We Travel*, coming in September



WHERE TO?

A jaw-dropping tour through

## Utah's national parks

**TALES FROM THE ROAD** I have a couple hundred favorite road trips, but I always come back to Utah, and the "Mighty Five," which is what they call the five magnificent national parks you can visit on a hamster's loop around the southern part of the state in roughly one week's time. I had never really heard much about Utah until my junior year abroad in Spain, when a local student told me all he wanted to see of the U.S. was Times Square, New Orleans and "Oo-ta." He waxed on about the incredible parks there, and he planted a seed. When I finally did visit, I felt like I was viewing them through his eyes.

**ITINERARY** Starting out of Salt Lake City, the first park you hit is Zion, the oldest and maybe most beautiful park in Utah, and that's a big statement. Zion is huge and mystifying, and you understand immediately why it awed the travelers who left these rock



The north fork of the Virgin River in Zion National Park

# HOT DEALS

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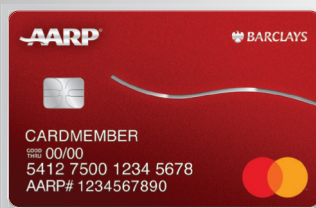
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faces and canyons with place-names like Angels Landing and the Great White Throne. Many visitors combine Zion with a trip to Bryce Canyon, which is more of a pocket park. Bryce has limestone hoodoos, or pillars, that are eroding over time, and you can go down into the depths to a trek called Wall Street, an unforgettable trail through towering natural skyscrapers.

If you continue north from Bryce, there's Capitol Reef, the second biggest of the Mighty Five but one that too often gets overlooked. It follows a 100-mile fold in the Earth's crust and has everything you want in a national park visit: old settlements, amazing hikes, orchards where you can pick fruit in season, and some great places to stop and eat, like the Capitol Reef Inn & Café. Right off Highway 24, you come upon petroglyph figures on a sheer face that runs parallel to the road.

Canyonlands National Park is Utah's biggest, and you could spend days getting lost in the 527 square miles of river canyons and mesas, but the Island in the Sky area is the most accessible by car. Pick almost any spot and just gawk at the miles of mesas and sandstone cliffs.

The town of Moab is a fantastic base for exploring this whole area. It's considered the adventure center of the Southwest because there is so much to do: bike riding and hot-air ballooning and trekking and more. Families love to go with multiple generations because some people can meander on easy hikes while others do whitewater rafting on the Colorado River.

I don't need to say much about Arches National Park. It's legendary, with more than 2,000 red sandstone arches. Driving is the best way to see much of the park, but don't just stay in the car. Balanced Rock needs you to get up close to take a look. The boulder on top resembles a mushroom cloud.

One of my favorite places to stay is Sorrel River Ranch. It's the full dude ranch experience. There's even a spa. It's the kind of idyllic place you never want to leave.

**Clockwise from below: McKibben in gear; Lawson's Finest Liquids in Waitsfield; the road in Warren; a Hill Farmstead brewski in Greensboro Bend**



7

FOR THE BEER CONNOISSEUR  
ON TWO WHEELS OR FOUR ...

WHO'S DRIVING?

## Bill McKibben

61, environmentalist, best-selling author and cofounder of the global grassroots climate campaign 350.org

WHERE TO?

A bike-friendly trek (or leisurely drive) through

## Vermont beer country

**TALES FROM THE ROAD** Route 100 runs through the absolute center of Vermont. You can cover it quickly by car, but if you're in moderately good shape, you can have a much deeper experience over several days on a bicycle. The air is clean, and it's just enough of a physical challenge that you'll really appreciate a glass of beer when you reach your destination.

**ITINERARY** Start in Rochester, home to the best bike shop I know. The mechanics at Green Mountain Bikes will make sure your machine is in working order. Head north on Route 100 through the Granville Gulf, a 6-mile stretch between mountains that's cool even in summer. You come out in the ski town of Waitsfield, which is also the home of one of the best breweries in Vermont. Lawson's Finest Liquids has a beautiful taproom and one of the best India pale

ales, the brew Vermont is famous for. Waitsfield and nearby Warren both have historic covered bridges, so this is a great area to spend the night.

Waterbury is the epicenter of beer culture. The place to have lunch is the Prohibition Pig in the center of town. It brews its own beer and carries many others. If it's jammed, there are three barrooms on the adjoining corners.

If you're cycling, you're burning calories, so there's every excuse to stop and eat. The Ben & Jerry's factory offers great tours (when pandemic restrictions allow). A little farther on, you can get cider, and then taste many varieties of Vermont cheese at the Cabot Farmers' Store. Spend the night in Stowe if you can, at the Trapp Family Lodge, and visit The Alchemist brewery, which produces what's probably Vermont's most famous beer. Heady Topper has a cult following around the planet.

Pedaling north, you'll come to Morrisville. Head east and ride back roads for half a day through Craftsbury and eventually to Greensboro. You won't find signs for Hill Farmstead, but ask locals for directions. The place perennially wins the championship as best brewery in the world, and it's a magnificent spot to end your pilgrimage. ■



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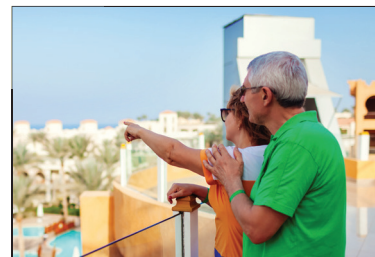
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# Can You Pass the **PENNY-PINCHER** Test?



See if your spending strategies and mindset  
match the experts' formulas for success

BY KIMBERLY LANKFORD • ILLUSTRATIONS BY ZOHAR LAZAR



### QUESTION 1

**It's time for a grocery run. What's the best way to keep your food budget down?**

- a** Eat a meal before you head out.
- b** Plan meals for the coming week.
- c** Buy primarily store brands.
- d** Shop for groceries online instead.

