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[FROM THE EDITOR]



Josh Newby
*Marketing Communications
Director and Editor-in-Chief*

What do we owe to each other? It's a question that has plagued me the past several weeks. And do we owe the same debts to everyone, regardless of their actions toward or relationship with us? Surely we should demonstrate greater consideration and care to those who have been instrumental in raising us, caring for or guiding us in some way, but what about the clerk at the grocery store, the woman who takes our temperature—or the gentleman who just cut us off in traffic? It's easy to be kind to those who return the favor, but it takes a special type of kindness to be generous toward those we've never met. While we may reserve Christmas presents, special dinners and time spent alone for those who have had a tangible impact on our lives in some way, I believe the base debt we all owe to one another is to be kind. This is not a new concept, but it is a challenging one.

It is that spirit of kindness that causes our staff to work the extra hour and go the extra mile for our clients. It is that spirit of kindness that inspires our volunteers to take time out of their week to deliver a meal, build a ramp or transport an elder to the doctor's office. And it is that spirit of kindness that motivates our donors to give generously to those they will never meet, simply because we ask. We all owe a debt to each other, and it can be repaid with a smile, or a favor, or a dollar.

The holiday season and new year is the most convenient time to pay that debt, and on the following pages I hope you find a cause that inspires you. Foremost, this month features an interview with a man who is perhaps best known for the kindness he has demonstrated throughout his career. Known as Mr. Feeny to some, KITT to others and John Adams or Dr. Mark Craig to still others, actor William Daniels is everyone's idyllic grandfather, and is the blueprint for aging gracefully and actively. I hope you enjoy our interview with him, which takes a few fun twists and turns!

We'll also discuss the value of elders to an ever-changing workforce, profile caregivers as they confess their struggles and even feature a few recipes cooked up by our own Senior Companions and Foster Grandparents. Of course, no year-end issue of *Coming of Age* would be complete without a look back on 2018 and a look forward to 2019.

If you are a client, a volunteer, a donor or just someone who picked up this periodical while waiting for your coffee, thank you for reading and thank you for contributing in some small way to the improvement of this community. My email is jnewby@coawfla.org and my phone number is (850) 266-2507 if you have any comments. Until next time, enjoy life—you've earned it!

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Overcoming Loneliness and Social Isolation

“Loneliness and the feeling of being unwanted is the most terrible poverty.” - Mother Teresa

by John Clark

President, Council on Aging of West Florida

It can be uncomfortable to think about loneliness and isolation during the holiday season, but it is perhaps the best time to touch on the topic. Whether we want to admit it or not, aging can bring us into a season of loss and sorrow. The loss of loved ones. The loss of friends. The loss of a job. The loss of independence (e.g. losing your driver's license or ability to drive). The loss of finances. These losses can lead to isolation and loneliness. This is compounded for those who are so-called “elder orphans,” that is, those who never had a spouse and/or child or a large extended family. This feeling of loneliness and isolation is further compounded during the holiday season when we are bombarded by TV

shows, advertising and other media—all revolving around “happy times” with loved ones or friends. And those without families, or who are isolated, are left feeling more lonely or more isolated. Men and women are social animals and, by our very nature, have a desire to be with others, whether we want to admit it or not.

Thus, when faced with loss, there becomes a very real danger of finding yourself isolated and adrift—this may not seem like a huge problem, but it is truly a health hazard. According to an article in the Florida Association of Aging Services Providers (FASP) newsletter, “Social isolation is a pernicious problem among seniors with dire consequences. According to the US Census Bureau, 11 million

people, or 28 percent of people aged 65 and older lived alone at the time of the census.” According to the article, “Risks can include higher rate of mortality when an elder does not have someone to encourage them to seek medical help when there are signs of illness. Isolation can impact physical and mental health, such as high blood pressure, dementia and depression. Elders who are isolated are also at greater risk of abuse and suicide.”

Becoming socially isolated is not something to be ignored or trivialized. As Mike Magee, M.D. said in his Book of Choices, “Loneliness breeds only discontent. When no one cares, no one cares, period. The perception is the reality.” This feeling is akin to being in a room full of people but

still feeling lonely and isolated. Other people would say you are not alone or isolated and have no reason to be lonely, but you are. That is your reality. Overcoming this reality as one ages is not without its challenges.

It really is too easy for the “experts” to say: get involved, volunteer, take a class, use technology (e.g. Facebook) to stay in touch with family (assuming you have family), attend church (assuming you had/have one and have not fallen off the radar), get a pet or you’re never too old to find new friends (finding a true friend at any age is tough, and only tougher as we get older). No, I am not trying to be negative or to “poo-poo” all these ideas. These are good ideas worthy of consideration and some elders will use some of these ideas in a self-help way out of isolation. But for many elders who have experienced significant losses in life and now find themselves isolated and alone, it might be important for us to reach out to them and not vice-versa.

**For all of us
this quote
of Norman
Cousins is
so true,
“The eternal
quest of the
individual
human being
is to shatter
his loneliness.”**

So let us take baby steps, together. Do we know someone in our personal lives who is possibly lonely and isolated? I suspect we all do. Call them. Ask them out to lunch or dinner. Gradually—but don’t throw it

at them all at once—find out if they would be interested in volunteering or attending a church, and find out if they have a way to get there? Could they benefit from the visit of a Senior Companion or a friendly visitor, and would they be at all interested? Try to find out what their likes and dislikes are (again, a slow process). Don’t give up because they don’t jump at your suggestions or ideas. Don’t push them. It really is important to remember that people don’t become isolated (and in many cases, lonely) overnight. For most it was, and is, a gradual process. But it can be scary and frightening to suddenly realize you are alone. Unfortunately, by then, many can become paralyzed by inertia and may need help taking the first steps. And many will have become so isolated that they are hidden in the shadows of life. But remember for all of us this quote of Norman Cousins is so true, “The eternal quest of the individual human being is to shatter his loneliness.”



PHENOMENAL PHILANTHROPISTS by Lauren Meadors

Navy Federal Credit Union



Navy Federal Credit Union's mission is to serve their members, wherever life takes them. This commitment to service is easily seen in their charitable efforts within the greater Pensacola area. "Our team members are involved in the community and it doesn't take long to see the importance of the work being done by Council on Aging," said Alethia Coleman Davis, Contact Center Manager. Every holiday season, Navy Federal's Greater Pensacola Operations participates in Christmas for Seniors. In 2018, team members in the credit card division wanted to go beyond this drive and give all year to Council on Aging.