**Answer: b** “In my personal and professional experience, I’ve found that the single best way to save money is to meal plan,” says Lisa Freedman, executive lifestyle director at *Kitchn*, an online food magazine. That means deciding menus for each day of the week and building a shopping list from those choices. “Look to see what you have on hand already,” she says. “See how you can use those items, then think about what you’d need to buy.”

Not that choices a, c and d are bad ideas. Research has shown that hungry shoppers spend more. And if you’re prone to impulse purchases, online shopping may present fewer temptations, says Freedman.

### QUESTION 2

**Among the items gathering dust in your closet are a once-used pasta maker, a never-used foot massager and a regrettably used baseball cap with beer-can holders. What's the easiest way to stop these impulse buys?**

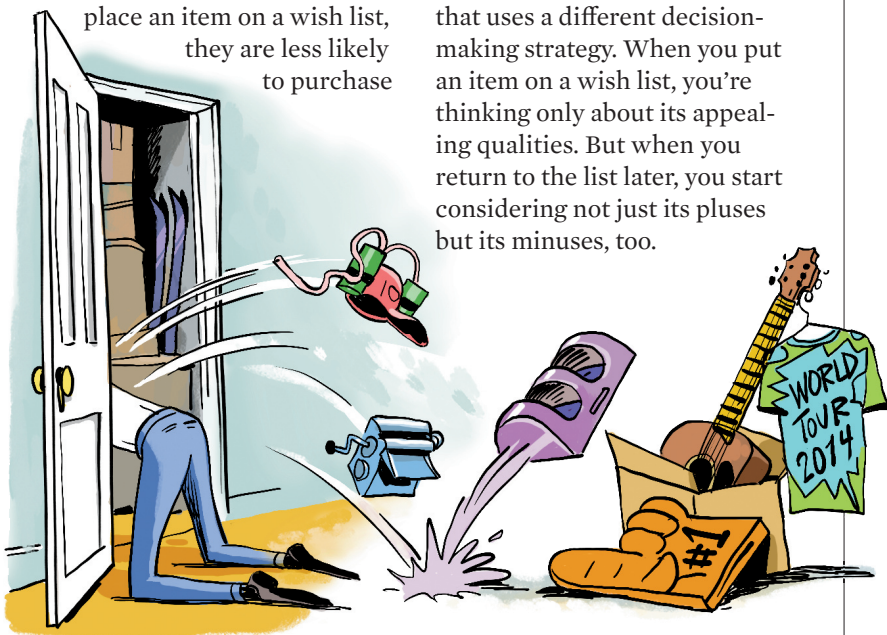
- a** Freeze your credit cards in a block of ice.
- b** Don't go online. Don't visit shopping malls.
- c** Tape a gallery of your unfortunate purchases to your refrigerator door.
- d** Put appealing purchases on a wish list first.

**Answer: d** You don’t need to become a hermit, freeze your cards or shame yourself daily to avoid impulse buys. Instead, make a habit of putting items you think you want on a wish list first—whether it’s handwritten or in an online shopping cart—then make your final decision a few days later.

“We find that when consumers place an item on a wish list, they are less likely to purchase

the item,” says Deidre Popovich, assistant professor of marketing and supply chain management at Texas Tech University’s Rawls College of Business and coauthor of a paper on the topic.

Her study found that putting items on a wish list essentially turns a one-stage purchase decision into a two-stage process that uses a different decision-making strategy. When you put an item on a wish list, you’re thinking only about its appealing qualities. But when you return to the list later, you start considering not just its pluses but its minuses, too.



### QUESTION 3

**You're finally ready to take a vacation again, and it's time to book a hotel. To be certain you're getting a good price on your room, how many websites will you need to look at or how many phone calls will you need to make?**

- a** One or two websites
- b** Three or four phone calls
- c** Five or six websites
- d** Seven or eight calls

**Answer: a** Finding the best price used to require combing through several websites, says Matt Kepnes, author of *How to Travel the World on \$50 a Day*. But times have changed. “You just need to use Google,” he says. Type in your destination, plus the word “hotels” and your day of arrival, and you’ll see a map displaying available hotels, with prices. When you find a hotel you like, click on “View prices” to see the rates listed by major booking websites. You can then book your room on the site with the best deal or call the hotel and ask if they’ll match the offer.



#### QUESTION 4

**You've decided to start shopping way ahead of time for birthday, anniversary and holiday gifts this year, in the hopes of not overpaying for last-minute presents. Which of these is *least* essential for pulling off this plan successfully?**

- a** A budget
- b** A list of recipients and gift ideas
- c** Designated closet space
- d** A cash-back credit card

**Answer: d** First of all, planning far in advance for gifts is a great idea, says consumer savings specialist Andrea Woroch. "The more time you give yourself, the more time you have to save up and shop around for the best presents at the best price," she says. That means writing out a list of upcoming celebrations with gift ideas and budgets for each.

Yes, a cash-back credit card is nice for recouping a little bit of the money



you've spent, as long as you're the type of person who pays off the credit card bill in full each month.

But the really crucial element of this strategy, Woroch

says, is picking only one spot in your home to store all your early bird purchases. "When you start hiding them all over your house, it's easy to lose track of what you bought or where you put things," she says. "I lost a necklace for my daughter for a year."

#### QUESTION 5

**Sometime in the next year, you've decided, you'll replace all your bedsheets and bedspreads. When will be the best month for getting good deals?**

- a** July
- b** October
- c** January
- d** There's no particular month.

**Answer: c** You already know about back-to-school and Black Friday sales, but real penny-pinchers keep a more detailed calendar. January, for example, is the best time to buy bedding and linens, Woroch says. For seasonal clothing, it's typically best to make those purchases toward the end of that season, says Julie Ramhold, consumer analyst with DealNews.

To get notified of sales at your favorite stores and on your favorite brands, sign up for their e-newsletters and follow them on social media, Woroch advises. You can also get advance word in the traditional way: When you're in a store, just ask. "You may learn that a potential purchase will be going on sale in just a couple of days, so you can hold off on buying," Woroch says.

#### QUESTION 6

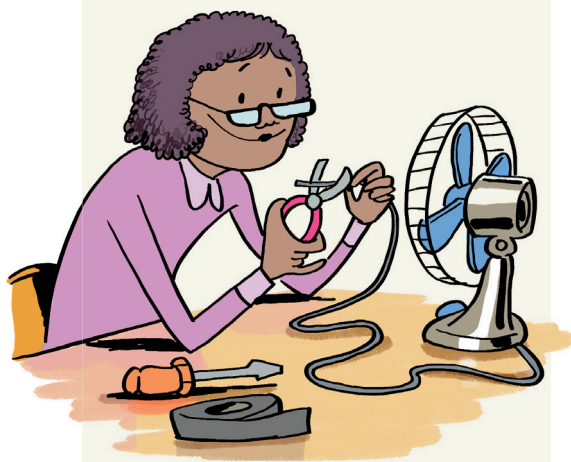


**A week ago, you bought a \$700 exercise bike at the local outpost of a major retail chain. Now you see they're selling exactly the same model for \$150 less. What do you do?**

- a** Curse your bad luck and bad timing and move on.
- b** Return it to the store, then go back a day later and buy it again.
- c** Go back to the store and ask the manager for a \$150 refund.
- d** Ask your credit card issuer to cancel the purchase.

**Answer: c** It's commonplace and perfectly reasonable to ask for a partial refund if a product's price drops after you buy it, says Ramhold. The window for getting a price adjustment—that is, a refund or store credit—is typically a week or two after a purchase, but it can be longer.

At Costco, you can get a credit for the difference between the price you paid and a sales price for up to 30 days after your purchase. Target will match a price within two weeks of purchase if the price drops at your store or is lower at target.com. Note: Some retailers exclude certain items or time periods—for example, limiting adjustments around Black Friday.



### QUESTION 7

Your 50-year-old table fan has a frayed power cord. The hardware store has a new fan for \$15, but you buy a \$3 replacement cord instead. You then spend three hours disassembling, cleaning and repairing the old fan. What does this episode tell you about your thriftiness?

- (a)** Penny-pinching is a good habit, but you've gone overboard.
- (b)** If you value your time at more than \$4 an hour, you have misplaced priorities.
- (c)** Anytime you can save \$12, you should do it.
- (d)** None of the above.

**Answer: d** Sure, just as there are impulsive spenders, there are impulsive savers, says Alex Melkumian, founder of the Financial Psychology Center in Los Angeles. But that's probably not the issue here, he says. It may be that you enjoy tinkering, or that the fan is a cherished hand-me-down, or that you prefer its metal construction to the mostly plastic new unit.

In other words, fixing the fan may simply reflect your personality and your life values, Melkumian says. "It may be more important for you to tinker and save the money there, and then have more money to give to your grandkids." Not wanting to spend \$12, then, doesn't make you a cheapskate.

*Kimberly Lankford, a longtime columnist at Kiplinger's Personal Finance, is the author of Rescue Your Financial Life.*

### QUESTION 8

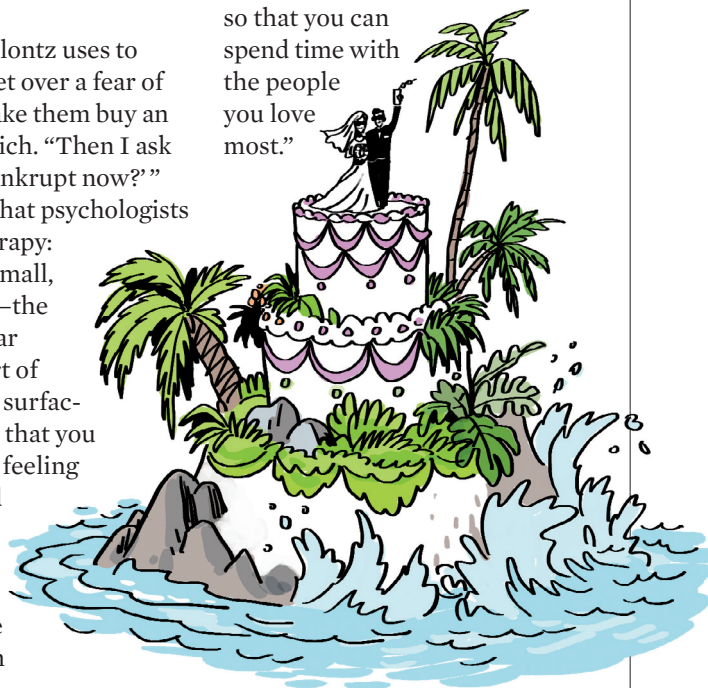
You've been invited to a destination wedding for the only child of your oldest, dearest friend. This would be a great time to spend a week with your bestie, whom you haven't seen in person for years. You can afford to go, but it's upsetting to spend \$300 a night for a room at the resort where the wedding is. What's the best way to proceed?

- (a)** Life is short: RSVP "yes" and enjoy a wonderful week.
- (b)** Send your regrets, along with a note to your BFF proposing a more economical joint vacation down the road.
- (c)** Go to the resort, but don't stay the whole week—just the days around the ceremony.
- (d)** Go to the wedding but stay at a cheaper hotel near the resort.

**Answer: a** Money vigilance is good, says Brad Klontz, a financial psychologist, "but it can go too far." Ironically, he says, many people who save so diligently for the future find themselves unable to spend their savings once the future arrives.