A quarterly donation drive was designed to help meet the needs of seniors during each season, from A/C window units and fans in the summer to blankets and hygiene items in the winter. The first quarter's donation floored us at Council on Aging. An

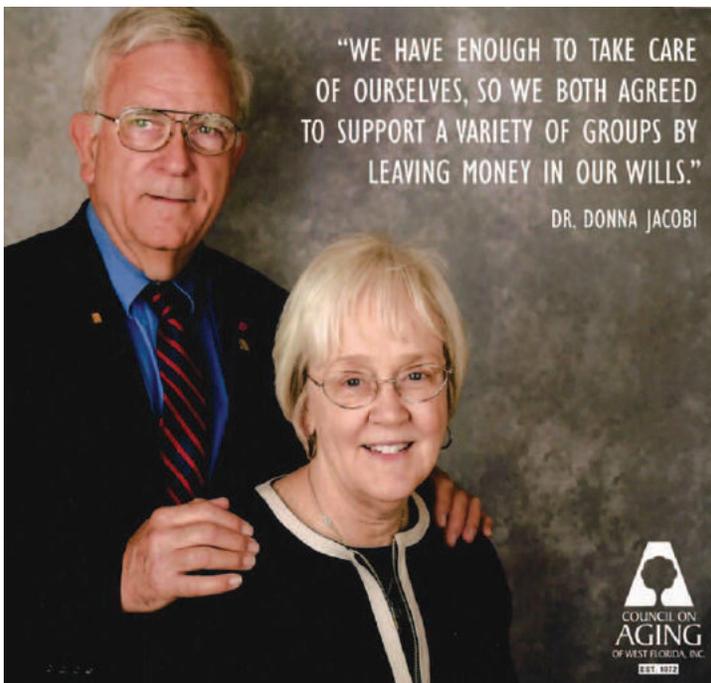
agency van was required to pick up all the supplies at Navy Federal, including dozens of cases of Ensure to seniors and more than 60 blankets. This strong source of supplies for our seniors has not wavered over the year; in the fall quarter alone, team members donated 55 cases of Ensure! Outside of this, two team supervisors have even volunteered with fundraisers for both air conditioning drives and activity funds for the Retreat.

Navy Federal team members quickly became not just donors and philanthropists, but also volunteers. Each team in the contact center has taken time on their day off to go together to volunteer at the Retreat this year and bring with them an engaging experience for both our seniors and their fellow team members by playing games, reading books and even dancing. One team brought a pool party straight to our clients, easily the

highlight of this past summer for staff and clients. They have also donated food, a Christmas tree, bingo prizes and have an ornament drive planned for the holidays.

"Navy Federal team members arrive with both excitement and uncertainty in their eyes and leave with a sense of joy and a new appreciation for what we bring to our Seniors and their families," said Jessica Ayers, the Retreat Director, "I would like to thank them from the bottom of my heart, for their time and dedication to this community service project. Their time and donations are greatly appreciated by all here as we look forward to spending more time together in the future".

When asked what caused Navy Federal teams to want to add weekly volunteering to their partnership with Council on Aging, Coleman Davis said simply, "When you support Council on Aging and you see the importance of the work, it's easy to ask, 'What else can we do?'" Both the ongoing drive for much needed supplies and the incredible fun and life brought to the Retreat weekly have made huge differences in the lives of seniors on our community, and Navy Federal team members. "When our employees return from volunteering, they bring with them a renewed sense of empathy and service," said Coleman Davis, "That helps them better serve their coworkers and our members."



Donna Jacobi

Dr. Donna Jacobi has been practicing Internal Medicine and Geriatrics for almost 40 years. "I went into medicine because of the needs I saw in nursing homes, but I soon learned my patients wanted to stay HOME," said Jacobi. Only desperate families requested nursing home placement. Jacobi recognized that many of her patients could not physically take care of their home and their needs and often did not have the financial resources to manage either.

When working closely with the Florida Council on Aging, Jacobi was shocked that only a small fraction of charitable giving is directed towards

elders. A long-time board member at Council on Aging, she plans to leave some of her estate to Council on Aging.

"My husband, Jack, and I were blessed with supportive families and good-paying jobs. We have no children. We try to serve, support, and give in various ways, and because we do want to be sure we have enough to cover our own long-term care, we chose larger donations after we are gone," said Jacobi, "Beyond my church, Council on Aging is clearly my favorite charity. I can't imagine our community without its efforts to keep people independent as long as possible, helping them stay home where they wish to be."

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Caregiver Support Group Program

You cannot serve from an empty vessel

By Noah Desimone

For the millions of Americans living with debilitating diseases and disabilities, caregivers provide much needed assistance and comfort. While we often discuss the challenges associated with individuals in need of care, we often overlook the people who dedicate themselves to assisting others.

Often, the duties of caregiving can take a hefty emotional toll, especially considering that many caregivers are family members and friends of their clients. Luckily, various outlets devoted to caring exist for those selfless individuals who care for others.

Council on Aging has one such program devoted to caregivers. Individuals like Al Simmons have appreciated the emotional comfort of Council on Aging's support group program.



Senior Companion Margaret Lett provides assistance at Arc Gateway

“Hearing the families share and being able to offer empathy and possible resources is unbelievably rewarding.”

“Sometimes, it’s just nice to have a break, that’s a big part of what the support group does,” Simmons said while talking about the three years that he has been with Council on Aging’s Caregiver Support program.

Simmons explained his history as a caregiver and some of the challenges that he has faced in helping his wife throughout the past seventeen years. Simple things like getting enough sleep become a constant struggle as a caregiver.

“Caregiving really is a 24-hour job because she can stop breathing at night,” he said. “Every time she stops, I have to get up to make sure that she starts breathing again so I used to never get any sleep before she got her CPAP machine.”

Simmons talked about the fact that caregivers are often thrust into roles that they are likely unprepared for.

“I just felt lost and ready to give up because there is so much information out there that you don’t know how to get unless somebody comes and tells you about it,” he said.

Thankfully, Simmons was able to navigate his way through caring for his wife thanks to the support group.

“The main thing that the group gives you is information,” Simmons said.

“The program has really helped because you get into this business and it’s all hit and miss. At first you have no idea that you’re supposed to take care of yourself. The problem is, if you don’t take care of yourself, you

just can’t take care of anybody else. that’s one of the biggest things that the support group stresses.”

Simmons explained that the program is also a way to destress and vent about many of the issues that individuals might be having.

“A lot of people just don’t have the time to take care of themselves at all anymore,” he said. “If you’re doing it for 24 hours a day for 17 years, there’s no time for rest. Honestly, a lot of people just come to the group to get a break.”

After talking with Simmons about his time with the support group, Margaret Jerauld discussed her time running the program and some of the challenges and rewards that come with it. Jerauld went out of her way to

explain that the emotional benefits of the program are not strictly limited to the caregivers who are a part of it and has deeply affected her as well.

"Hearing the families share and being able to offer empathy and possible resources is unbelievably rewarding," she said. "The whole experience puts life in a whole new perspective for me."

Jerauld explained that Simmons echoed many of the same challenges and difficulties that nearly all caregivers face.

"Caregivers often need to understand what is happening to their loved ones and who to go to for diagnosis," she said. "Unfortunately, the resources required to know these things are often very difficult for caregivers to get a hold of."

Jerauld went on to say that one of the primary goals of the program is to aid the caregivers in gaining access to these materials and supporting them while they deal with the uncertainty of their loved one's medical situations.

"One of the other things that we often deal with is helping caregivers who have a desperate need for respite care resources. These resources enable caregivers the opportunity to take care of themselves for a change," Jerauld added.

She went on to talk about how respite opportunities are vital for the quality of care as the time off allows caregivers to destress and come back to the people they look after with a new perspective.

Jerauld explained that many of the individuals who come to the support



Senior Companion William Lindsey provides respite to caregivers

group can be daunted by the idea of putting themselves out there and can be a little bit shy at first.

"Some choose to share more than others, but those who hesitate to share in a first meeting will often share when they attend another session," she said.

Many times, Jerauld explained, the concept of support groups is intimidating for caregivers. Despite these common concerns, the reality of the program is anything but intimidating.

"Every session, the caregivers gather around a conference room table, snacks are provided and they introduce themselves and share as much or as little as they choose," she explained.

After the caregivers talk about the challenges that they are currently facing, the group always tries to offer resources based on the needs discussed in each session and to make sure that everyone is

as comfortable and emotionally supported as possible.