One exercise Klontz uses to help his clients get over a fear of spending is to make them buy an expensive sandwich. "Then I ask them, 'Are you bankrupt now?'" he says. This is what psychologists call exposure therapy: confronting—in small, controlled doses—the thing that you fear most. "That's part of the intervention: surfacing an awareness that you have this intense feeling about saving, and acknowledging that you're OK financially because you have been careful with

money. So do you need to be carrying around this much anxiety?" Adds Klontz, "If it's something you can afford, focus on your values—on what matters most to you. You have been such a diligent saver for this exact reason: so that you can spend time with the people you love most."



### SCORING:

**Give yourself 1 point for each of your answers that matches our experts' choice.**

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**3-6 points**  
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# REAL/PEOPLE

*Force for Good*

## Rebel, Rebel

Why Shawn Crosby drives a homemade spaceship

**W**HEN I WAS a kid, my distance vision was terrible, so I couldn't play sports. Instead, I would read science fiction magazines and try to re-create the things I saw in them, using junk from around the house. *Star Wars* came out in 1977, and it struck a huge chord with me. Who didn't want to leave home and save the galaxy? I came to know the characters as well as anyone knows their favorite team.

At 32, my eyes had corrected themselves enough that I could finally get my driver's license. I decided that I wanted to drive a spaceship, so I outfitted a car to look like a *Star Wars* starfighter—I called it a “carfighter.” This Nissan 350Z is my second one. Everything on it is repurposed. The wheel covers are modified pizza pans, and the guns are baseball bats.

Through community theater, I had started doing charity appearances, playing characters from movies, including *Star Wars*. I went from supporting a handful of local groups to working with national charities like Make-a-Wish.

I've portrayed a young Luke Skywalker, then a young Obi-Wan Kenobi, and now I play the older Ben Kenobi, or the older Luke Skywalker from *The Last Jedi*. The one constant has been the enjoyment of the people I interact with. One little boy who I used to donate platelets to had terminal cancer and would eventually pass away. But for the years I could donate to him, he had the encouragement of getting his Jedi blood from “Obi-Shawn”—that's me.

Some people ask, “Why don't you act more grown-up?” That's a limiting frame of mind. We all need imagination, adventure and whimsy in our lives. —As told to Leslie Quander Wooldridge

Artist, actor and radio host Shawn Crosby, 54, has appeared for free at more than 2,500 charity events, visiting schools, libraries, children's hospitals and military bases.



Winni Wintermeyer (burger)



*Inspiring stories  
of friends and  
neighbors, in their  
own words*

**INSIDE** • KENNY'S LAST-CHANCE CAFÉ P. 62

AFTER A DEVASTATING INJURY, PHOTOGRAPHER  
MARCY MALOY CONSIDERS WHAT SHE HAS GAINED P. 63

KWANE STEWART, VETERINARIAN VOLUNTEER P. 66



Crosby as Luke  
Skywalker, with a  
custom-made Yoda  
puppet, in his Nissan



# I Wanted a Totally Different Life'

Café owner Kenny Kim went from night owl to early bird—and from sad to happy

**F**OR 25 YEARS, I was a car salesman. I sold Mercedes-Benzes and Lincolns. The money was very good, but it was really stressful. You stay out late, often till after midnight. You drink a lot. You smoke a lot. And you have to smile when you sell a car. You have to be happy.

But all the pressure made me impatient at home. I acted angry. Eventually, about 12 years ago, my wife divorced me, and my son wanted nothing to do with me. After the divorce, I couldn't smile. Customers would come in, all happy, buying a car for their family. But every time I sold a car, I cried afterward.

I decided I had to quit my job. Quit drinking. Do the opposite of everything I had been doing. I wanted a totally different life.

In 2012, I took money from my retirement fund and bought a small hamburger shop. I turned it into a breakfast and lunch café, with dishes from America and from South Korea, where I was born. Now I go to bed early, because I open at 6 a.m. And you know what? I started smiling again.

My customers work in construction, at tech companies and at the nearby San Jose Airport.

And when new customers come in, I take their pictures. I tell them



**Kim has papered his café's walls with pics of his customers.**

it's a souvenir. I use my iPhone, and then I get the pictures printed and tape them to the walls or the ceiling of the café. So far there are around 22,000 photos on my walls. That's a lot of smiles.

It hasn't all been easy. My ex-wife died a few years ago, and that was very sad. I had to work and wait for my son to accept me back into his life, but we're getting there. He is in college and in ROTC. I am so proud of him.

COVID has been hard on the

business. I lost 80 percent of my customers at the beginning. Money is tight. I applied for a federal PPP loan, but I didn't qualify because I don't have any employees. It's just me. Still, I'm happy. Every morning at 5 a.m., I stand outside the café and pray to God. I say, *Thanks for keeping me healthy and for teaching me what's most important in life.* You don't need a lot of money or a fancy car. You just need to help others and be grateful for what you have.

—As told to Robin Westen

*Kenny Kim, 65, is the proprietor of Kenny's Cafe in Santa Clara, California.*



# I Lost All Feeling Below My Chest— and Discovered My Heart

After photographer Marcy Maloy became disabled in a freak accident, she looked to her baby grandson for inspiration



Maloy and grandson Dylan travel at the same speed.

**I**N SEPTEMBER OF 2020, I went for a run in Golden Gate Park. Late to meet my husband, I took a shortcut, tried to jump over a wall and missed. The minute I hit the ground, I knew it was bad. I couldn't feel my body below my neck.

The doctor who first examined me didn't deliver the news to me himself. I overheard him telling my husband, "She'll never walk again." It was my C3 vertebra. One inch higher and I'd have been on a breathing machine.

As it was, I became a quadriplegic. After all the risky things I'd done in my life, something so simple changed everything at age 71. Jumping over that wall was the last time that I did anything fast.

I grew up as the daughter of a high-ranking Air Force general. We lived in Morocco, Paris, Korea and, eventually, Washington, D.C. Maybe that explains why I could never stay in one place very long. There were always trips and adventures. In my 20s,

I moved to Berkeley with a boyfriend. He lent me a camera and I started taking pictures. I was fast and took many, many pictures. The first time I picked up a contact sheet at the store, the woman said I had a good eye. So I signed up for photography school.

By the time I was 40, I was married with two little girls under 5, trying to make it as a freelance photographer. One day I walked into the studio of a designer in San Francisco and walked out with an assignment to



do a full-page ad for *Vogue*. Plenty of jobs followed, as did a divorce that had me running faster than ever to keep a roof over our heads.

Of all the work I took on, my favorite jobs were the ones with babies. I got a reputation for being a photographer who could make even crying babies smile. If you were buying Pampers anytime from around the mid-'90s to the early 2000s, odds are the picture on the box was taken by me.

I think I relate to babies because they're all about instincts. Always moving, checking out their bodies, checking out the world. When I'd do a shoot with a baby, I'd get down on the floor with him and look into his eyes. In all the years of shooting catalogs and ads, I can't remember a single baby I couldn't connect with. Things with men would get complicated. With babies, it was easy.

I was 60 when I met Ron, through a Match.com ad, but I wasn't all that interested in dating him. I'd been on my own for over 20 years. No man was going to swoop in and take care of me. And anyway, he was too much of a straight arrow. I favored bad boys. But Ron was persistent. I told him if he shaved off his mustache, I'd go to bed with him. He said, "Where's the razor?"

We had great adventures together. Every spring we'd do a home exchange in Paris. We raced go-karts. The year after we met, we were chosen to be on the CBS reality show *The Amazing Race*.

Ron and I were a great team. We finally tied the knot—after 12 years—in San Francisco, with my two daughters and his one attending. That was August of 2020. Three weeks later: the accident. Shortly after I got home from rehab, my daughter Alexandra



**Maloy, Dylan and her husband, Ron Shalita, at home**

and her husband moved in with Ron and me. Their son, my first grandchild, was born two months later. On Dylan's first day home from the hospital, Alexandra put him on my lap and wrapped my arms around him. I couldn't feel his body, but I could look into his eyes and smell the top of his head. Every time he looked at me, his face lit up. All I had to do was hold him.

The doctors told me that most of whatever progress I'd make was likely to take place in the first year, so I never let up on physical therapy, working to regain what function I could. My father had always said, "We all fall down in life, but what matters is the steps we take to get back up," and I took that to heart. By the following spring I could stand up with help. By summer I was using a walker to get around.

I still can't hold the body of a Nikon camera or change lenses, but I take iPhone pictures of my grandson. For a while, anyway, Dylan and I have a lot in common. Neither one of us can walk by ourselves. We both like it when someone helps us

onto a swing in the park and pushes us. We both wear diapers.

I was never good at doing nothing—at just taking in the world around me. Now I move more slowly and I notice every small thing. In the old days I focused on my outer life. Now I look inside and find a peace and acceptance of who I am. I am not racing, and quietness serves me well.

And I spend time with my grandson. I wonder whether we would have been this close if I hadn't been injured. I wonder whether I would have paid as much attention to him as I do.

Now I have my eye on a brand of camera that's light enough that I could hold it on my own and operate the shutter. After 14 months of grueling therapy, I can make my way across the floor with a cane. Dylan often pushes his miniature walker alongside me.

When I watch him push his walker, I see my own determination reflected in his eyes. He takes a few steps, falls, then gets right back up.

He will be taking steps soon without his walker. When he does, I intend to hold his hand. And we will walk together. ■

*Marcy Maloy, 73, is a photographer and writer in San Francisco.*



**Maloy and then-boyfriend Shalita on CBS' *The Amazing Race* in 2009**

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## A Hand for Pets in Need

Kwane Stewart provides free care to the animals of people who live on the street. He says it has taught him a lot about life

**D**URING THE Great Recession, I moved to a city in California's Central Valley and became a shelter vet. Hordes of animals were coming in, and we couldn't keep them all, but as a municipal shelter, we couldn't turn them away, either. I got a taste of what it's like, sadly, to euthanize dozens of animals every day. It broke my heart. I began to feel like I was losing in the eyes of God. I was starting to feel guilty; I started developing anxiety. I was looking for something to pull myself out of that emotional situation.

Then everything changed in a moment. It was about 10 years ago. On my way to work, I would always stop for gas and coffee at the same spot. I kept noticing a homeless man who was hanging out there. His dog was suffering from a skin condition. I'm like most people—I walked right past the man without talking to him. But I couldn't stop noticing that poor dog. After maybe a couple of weeks, I stopped and asked the man about the dog. When I got closer to her, she looked almost as if she had been burned. She had scabs and redness and infection. It looked like it could have been something serious, but I knew it was just a flea issue. So I said, "I'm going to be back with medicine," and dropped some off to him the next day. A couple weeks later, I ran into him again. The dog was transformed. Her hair was coming back, and she was wagging her tail. He started to cry and said, "Thank you for helping—for not ignoring."

I started getting a little teary-eyed, too. When you're overlooked and dismissed by everybody and the thing you love most is suffering but



Stewart examines a very good girl in Reseda, California.

no one will help you, it's so hard. I decided to find people who can't get help for their pets—and give it to them. I dedicated a portion of my salary for medicines and procedures. When I had to refer a case, I could usually talk colleagues into reducing their fee.