The significance of support groups for the caregivers in our community is glaringly obvious. Programs like Council on Aging's Caregiver Support group give caregivers an outlet to tell their stories and their burdens with other people who can understand the unique challenges that caregivers must face. To summarize the emotional experiences of caregiving, Jerauld offered a poem from Owen Darnell:

Do Not Ask Me to Remember

**Do not ask me to remember,
Don't try to make me understand,
Let me rest and know you're with me,
Kiss my cheek and hold my hand.
I'm confused beyond your concept,
I am sad and sick and lost.
All I know is that I need you
To be with me at all cost.
Do not lose your patience with me,
Do not scold or curse or cry.
I can't help the way I'm acting,
Can't be different though I try.
Just remember that I need you,
That the best of me is gone,
Please don't fail to stand beside me,
Love me 'til my life is done.**

Council on Aging urges caregivers in need of assistance to reach out for the help that they deserve and use the resources from the support group to their advantage. No reservations are required, there is no pressure to share the details of your experience. Margaret Jerauld from the Caregiver Support Group Program is available between monthly meetings for one-on-one sessions with caregivers to meet their individual needs. For information on Council on Aging's Caregiver Support Group program call the Council on Aging office at (850) 432-1475.



The New Slang

by Will Isern

It's the mark of each new generation to invent and popularize new words and forms of speech. Informal slang, shorthand and dialect combine to form new ways of communicating.

With the rise of the Internet and social media, new slang is spreading faster than ever. While some words have a short life span, others stick around and seep into everyday use. You don't hear "groovy" much anymore, but the ubiquitous LOL (laugh out loud) is seemingly going nowhere anytime soon.

In an essay titled "Is English Changing?" Betty Birner of the Linguistics Society of America writes that, "Language changes for several reasons. First, it changes because the needs of its speakers change. New technologies, new products and new experiences require new words to refer to them clearly and efficiently."

Birner continues that, "Many of the changes that occur in language begin with teens and young adults. As young people interact with others their own age, their language grows to include words, phrases and constructions that are different from those of the older generation."

Modern slang is born and lives online. Some words are reserved for text messaging or posting on sites like Facebook and Twitter and rarely ever fit into daily speech. Others may start and spread online through social media posts and videos, but are quickly adapted to daily use. As always, keeping up with the latest slang is a way of exhibiting group identity. Speakers who use the same words and phrases are able to identify each other as members of the same group.

Trying to decipher what the younger generations are saying to one another can be almost impossible if you don't know what their words mean. Some may decry the slang is incorrect

or vulgar adaptations of language, but Birner notes that language is always evolving.

"The change is so slow that from year to year we hardly notice it, except to grumble every so often about the 'poor English' being used by the younger generation! However, reading Shakespeare's writings from the sixteenth century can be difficult. If you go back a couple more centuries, Chaucer's Canterbury Tales are very tough sledding, and if you went back another 500 years to try to read Beowulf, it would be like reading a different language."

With that perspective in mind, it can be fun to see the creative ways that today's youth are shaping language. To that end, we've compiled this primer on some of today's most popular slang being used daily on America's high school and college campuses. Try some of these out on a young person you know and watch their reaction!

BEGINNER

Lit – A social gathering or activity that is exceptionally enjoyable. Interchangeable with cool. “The party last night was lit.” Can also be used to describe an intoxicated person.

Chill/Chillin’ – To hang out alone or with friends doing nothing in particular. “Q: What are you doing today? A: Nothing much. Just chillin’.” Can also be used to describe something that is relaxing or peaceful.

Bae – A love interest or significant other. Can also be used to indicate favorite celebrities or foods. “Frank Sinatra is bae.”

Fam – Short for family, used to denote the speaker’s actual family or close circle of friends. The phrase, “Chillin’ with the fam” is common.

Extra – To be overly dramatic. “She was being so extra when the waiter brought her the wrong meal.”

INTERMEDIATE

Bet – Used as a one-off affirmative statement, bet indicates that the speaker understands and agrees with what is being said. Interchangeable with “word” or “true.”

Woke – To be knowledgeable of social issues, particularly issues of social injustice not popularized by the media.

Dead – To find something extremely funny. “That comedy show last night had me dead.”

Flex – To show off or brag, especially on social media. “He was posed in front of his mansion with his Lamborghini, just flexing on everybody.”

Salty – An adjective to describe someone who is upset or bitter, especially about an insignificant issue. “You salty, bro?”

ADVANCED

Savage – As an adjective, savage describes behavior that disregards the feelings of others. “I heard the most savage joke the other day.”

Lowkey – Used to indicate that the forthcoming statement is to be kept secret. Most common when expressing opinions that might conflict with social norms. “Lowkey, Dave’s sister is quite attractive.” Can also be used humorously to describe actions the speaker might be ashamed to admit. “I lowkey want to eat that entire cake.”

Ghost – A verb used to describe the act of cutting off all communication with a person with no notice, especially on online matchmaking services. “We were supposed to go on a date Friday night, but she ghosted me.”

Sus – Short for suspicious. Sus is used to describe someone who acts in a secretive or deceptive way. “He was talking to himself and being very sus.”



New Year's Resolutions

by Lauren Meadors

The holiday season is a time to reflect on growth throughout the past year and to think about the new person you may become in the following year. According to Forbes, 40 percent of Americans make New Year's Resolutions that include physical, emotional and spiritual goals. In 2017, 80 percent of New Year's resolutions failed by February, mainly because the goals were not tailored to individual and resources may not have been utilized. When planning your 2019 resolution, think about the resources that are specially made for seniors that may help you make it past February, and even into 2020 as an even better version of yourself.



EXERCISE

- Silver Sneakers provides participants with free gym memberships across the nation and is covered by many insurance plans, including Medicare Part C. Check with your insurance provider for details.
- Tai Chi works to improve balance and flexibility while centering emotions and bringing peace to those that practice it. Gadsden St. United Methodist Church offers Tai Chi and Qigong exercises Tuesdays from 2 to 3 pm. 850-433-0014.
- CrossFit isn't just throwing giant tires, it can help strength basic muscle groups for any motion. Programs can be designed by a trainer to work on any goal for everyday life, such as carrying heavy groceries or picking up your grandkids. Call Mako Athletics at 850-736-4968 to see what CrossFit routine can strengthen your body.



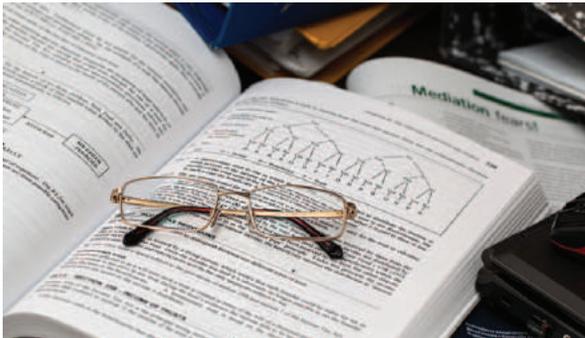
HEALTHY DIET

- Meal delivery services bring convenience and healthy choices straight to your door. Prepared meals can be delivered through Meals on Wheels. If you are interested in cooking, consider companies that deliver all of the fresh ingredients to your door that you need for their recipes such as HelloFresh or Blue Apron.
- If you have any health issues that may require dietary restrictions, meet with your doctor and a nutritionist to understand your needs and plan ways to eat healthier based on foods you enjoy.