Eventually, I left the shelter and joined a practice, and I also set up a nonprofit to provide care for the pets of homeless people. The biggest thing I've learned over the years is to approach everyone without judgment, with a perfectly clean slate. These people are just people. They're no different from anyone else. For whatever reason, they have

found themselves in a bad place. They may have had a difficult family past. They may have had some kind of addiction. They may have made some poor choices—who hasn't?—but may not have had the kind of support they needed to come out of it. So to be able to help them help that animal they love so much, it's something practical I can do that will take one worry off their mind. Kindness can't solve every problem, but it can solve a lot of them.

—As told to Leslie Quander Wooldridge

*Kwane Stewart, 51, is the chief medical officer of Papaya Pet Care in San Diego and cofounder of the nonprofit Project Street Vet, which gives free care, treatment and support to the pets of people experiencing homelessness or financial hardship.*

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\*Based on customer experience reviews shared online at [www.thehartford.com/aarp](http://www.thehartford.com/aarp) as of January 2022.

<sup>1</sup>In Texas, the Auto Program is underwritten by Redpoint County Mutual Insurance Company through Hartford of the Southeast General Agency, Inc. Hartford Fire Insurance Company and its affiliates are not financially responsible for insurance products underwritten and issued by Redpoint County Mutual Insurance Company.

<sup>2</sup>Average savings amounts based on information reported by customers who switched to The Hartford from other carriers between 1/1/20 and 12/31/20. Your savings may vary.

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# Your AARP®



## EXPERT TIPS FOR STAYING IN YOUR HOME

1. Install grab bars on the shower wall.
2. Swap door knobs for lever handles.
3. Move a bedroom downstairs.

## AARP, Lowe's Team to Transform Your Home

*You want to be ready for life's changes. We can help*

**O**LDER AMERICANS tell AARP in overwhelming numbers that they want to stay in their current homes and communities as long as possible. Trouble is, many American homes weren't made with the needs of an older resident in mind. To reach that goal, many homes will first need to be modified and updated so they can be places where older people are comfortable and safe, and where children can more easily take care of aging parents.

AARP intends to help. The organization is collaborating with the Lowe's home improvement chain on Lowe's Livable Home, an initiative designed to educate Americans about the steps they can take to help make sure their home accommodates them and their family at any age.

The Lowe's Livable Home hub on their website features articles and videos to assist those thinking about home-improvement projects that

will make aging in place easier.

The timing is crucial. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that the 65-and-older population grew by roughly 34 percent in the decade from 2010 to 2019. And America's housing must adapt.

"We know that very few of us are in a home that's ideal for aging," says Rodney Harrell, AARP vice president of family, home and community. "We are working together to get key information to people so that we can help them make the best decisions for themselves and their families."

The goal, according to Harrell, is to pursue gradual improvements—easy weekend projects and upgrades—in addition to major renovations when needed.

AARP will also work with Lowe's associates to teach practical skills to support customers who are looking to improve their home. Those associates will wear AARP-branded pins so customers know whom to ask about age-friendly options. Those efforts are underway in more than 50 metro areas and will expand throughout 2022.

"Together we want to make it easy for people of all ages by providing the information and inspiration across a range of projects and budgets," says Helena Poda, AARP director of strategic relationships.

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HOW WE'RE FIGHTING FOR YOU

# AARP TAKES ON FRAUD

**W**HETHER IT'S by phone calls, emails, texts, social media posts or a knock on the door, criminal fraud is invading older Americans' homes and lives.

And there's a reason why it's growing: The criminals are winning. Americans lose billions of dollars to fraud every year, and law enforcement is challenged to curtail an illegal industry that is increasingly international and quick to evolve.

That's why AARP has elevated the fight against fraud to one of its primary social mission goals. Through our Fraud Watch Network, we are working daily to help you navigate the treacherous world of scams.

Here's a summary of some of our efforts for 2022.

► **Education and outreach** AARP offers lots of fraud-fighting help, including our biweekly Watchdog Alerts, our podcast *The Perfect Scam*, our website (with the latest fraud news and information), the Fraud Watch Network, and virtual educational sessions at the national and state levels. Trained specialists with the AARP Fraud Watch Network Helpline answered more than 90,000 calls in 2021 from people who were dealing with scammers.

#### ► Emotional support

We launched a pilot victim-support program in 2021 ([aarp.org/fraudsupport](http://aarp.org/fraudsupport))



that provides a way for fraud victims and their families to begin healing emotionally. And we've extended it for 2022.

► **Targeting gift card abuse** The Fraud Watch Network launched a campaign in 2021 to grow awareness of an increasingly common (and successful) method scammers use to

receive your money—through gift cards.

#### ► Changing the 'victim vocabulary'

No fraud victim should be made to feel worse by hearing, "You should have known better." The Fraud Watch Network has teamed up with the FINRA Foundation and Heart + Mind Strategies on a multiyear campaign to shift the focus to those committing the crimes. —**Kathy Stokes, director, AARP Fraud Watch Network**

### HERE FOR YOU

#### • AARP Fraud Watch Network Helpline

Call our specialists toll-free to ask questions or report a fraud Monday-Friday at 877-908-3360.

#### • AARP Scam-Tracking Map

Find fraud happening in your area. Visit [aarp.org/scammap](http://aarp.org/scammap).