NEW JOB

- Career Source Escarosa is a nonprofit that works with both employees and jobseekers to find the perfect match, with a program especially for the senior workforce. Call 850-607-8700 or visit careersourceescarosa.com
- Unsure of what your next path is? A life coach will work with you to determine your vision, as well as goals to achieve whatever lies ahead. Laurie Hansen, Certified Life Coach, even offers a 10 percent discount to seniors (509)-306-9172.



BACK TO THE CLASSROOM

- It's never too late to go back to school, and with Pensacola State College and the University of West Florida in our backyard, it's easy!
- Just want to take a few classes for fun? Check out UWF's Leisure Learning program for those over 55. \$35 covers one year of courses that include: art, business, cooking, travel, history and science/health classes. The \$35 annual membership even includes your UWF parking pass. Contact Leisure Learning at 850-474-3491.



QUIT SMOKING

- Many smokers quit multiple times before the final attempt to give up cigarettes lasts. Each attempt becomes more successful with the right support system.
- For free quit counseling and nicotine patches, contact the Florida Quitline at 877-822-6669/1-877-U-CAN-NOW
- Escambia county residents can join a six-week "Quit Smoking Now" clinic offered through Escambia County Tobacco Prevention and Control Program and West Florida Area Health Education Centers by calling 850-682-2552.

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WINTER RECIPES

by Josh Newby



The combination of cold weather, friends and the holidays tends to bring out the very best comfort food recipes from the annals of family history. These delicious concoctions, passed down on paper from generation to generation, with eraser and pencil marks signifying the slight changes made as each cook puts their own spin on it, are powerful reminders of the power of food to bring people together. Below are some of our very favorite recipes, as voted on by members of the community and as prepared by volunteers. So throw another helping of sugar and butter in there; it's winter, and your body is burning more calories than usual as it fights to stay warm... right?

SOUTHERN RED VELVET

Ingredients:

- 2 ½ cups all purpose flour
- 1 ½ cups sugar
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp cocoa powder
- 1 tsp fine salt
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp white vinegar
- 1 ½ tsp vegetable oil
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 2 tbsp red food color
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

Frosting

- 4 cup confectionary/powder sugar
- 2 stick unsalted butter
- 1 pound cream cheese
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

Method:

Oven at 350 degrees. Mix dry ingredients with oil, buttermilk, eggs, food color, vinegar, vanilla. Divide equally into 3 9" pans – bake 20-30 minutes. For frosting, combine all frosting ingredients and whisk together til creamy.



APPLE DAPPLE

(with your favorite pie crust or purchased pie crust recipe)

Ingredients:

- 2/3 cup sugar
- ¾ tsp. cinnamon
- 1 tsp. nutmeg
- 1 ¼ cups chopped and peeled apples
- ¼ cup butter or margarine, melted

Method:

Heat oven to 375 degrees
Cut pie crust in 4" circles. Combine sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg in small bowl. Spoon 1 tablespoon of apple in each circle and 1 tsp. of sugar over apples. Fold pie crust in half, press edges, brush crust with melted butter and remaining sugar mix. Please in large pan and bake for 20 minutes or until golden brown.



COLLARD GREENS

Boil 2 smoked hamhocks until well done in stockpot
Add tsp (1) salt and tsp (2) sugar, add cooking oil ½ cup
Stir in 3 packages (1 pound) greens, cook for about 20 minutes on high on stovetop. Lower heat to medium for 1 ½ hour or longer, stirring occasionally.

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Best Friends Forever

by Josh Newby

The phrase “best friends forever” is thrown around a lot, but Betty Ward and Dorothy Hanes really have been the best of buds since before they could remember. Betty was born in January of 1928, Dorothy a month later, and they were inseparable by June of that year.

“I’m a month older than her, and I don’t let her forget it,” said Betty.

They grew up together across the street from one another in Bowling Green, Ky. Betty and Dorothy spent all of kindergarten, grade school and college together, before Betty moved to Pensacola around the middle of the century. That means that for 70 years, they have maintained a long-distance friendship closer than most pals who live down the road from one another.

Betty and Dorothy stay close by talking on the phone, chatting on Facebook and meeting up a couple times a year. In fact, in the 90 years they have known each other, Betty estimates that they have never gone more than a year without seeing each other face to face.

“We just genuinely love each other so much,” said Betty. “I never hesitated to call her or reach out. She never hesitated to spend time with me, my children or my grandchildren. She’s so close to me and I appreciate her so much.”

“We have as much fun sitting in a room together as we did when we used to take road trips as young married couples. She’s so sweet.”



To My Best Friend

We've been friends through
a million things ~
in our worst moments
when everything seemed horrible,
and on our best days
when every moment was beautiful.

We've shared all our thoughts,
our dreams, and our hearts.
We've kept each other's secrets
and sworn to be faithful.

We've spent time revealing
the deepest part of our feelings
and encouraging each other
when one of us was insecure.

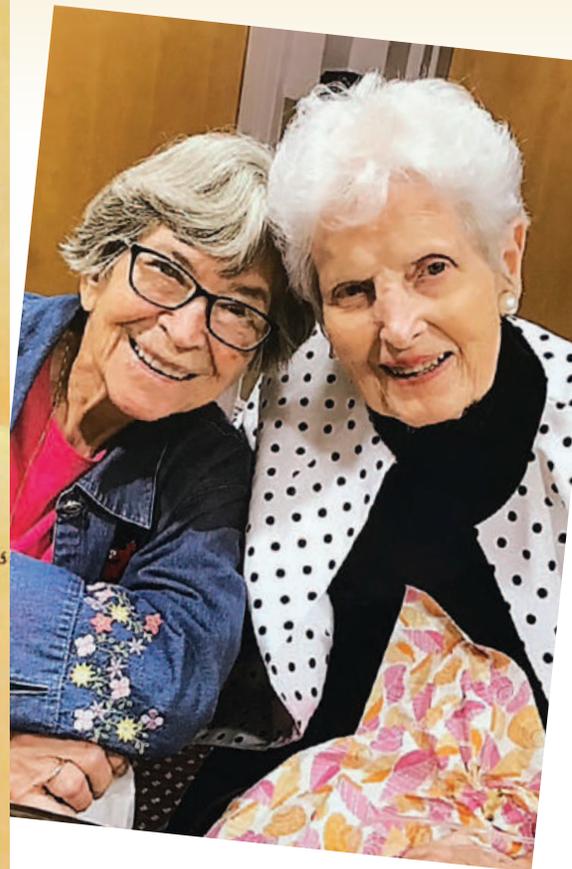
We've been each other's strength
during the saddest moments
and shared each other's dreams
through every change or discouragement.

We've been the best of friends, for 90 years
known each other better
than anyone else,
and accepted each other.

We've shared a lot through the years,
and I have to tell you
that I love you, my dear friend,
and I will until the end.

If you ever need a friend...
please know you can count on me!

Love, *Dinksey* 2018
- Regina Hill



Betty reports that when they get together after a few months, it's just like no time as passed at all. They play cards, joke, and talk about their 90 years of memories that they share.

They were at each other's weddings—and helped one another when those husbands passed away years ago. They have been present at the birth of their children, and many of their offspring have forged their own relationships with the matriarchs.

“Just being together was always special,” said Betty, as she tries to remember what her and Dorothy did together during their

adolescent years. “We didn't really play sports or go to the movies. Just walked together and let the time pass. I honestly can't remember a time when we were ever mad at each other or argued. We had different taste in men, too, so that was never a problem.”