#### • AARP Fraud Watch Network Online

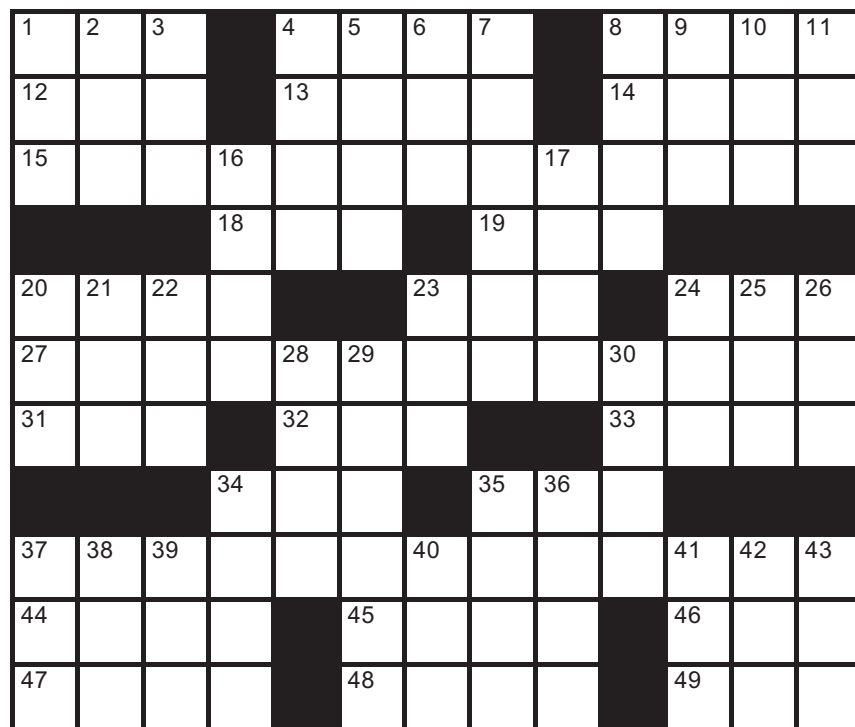
Get up-to-date information on the latest scams at [aarp.org/fraudwatchnetwork](http://aarp.org/fraudwatchnetwork).



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PUZZLES BY STANLEY NEWMAN



## CROSSWORD

### Let's Play Twister

#### ACROSS

- 1 Crowd around
- 4 '70s supergroup with a new 2021 album
- 8 Personal assistant
- 12 "You've got mail!" company
- 13 Nottingham native
- 14 Hazy view
- 15 Twister with a 1960 No. 1 song
- 18 Caterer's coffee brewer
- 19 Campers' vehicles, for short
- 20 Astronaut Shepard
- 23 Daughter of a deer
- 24 "NOW I get it!"
- 27 Twister for whodunit plots
- 31 Vigor, informally
- 32 Caviar, for instance

- 33 Copper-coated coin
- 34 Org. of expert putters
- 35 Moving to and \_\_\_\_
- 37 Twister in a circus
- 44 General vicinity
- 45 Extremely long time
- 46 Poolroom stick
- 47 Sums being risked
- 48 All through
- 49 Wrap things up

#### DOWN

- 1 Cheese partner, in kids' lunches
- 2 "That's impressive!"
- 3 \_\_\_\_-ray disc
- 4 Shortened form, for short
- 5 \_\_\_\_ Mawr (Pennsylvania college)
- 6 Paper Mate alternative
- 7 Each, in slang
- 8 First-learned basics
- 9 Of the same \_\_\_\_ (similar)
- 10 Payable now
- 11 Do something wrong
- 16 Batter's ploy
- 17 At any time
- 20 Band's sound-boosting box
- 21 Drain cleaner chemical
- 22 Cleopatra's snake
- 23 Give a new hue to
- 24 Had for lunch
- 25 Roost dweller
- 26 Display on museum walls
- 28 Therefore
- 29 Laughed heartily
- 30 Smartphone app logo
- 34 Grade school support grps.
- 35 Huckleberry of fiction
- 36 Floated upward
- 37 Auto for hire
- 38 Mineral that's mined
- 39 After all costs
- 40 Excessively
- 41 Road hazard
- 42 Renewable energy source
- 43 Danson, Koppel or Turner

## WORD PLAY

### DON'T BE RASH

Rearrange the letters in the word

**ALLERGIST**

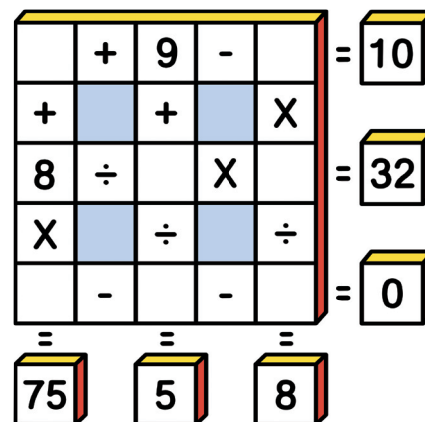
plus the letter O,  
to get a very different  
occupation.



## NUMBER FUN

### MATH SQUARE

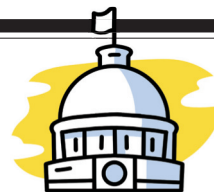
Enter each of the unused digits from 1 to 9 into the square, so that the six math equations are all correct.



## INSTA-QUIZ

### TOP CAP

What is the only state capital that is among the 10 highest-population cities in America?  
**Hint:** It is the only state capital whose name includes the letter X.



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## LIAM NEESON

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 31

we're chilling." But this past year all three produced lovely, lovely apples. Just to walk past them, pick an apple, eat it by my back pond stocked with koi a neighbor gave me, gives me an incredible amount of pleasure.

**That sounds idyllic. Are there goats or chickens about?**

No! Long ago we tried chickens, and they stopped laying. Someone suggested getting a cock, so I got this little cock, and when I went in to check on the hens, this cock would fly in my face. Every morning. And I thought, *I'm going to kill this f-----*. I told Natasha, I said, "Darlin', we can't do this. This cock is putting the fear of God in me."

**You're also an avid fisherman. When did that start?**

I was doing this film *Nell* with Jodie Foster and Natasha 28 years ago, and the props lady, who had just come off Robert Redford's lovely film *A River Runs Through It*, taught me how to cast with this split-cane fly-fishing rod. And I literally got hooked.

**It seems like you enjoy solitude.**

During the lockdown, I was in heaven. I read something like 30 books. I was a pig in s---, totally content. I was very aware of millions of Americans wondering where their next meal is coming from. I was very, very aware of that. But there I was, upstate. I wasn't exactly Nero, but I was very content.

**What were you reading?**

A lot of crime fiction. I got into Nordic noir big-time. Jo Nesbø, Henning Mankell. I just couldn't get enough of these thrillers. And then I'd think, *OK, I'm Irish. I have to tackle Ulysses for, like, the fifth time. I must finish Ulysses and Crime and Punishment and War and Peace*. So, I did. I managed to read those three books to offset all the crime novels. I can't go to sleep at night unless I have read something.

**You mentioned your children. What have the two of them taught you about yourself?**

Well, it's a continual process, isn't it? Sometimes you see in your kids

a flash of their mother or a flash of your grandmom, and it might last only seconds, but you see the connection. I always think of my friend Gabriel Byrne. I've known him for over 40 years. Ages ago, when his little boy was 2, I went to visit him. He had rented a house because he was doing some movie, and we were sitting at the swimming pool, and I was watching this kid, this beautiful little creature with long blond hair, running around the pool naked. I said, "Gabriel, what's that like?" And he said, "I'll tell you. I was there when he was born, and when he came out, I realized my place in the universe." I was there for the birth of my two boys, and that's exactly what happened. Something shunted into place, a continuum. It's strange and miraculous and kind of frightening.

**These are interesting times. Are you optimistic about what the future holds?**

I'm very concerned about what's happened in Ukraine. And England and this whole Brexit business is an absolute shambles, and it's really hurting people. I hope some level-headed politicians will see the light. We're Mr. and Mrs. Gloom and Doom, aren't we?

**Well, I'm Scots Irish, so there's no way around it.**

Do you know what Irish Alzheimer's is?

**You forget everything but the grudges.**

Exactly! [Laughs.]

**And finally, is there anything left that you want to do?**

Ohh, to play King Lear, darlin'. On the stage. [Laughs.] Not. No, I'll be very honest, Allison. I turn 70 in June, and they're still sending me scripts. Some of them are interesting. Others aren't so interesting, but I'm still getting work, and I'm very blessed, very lucky. And I get a real kick out of that. ■

*Allison Glock is a writer and executive producer for ESPN and NBC's The Blacklist. Michael Douglas was her most recent cover subject for AARP THE MAGAZINE.*

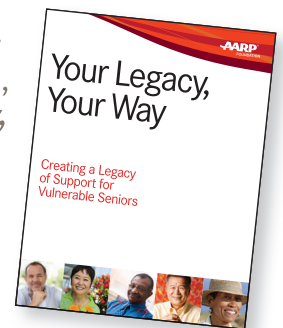


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## SOLUTIONS TO PUZZLES ON PAGE 70

M	O	B		A	B	B	A		A	I	D	E
A	O	L		B	R	I	T		B	L	U	R
C	H	U	B	B	Y	C	H	E	C	K	E	R
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A	L	A	N				D	O	E		A	H
M	Y	S	T	E	R	Y	W	R	I	T	E	R
P	E	P		R	O	E			C	E	N	T
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C	O	N	T	O	R	T	I	O	N	I	S	T
A	R	E	A		E	O	N	S		C	U	E
B	E	T	S		D	O	N	E		E	N	D

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population of  
1,608,139, the  
state capital  
of Arizona is  
currently the fifth  
largest city in the  
United States.

## MATH SQUARE

7	+	9	-	6	=10
+		+		X	
8	÷	1	X	4	=32
X		÷		÷	
5	-	2	-	3	=0
=		=		=	
75		5		8	

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HAPPY BIRTHDAY

## Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson

**(MAY 2)** Thanks to his *Jumanji* and *Fast & Furious* movies, the Rock, as Dwayne Johnson is known, has carved out an acting career almost as massive as his towering frame. With a box office count in excess of \$12 billion, he's one of the world's highest-grossing actors—and last fall, his action comedy *Red Notice* became the most-watched original film in Netflix history. For more on his story, see NBC's *Young Rock*, a sitcom that traces Johnson's life from his unsettled childhood to an imagined future where he's running for U.S. president in 2032. When a poll last year showed that 46 percent of Americans would consider voting for him, he weighed in on Twitter: "Not sure our Founding Fathers ever envisioned a six-four, bald, tattooed, half-Black, half-Samoan, tequila drinking, pick up truck driving, fanny pack wearing guy joining their club—but if it ever happens it'd be my honor to serve the people." —Nicholas DeRenzo



### MORE MILESTONE BIRTHDAYS

#### Jennifer Garner

APRIL 17

Actress stars in the upcoming sci-fi film *The Adam Project*—Mark Ruffalo plays her hubby.

50



#### Laverne Cox

MAY 29

Trailblazer was the first transgender person to receive an Emmy acting nod, in 2014.

50



#### Emilio Estevez

MAY 12

*Mighty Ducks* actor loves living in Cincinnati. "It's a really magical city," he's said.

60

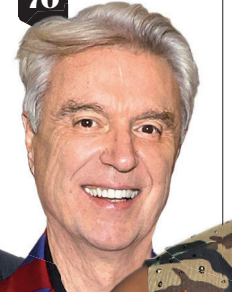


#### David Byrne

MAY 14

Musician notes that the title of his exuberant Broadway show, *American Utopia*, "is not ironic."

70



#### Mr. T

MAY 21

*A-Team* tough guy tweeted "I Pity Pain!" after he got his no-pain COVID-19 booster shot.

70



#### Loretta Lynn

APRIL 14

Legend raised nearly \$1 million in aid after the deadly flood in her Tennessee county last year.

90



Photo credits and information on page 74



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