Nowadays, Betty is mostly confined to The Haven in Pensacola, an assisted living facility. Dorothy still lives in Bowling Green and comes down to visit whenever she can. In the meantime, she makes ornaments and other crafts to keep Betty company.

“She loves me and I love her,” said Betty. “We have as much fun sitting in a room together as we did when we used to take road trips as young married couples. She's so sweet.”

Betty said she'll probably see Dorothy again sometime after January 2019. Till then, she enjoys looking at photos of the two of them as babies. Betty couldn't have possibly known, when she was posed next to Dorothy as just an infant, that she was sitting next to a best friend who would accompany her through every great challenge and triumph of life. But they are both so glad they have one another. ●



ELDER WORKFORCE

Experience, Discipline, Commitment

by Noah Desimone

Over the past several decades, the U.S. retirement age has steadily increased. Currently, the average retirement age in the country is 66, an all-time high. Reasons for this shift towards an increased senior labor force range from growing lifespans to an economy still recovering following the financial recession.

Whatever the reason for this trend, millions of “retirement-aged” Americans are discovering that retiring from the workforce is often a lot more complicated than it used to be. For many seniors, rejoining the workforce has been their

only option. This process can be daunting for many individuals. Fear of ageism and discrimination often leads many seniors to question their ability and self-worth when looking for work.

Thankfully, many programs and individuals in the area are dedicated to helping seniors throughout this difficult process. After reaching out to one such agency, *Coming of Age* asked Landrum’s Director of staffing, Jim Howe, about his role in helping seniors find employment.

“We have a unique opportunity as a staffing company to see

employment trends from a variety of industries,” he said. “Typically, we ask what our candidates are looking for and try to accommodate their needs as best we can.”

After talking a bit about the staffing process, Howe went on to explain some of the factors which can make employment challenging.

“Many times, we’ll see workers who have been displaced from positions and are looking for a second career or a new position,” he said. “This can be frustrating, as these opportunities can be quite rare and difficult to find.”

According to Howe, hiring is always a two-way street where both the employer and employee should be satisfied. This need to appease everyone is often challenging and requires some time spent educating candidates about what they can offer to potential employees.

“Often, it’s not about experience, it’s about skill sets and personalities,” Howe said.

He went on to explain that often, the impetus for senior’s decision to rejoin the workforce stems from a desire for purpose.

"The workforce provides an opportunity for socialization and a chance for seniors to broaden their peer network," he said.

Howe explained that despite the misconceptions we often have regarding older workers, they typically prove to be some of the most valuable and reliable members of the workforce.

"Many studies have suggested that baby boomers have much higher loyalty and commitment factor than their younger peers," he said. "Typically, these individuals have a very strong work ethic and take a great deal of pride in what they do. While misconceptions abound regarding older workers and their assumed aversions to technology, we almost always find them easy to work with."

After talking with management about the circumstances surrounding elder workers, *Coming of Age* reached out to Brenda Davenport, one of the many seniors in our area who has decided to make a change in her life and reenter the workforce.

"If something that you've been doing for all these years doesn't cut it anymore, then you need to try something different," she said. "Things just weren't working for me and I decided that I needed to restructure my life."

For Davenport, this change meant more than just reentering the workforce.

After leaving the workplace in 2009, Brenda decided to start going back to school in order to work in the field that she knew really suited her.

"I started out in PJC in 1984 in computer programming," she said. "While I was at school, I ended up changing my major several times. Now I'm going back to school for business administration. This decision was really difficult as it had been such a long time and thinking about my age, it was really daunting knowing that I was the oldest person in class. The biggest challenge has been all the overload, the classes, the work and the writing. It was so overwhelming at first."

Despite the challenges, Davenport knew that the struggle of school and work was worth the reward of working in the field that she feels she belongs in.

"This semester, I decided to do at least one class on campus," she said. "After taking one class I decided to go back out there and work. I knew I could only do part time because it's so difficult to do both, but it's been an incredibly rewarding journey."

Brenda went on to explain some of the unexpected advantages to working as a senior in our area.

"I think that the older we get, the more we can remain disciplined," she said.

In fact, Davenport's experiences reflect some of the common misconceptions about older workers. Despite the typical stereotype of older employees as inflexible and inefficient, the reality of what the older workforce has to offer is much different. According to some of the most recent research regarding the work habits of senior individuals, the quality of job performance is often much higher from mature workers than from their younger counterparts. Beyond this, factors like counterproductive work behaviors, turnover rates, ineffective organizational commitments, and even resistance to change are much more common among younger workers.

Although there is often little evidence to suggest that common prejudices towards elder workers have any validity, many elderly individuals report regular instances of ageism during their foray back into the workplace. Thankfully, these examples of unfair practices and prejudices do not have to be the norm.

Thanks to organizations such as Landrum and the HR staff who specialize in aiding seniors with this transitional period in their lives, seniors can find productive and rewarding roles in careers throughout our area without the stress of ageism. Individuals like Davenport serve as fantastic success stories regarding this transition.

"If something that you've been doing for all these years doesn't cut it anymore, then you need to try something different."

"Things just weren't working for me and I decided that I needed to restructure my life."

"I think that experience and confidence in yourself, knowing that you can do it, that's most important," Davenport said. "Me personally, I don't like to fail. I never like to repeat things over again, I like to get it right the first time... I would tell people who are nervous about getting back into the workplace to just do it and not put any limitations on yourself."

In a constantly shifting economy, Davenport's acceptance of change seems as though it is the most important takeaway for many seniors looking to the future. More than ever, our economy is inextricably linked with our elders.

WILLIAM DANIELS

An Exclusive Interview

by Kelly Oden

Actor William Daniels has been performing in one way or another for most of his 91 years. He is unique among actors in that he is instantly recognizable to most people, but the generation of the viewer is often the decisive factor in how they recognize him. Older generations may remember him as Dustin Hoffman's father in the iconic 1960s film *The Graduate* and to younger folks, he is and will forever be that wise teacher Mr. Feeny from the 90s teen show *Boy Meets World*.

Born in Brooklyn, New York on March 31, 1927, Daniels and his sister Jacqueline began performing at an early age at their mother's urging. Daniels was drafted into the U.S. Army in 1945 and was stationed in Italy, where he served as a disc jockey at an Army radio station. Later, Daniels enrolled at Northwestern University where he met his wife of 67 years, Bonnie Bartlett.

Daniels is well-known for multiple iconic roles including Dr. Mark Craig in the NBC drama *St. Elsewhere*, for which he won two Emmy Awards, and Mr. Feeny in the ABC sitcom *Boy Meets World*.

Daniels played the father of Benjamin Braddock (Dustin Hoffman) in *The Graduate* (1967), Howard in *Two for the Road*, John Adams in the 1972 musical film *1776*, Carter Nash in *Captain Nice* and is the voice of KITT in *Knight Rider*. In 2014, he returned to his role as Mr. Feeny in *Girl Meets World*, the sequel to *Boy Meets World*.

Coming of Age had the distinct pleasure of speaking with William Daniels—and his wife, actress Bonnie Bartlett—about his life, his career and their long, happy marriage.





COA: Mr. Daniels, thank you for speaking with me. Let's start at the beginning. You were born in Brooklyn in 1927. What an amazing span of time—you must have some incredible memories of the shaping of that city.

WD: Well, it's totally different today, but when I was a young person in Brooklyn it was more of a blue collar area. My father was a blue collar worker—he was a bricklayer. It was a middle class area. Hull Street was where I was born and played. I went back a few years ago and I was shocked to find that Hull

Street was only two blocks long. It seemed much bigger to me as a child.

COA: What was your childhood like?

WD: We were performers very early. My mother put my sister Jackie and I into dance classes and then pretty soon into performing. It was the 30s, so it was during the Depression. There were a lot of child performers out there because they were cheap, and sometimes they were just free. Anyway, that's when we started performing for The Nick Kenny Children's Show on

the radio. We would go and do all of this for nothing. We weren't getting paid, although we found out later that he was. For my mother, it was important that we were gaining experience. It was a lot of experience over the years. I was something like 13 or 14. I really didn't get away from the family until I was drafted, which was a great help to me because we were all much too close.

COA: That must have been quite the challenge—going from this tight knit family in Brooklyn to being on your own?

WD: Yes, it was, but it also kind of freed me from the family. We were so close, it was ridiculous. I wound up in Livorno, Italy and I worked as a disc jockey at an Army radio station. I was in there for two years. When I got out, I immediately went into Northwestern University where I met my wife, who's on the phone with me.

COA: Hello, Bonnie. Thanks for joining us. How exactly did you meet?

WD: Well, we were actually in a classroom auditioning for a play and the director was in the classroom and the people who were



Top: William Daniels and his wife, Bonnie Bartlett.
Bottom: William Daniels with his first Emmy award.

auditioning sat in these class desks in front. I heard these people read and I thought, "Oh yeah, well that's no actor. I don't know if I want to be in this turkey." That's when I heard a voice in the back. The director called out Bonnie and he had her read and I heard an actress.

COA: So you heard her voice before you even saw her?

WD: Yes, exactly. It was the voice of an actor and I heard it immediately. Mind you, I had already been in New York and on Broadway. I was a cocky kid at that time. Having had Broadway experience, I was rather critical of all of these people. So I waited at the door for her to come by. I said, "How about a cup of coffee?" She said, "You are too short." I said, "Come on, have a cup of coffee" and she said, "All right." We have been together ever since.

COA: How did you propose?

WD: I really don't recall having ever proposed. We went together for so long it was just assumed that we would get married.

BB: We finally had to get married just to be alone.

COA: How long have you been married?

BB: We have been together for 70 years and married for 67.

COA: What is your secret to a long and happy marriage?

WD: Mutual respect. Respect for each other as human beings and respect for each other's talent. We worked in the same field but if one of us got a job we would be happy for each other. I think respect is probably the most important

thing in marriage and love, of course.

BB: It is sort of like being able to be flexible enough because you each are going to do something that is annoying to the other person. So, I would say to be tolerant of each other. Getting through those things and talking about them. When I was younger, it took a long time for me to learn to say, "You know, you can't do that to me. You can't." That is part of what you have to say to each other—"I don't like it when you do that. Let's talk it out." You must not be silent. I know when we were first married it was during the time when women did everything around the house. You didn't see a man with a baby carriage. Women did all of the work. A lot of it was just, maybe, if you asked the man to do something, then maybe he would do it, but you had to ask. You can't just silently suffer.

COA: William, in your memoir, you talk about the difficulties of dealing with an over enthusiastic stage mother and how you came to terms with that by going to therapy. Tell me how you dealt with that and what advice you would give to young actors who might be dealing with the same things as you.

WD: Well, my mother put Jackie and me into show business and she was our mentor. She read in the paper that Nick Kenny, who had a daily column in the *New York Daily Mirror*, was auditioning kids. She took us to go audition for Nick Kenny's younger brother Charlie. We did a little tap dance and when we did,

they said, “No, no, no. This is radio. Tap dancing is no good. Now, if you sang, maybe.” So, she took us home and taught us how to sing. We went back and they said, “No, no, no. Not in unison. In harmony” So, she took us back home taught us to sing harmony and took us back for a third time. That time, they said, “Yes, that’s it,” and they let us onto the show.

BB: Irene was the persistent one. The kids just did what they were told. Bill loved his mother very much and he did what he was told. But, he sometimes displayed a great deal of anger and would say, “Why couldn’t I just say that I didn’t want to do it?” So I think if children want to perform, that’s great, but if it comes from the parent, then it is no good. The kid has to want to do it.

WD: It took a long time to get over that resentment of being put into it. It actually came when I started acting. I was in a Broadway show called *Life with Father*. Then I realized, wait a minute, I am pretty good at this—not the song and dance, but acting. I decided that I would like to become an actor. That was the moment when I kind of walked away from the family and our song and dance team and I went into acting.

BB: The irony is that all of that experience as a singer and dancer actually did come in handy when he wanted to do a couple musicals. He wanted to do *1776*, and the only reason he could do that was because he had been a singer and had an incredible musical background and talent.

COA: Speaking of 1776, you famously refused the Tony nomination for supporting actor. Tell me about that.

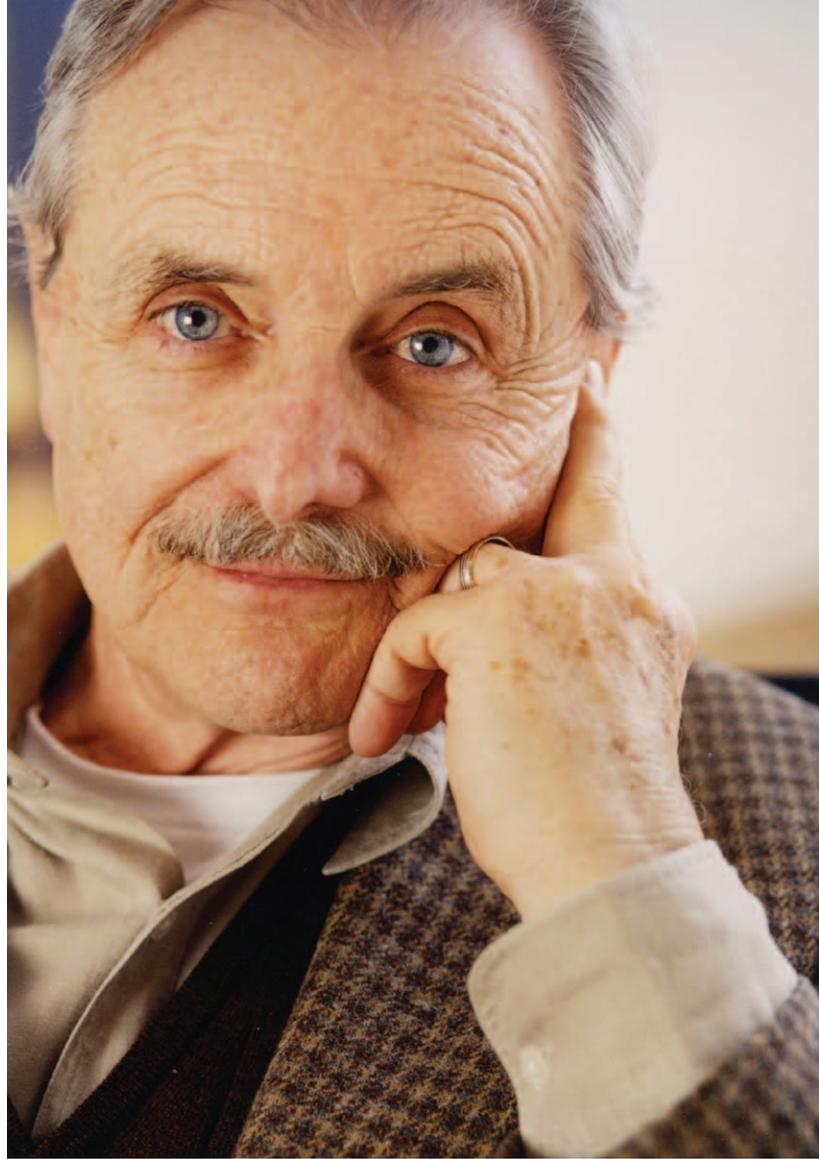
WD: Yes. Our show opened on Broadway after we had been out of town in Boston. But it opened in the spring. The producers had already met and nominated shows that they had already seen and they had not seen our show. Obviously, I was the lead in *1776*, but they offered me a supporting actor nomination and I turned it down. They said, “Why?” I said, “Who am I supporting?” And they didn’t have an answer for that. They said, “Well, we already have leading men,” and I said, “Well, then leave me out.”

COA: Was there any backlash from your decision and did you ever regret it?

WD: No, I haven’t regretted it at all. I think I was right in insisting that I am the leading role because, obviously, in *1776* John Adams is the leading role. I turned down this supporting role nomination and I never regretted it and I forgot about it. I think this show business offers out too many awards as it is. I wasn’t about to feel anything other than that I was right because I wasn’t a supporting actor. I was the lead in the show.

COA: We’ve talked about 1776 a lot. What are your thoughts on Hamilton?

WD: We loved it. It was a pleasure going to see it and meeting Lin-Manuel Miranda. He wanted me to come back to show me my old dressing room because I had performed in the same theater—the 46th Street



“I enjoyed using my voice to make the crowd quiet to the point that you could hear a pin drop. You knew you had them in the palm of your hand, and that feeling that you could do whatever you wanted and they will be with you. That was a strong attraction for me in working in live theater.”

Theater. I went back and it was a wonderful experience. He’s a great guy.

BB: By the way, the whole conversation with Lin-Manuel is in the back of Bill’s book. It’s a wonderful dialogue between Bill and Lin-Manuel. We can’t wait to see what he does next.

COA: William, I heard that you were only 10 years older than Dustin Hoffman when they asked you to play his father in *The Graduate*. Is that true?

WD: Yes, that’s true—9

years, but that didn’t make any difference to the director, Mike Nichols. He does amazing work. He had seen my work and he offered me a small part and I turned it down. He asked why I turned it down and I said, “Well, it’s a small part.” He said, “But, it has two laughs.” He said, “Well, how about the father?” That was whole different story. It was a substantial part and I guess he just wanted to work with me, so I did it. It was a wonderful experience. Mike was a

WILLIAM DANIELS: AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

wonderful director and he knew enough to cast people that he didn't have to give acting lessons to. Some directors just love to give you an acting lesson, even though you are probably a better actor than they are. He didn't do that. He knew the people he cast and he left them alone to do their work. He would just set up scenes and he would go from there.

COA: Did you become friendly with Dustin Hoffman?

WD: Yes, I did. We did that, but after a show is over you all go your own ways. I know if I saw Dustin on the street we would say hello, but we never became close friends or anything like that.

COA: That movie is such a cultural touchstone. Did you have any idea what it would become?

WD: I misunderstood from the beginning. When I heard the cast, Anne Bancroft was going to play the mother and she had a name on Broadway, so I assumed this movie was about her. I went in and we had the first read through. Then I realized and I said, "Oh, wait a minute." And Mike Nichols said, "I'm going to play you some music that I'm thinking of playing during the show." He played "Sounds of Silence" and I realized that's a young person song. Our young person was this young man that I had never heard of, Dustin Hoffman, who was the lead in the show. Indeed, it was his show and he became a huge star. My whole idea about the show changed starting with that music.

COA: Let's talk about *Boy Meets World* and the role of Mr. Feeny. You were a surrogate father figure for so many people who grew up watching that show. How does that make you feel? Did you realize this at the time?

WD: Actually, I turned that role down because to me the name Mr. Feeny was a very funny name and I didn't want to make fun of teachers. They are underpaid and they're terribly important to all of us. So I turned it down and Michael Jacobs asked me to come in and meet with him. I did and he said, "Why did you turn it down?" I said, "The name is funny and I don't want to make fun of teachers." He said, "Wait a minute. I based this Mr. Feeny on a teacher of mine in high school who became a mentor of mine and who was a very important person in my life. I expect to treat Mr. Feeny with that kind of respect." I said, "Well, in that case I will do it."

BB: The response over the years has been totally incredible and surprising. We didn't realize that would happen. We were just shocked.

COA: Let's talk about *Knight Rider*. I understand you read the lines for KITT just to help out a friend, but then they offered you the role?

WD: Yes. At that time I thought, "a car that talks? Give me a break." I was ready to walk away from it. I was doing *St. Elsewhere* and they knew that. It was the same network and they were willing to work around it. When I had a day off, I would go over and do KITT. I didn't meet



William Daniels with his sister, Jackie.

David Hasselhoff for a long time. He was on the road shooting it. I would record KITT's voice and they would play my recording to Hasselhoff out on the road. It seemed to work out. I finally met him at the Christmas party. Neither one of us could believe what a hit it had become.

BB: He has been so lucky. KITT was a total surprise—that it was such a big hit. It paid nicely, too.

COA: You mentioned *St. Elsewhere*. That show aired for six seasons and the two of you played husband and wife. How did you enjoy working together?

BB: Yes. I loved it. It was just a wonderful six years of working together and with wonderful people. I think I just read that all

six seasons are going to be on Hulu! We work well together.

COA: You are one of only two couples to both win Emmys on the same night, correct?

BB: Yes. Besides Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontaine, who were fabulous Broadway actors, we are the only other ones. It's such an honor.

COA: You both publicly endorsed Bernie Sanders in 2016. What are your thoughts on the current political climate?

WD: Well first of all, I'm pretty concerned about who is sitting in the White House. I don't agree with the man and I don't like the man. I stay away from that.

BB: Bill has read *The New York Times* every day of his



Ben Savage and William Daniels on the set of *Boy Meets World*.

life. When he was a kid in New York, he would go in and buy *The New York Times* and sit there and read it instead of going to school.

That's what he always has done. He has always been extremely political and extremely left. He still doesn't understand the Electoral College. He says, "What is that all about? It doesn't make sense. Hillary won. What's going on?"

WD: I don't understand it because it turns out that Hillary had almost a million more votes than this man who sits in the White House now. So that's the popular vote! So, I was very annoyed with that.

BB: Billy, don't you think this is amazing how many women have been elected?

WD: Yes, that is very encouraging for women.

We've had enough men screwing up our government. Let's get the ladies in there and give them a chance.

COA: What inspired you to write a memoir? Have you written anything else before that?

WD: I don't know what it was that made me sit down and want to write. I hadn't researched it. I hadn't really thought about it. I just picked up my pen and started writing. I think what I was trying to do is see if I could recall where I started and the journey I have had up until now. Once you pick up the pen and start writing, it is amazing. So much of my past came back to me—things that I didn't even think to remember anymore.

BB: Bill wrote it well. I know

because I am writing now and it is hard for me. I have to go back and rewrite. Bill never had to go back. He was able to tell his stories with humor and insight. He wrote easily.

WD: I kind of enjoyed doing it, actually. It was very easy for me. I liked it.

COA: You were recently in the news for foiling an attempted burglary at your home. Tell me about that.

WD: It was scary. Afterwards, I made jokes with the press because they were all here and wanted to know about it. But if you are laying bed at night and you hear bang, bang, bang on the glass, it's pretty scary. We have a glass paned door that opens onto our bedroom. Somebody was knocking out the glass panes on the lower section of the door. Bonnie screamed and I turned on the lights. He ran when he heard Bonnie and saw the lights, but that wasn't enough of a story. I knew the press wanted a story, so, I told them that I grabbed him and threw him on the ground, hit him a couple times, picked him up and hit him again and then sent him on his way. But, you know what, they didn't buy that.

COA: So you are a natural born storyteller.

BB: Yes. He is. All actors are—especially old actors.

COA: You are 91 years young. You are in good mental and physical health. How do you maintain your health as you age?

WD: I don't know how to answer that. Thinking about it, we've been busy. We have been fortunate enough to work into our older age. We don't retire. If the phone

rings, maybe it will be something interesting to do. Everybody, I think, knows I'm available. When you are 91, if they haven't met you personally, they don't know if you will come in on crutches or with a cane or what. But I am in good physical shape. I'm always a little surprised that I am as well preserved as I am.

COA: What projects do you have coming up?

BB: Bill recorded some KITT voices for a Melissa McCarthy movie. It will come out next year. I'm writing a book too. It's not quite a memoir. It's a story. It specifically has to do with the changing culture of how men treat women. I think it will be interesting and somewhat shocking.

COA: Do you have a particular time period or genre to work in?

WD: In my case, what I enjoyed most was working in front of a live audience. Doing eight a week is rather tough and I am too old for it now. When I opened a show—say for *1776*—and people were whistling and waving their programs. I enjoyed using my voice to make the crowd quiet to the point that you could hear a pin drop. You knew you had them in the palm of your hand, and that feeling that you could do whatever you wanted and they will be with you. That was a strong attraction for me in working in live theater.

COA: Thank you both so much for talking with me today. It was such a pleasure.

BB: Thank you. The pleasure was ours.

WD: Thank you. •

What's the News?

Rat Pack Reunion raises nearly \$200k for elders



The eighth annual Rat Pack Reunion fundraiser, hosted by Council on Aging of West Florida to increase awareness and support for senior programs in the area, raised approximately \$196,000 the evening of Oct. 19. Almost 350 individuals attended the gala, which featured dinner, drinks, dancing, a "raise the paddle" fundraising segment and honorary videos and speeches from four community leaders. This year, those leaders were Troy Rafferty, Valerie Russenberger, Bob Tyler and Justin Witkin.

"This was a wonderful event and it was an honor for me and John McMahon to co-chair it," said Marianne McMahon, Rat Pack committee co-

chair. "Our thanks to the committee, the sponsors and of course the Rats, who over the course of the memorable evening made a tangible impact in the lives of senior adults across the area."

Sponsors for this event include aDoor Properties, Ballinger Publishing, Baptist Health Care, Bob Tyler Toyota, Carlette Howell, Cat Country 98.7, Charlie & Fran Switzer, Covenant Care, Doug Kreis, Ed & Esther Turner, Edward Jones - John Peacock, Emerald Coast Hospice, Escambia County Sheriff's Office, Fabadashery, Flack & Kathleen Logan, Gulf Power Company, Home Instead Senior Care, Humana, Justin Witkin, Jewelers Trade Shop, Jim & Ann Neal, Joe & Tracey Durant, John B. Clark, Larry Morris, Levin Papantonio Personal Injury Lawyers, Levin Rinke Resort Realty, Commissioner Lumon May, McMahon-Hadder Insurance – John & Marianne McMahon, Nels & Abbie Offerdahl, Pete Moore Automotive, Ray & Valerie Russenberger, The Riesberg Institute, Roger Webb, Sammy's Management, Spencer Law, Stevenson Klotz Law Firm, Synovus Bank, The AKWO Justice Foundation Inc., The Oar House, The Studer Foundation, Tom & Katrina Pace, Skopelos at New World, Valley Services and WEAR-ABC3.

Council on Aging begins partnership with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northwest Florida



Council on Aging, which facilitates the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren support group, is partnering with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northwest Florida to provide mentors for grandchildren and respite for caregiver at least one hour per week.

Having a Big means that for a few hours a month, he or she experiences a different perspective and new opportunities. The longer a match lasts, the more likely it will help your child develop new ideas, habits and opportunities that can have a long-term impact on their future.

After our Match Specialist meets with guardians, children and volunteers, BBBS proposes what they believe are the best match options based upon the background, life experience, schedules, personalities and interests of both our volunteers and youth.

BBBS begins enrolling children at age 6 and continues enrollment through the 8th grade. Once matched with a mentor, children may stay active in the program until age 18. There is no cost involved. Contact BBBS at (850) 433-5437.

Day of Caring a big success for elder adults



United Way of Escambia County's Day of Caring is always such a blessing for Council on Aging clients, and 2018 was no exception. Businesses from across the area gather together to do yardwork and other tasks for seniors who cannot do it themselves. Thank

you to Gulf Power Company, Humana, Beck Partners, Capstone Academy, Lucky Cab, Pensacola Sports, Pen Air Federal Credit Union, Escambia County Public Safety, T.J.Maxx, Pensacola Energy, Visit Pensacola, Pall Group and Armstong.

African-American Alzheimer's Caregiver Training and Support (ACTS) 2 Project

The ACTS 2 Project offers faith-based, skills-building and support services to distressed African-American family caregivers of loved ones with dementia across all counties in north and central Florida.

There is no charge for this service. The ACTS 2 Project is funded by the Dave Groves, VALIC, Inc., Geriatric Workforce Enhancement Program, Florida State Primitive Baptist Convention, African Methodist Episcopal Church (11th Episcopal District), Sandy Halperin Alzheimer's Research Fund and FSU College of Medicine.

The skills-building program consists of 12 weekly sessions on topics, such as relaxation, effective thinking and problem-solving skills. Sessions are offered over the telephone by trained, lay volunteers from the African-American faith community. Caregivers are encouraged to work on the problems

and challenges they face every day. Caregivers will receive up to \$90 for completing the project.

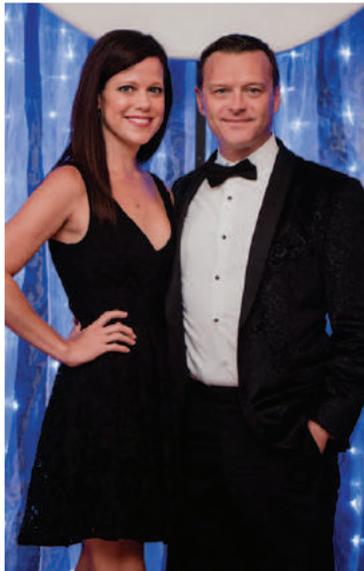
Common issues to be addressed:

- Communicating effectively with your doctor and family members
- Dealing with aggressive behaviors
- Safety and wandering
- Giving medicines
- Managing the stresses and worries of caregiving
- Increasing self-care, rest and relaxation

For more information on how you can receive these services, please call them toll-free at 1-866-778-2724 (Tallahassee local 850-274-4945) or visit our website (ACTS2Project.org). You also can email (tnnorton@fsu.edu) Tomeka Norton-Brown, ACTS 2 Project Coordinator.

Were you seen?

Rat Pack Reunion 2018





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Council on Aging of West Florida is a local independent 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization that has served seniors and their families since 1972. Council on Aging of West Florida helps seniors in Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties live healthy, safe and independent lives in their own familiar surroundings by providing community-based, in-home programs and services such as Meals on Wheels and Alzheimer's respite care. For more information, call 432-1475 or visit www.coawfla.org.

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