

Spring 2016

Updates

Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America
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Update Issues:

Spring 2016,
Summer 2016,
Fall 2016,
Winter 2016



President's message - cover page

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Sharon's quote for this issue:

**"Volunteers don't necessarily have the time,
they have the heart." -Elizabeth Andrew**

Happy Easter



President's Message

Associates of Vietnam Veterans AVVA membership has increased dramatically due to the Life Membership Fire Sale and to the recruiting and renewing efforts made by our dedicated members at the chapter-level. We are nearing 9,000 in membership because of your labors and commitment. Thank you for your support of AVVA and our veterans.

Since our last newsletter, AVVA has donated to the DC Winterhaven Coat Program and to the Veteran's Voice Writing Project. Don't forget about our Homeless Grant Program. Are you planning a Stand-down event this year? Take the time to fill out the application.

Chapter elections will be held in April. Let's make this the best election year ever. Holding elections in your state and chapters this year will ensure that you are represented at the National Convention in 2017. Expect more details from the Election Committee in this newsletter.

The Leadership and Education Conference will be held in Tucson, Arizona this year. The VVA Conference Committee has endeavored to offer an informative program that will benefit everyone. AVVA will hold our first official Secondary PTSD session. We have teamed up with VVA to offer a seminar for everyone attending. We will also hold the Annual Membership Meeting that week. Our Project Friendship for 2016 and Luncheon speaker will be announced very soon.

There is still time to nominate that special member for the AVVA Fellowship Award or Member of the Year Award. Criteria and nomination forms can be found on the AVVA website. The recipients will be announced during the AVVA Luncheon in Tucson.

Together Always,

Sharon

Feature Article

Wartime sweethearts reunited after 70 years.

American Norwood Thomas traveled to Australia to see his lost love Joyce Morris for the first time since 1945.

MICHAEL D'ESTRIES February 11, 2016



The first time in 70 years, Norwood Thomas and Joyce Morris are once again sitting side-by-side.

The pair, 93 and 88 years old respectively, met in London shortly before the 1944 invasion of Normandy. Thomas, a former U.S. military paratrooper, told reporters that above all, it was Morris' smile that took his breath away.

"This young lady had a smile that would melt you, and of course I was melted, and it very rapidly developed into something from attraction to a very strong affection," he told reporters.

Despite keeping contact through letters, the relationship ended after Thomas asked Morris to move to the U.S. to marry him. Unfortunately, she somehow misunderstood and assumed he had met someone else. She stopped writing.



Both went on to marry other people. Eventually, Thomas was widowed and Morris divorced her husband of 30 years. Last year, she asked her son to track down her lost love. The two were quickly corresponding again. After word got out about their reconnection, fans of their story immediately started raising funds to make a reunion possible.

"This is about the most wonderful thing that could have happened," Thomas said after landing in Sydney on Wednesday to visit Morris. "It was a nice feeling to see this woman that I hadn't seen in 70 years."

Morris and Thomas will now spend the next two weeks together, reconnecting and (hopefully) picking up where they left off.

"We're going to have a wonderful fortnight," added Morris.

Leap Year - 2016

Our yearly calendar is 365 days long, but the Earth actually take a little longer than that to make its way around the sun. This means that every year we accumulate about 5 hours and 48 minutes of extra time.

If you add the hours up, it makes for around 24 every four years. That's why we add an extra day (February 29th) - to make up for the extra time. If we didn't add that extra day, our seasons would gradually shift and everyone would get confused.

The leap year was introduced in 46 BC, by Roman leader Julius Caesar. In case you're wondering, credit probably goes to his astronomer for figuring out a simple solution to the problem of extra time.

Leap Year Traditions

Tradition says that, on a leap day, a woman may propose to a man. If the man should refuse, he must give a gift to soften the blow, such as a kiss, a dress, or a piece of fabric.

In Denmark, the tradition varies a little and demands that, should a man refuse, he give his suitor 12 pairs of gloves!

In Greece, it's sometimes considered bad luck to be married on a leap year.

In Taiwan, some think that the month of February during a leap year may bring bad luck to parents!

Cont.

This may prompt grown children to return home to watch over mom and dad.

Region II

Nancy Rekowski Region II Director

AVVA wishes to thank Irene Gratacos for her many years of service as the New Jersey AVVA State Representative. Irene recently resigned and will be missed. Margaret Wojohosic (gee I hope I spelled that right) will serve as Point of Contact for the state of New Jersey. Margaret will also chair the New Jersey state election in June. Anyone wishing to run for AVVA State Representative should contact Margaret prior to the June meeting.

Bobbie Morris, Pennsylvania AVVA State Council President recently held an online seminar for chapter elections. The seminar was well attended. Should your chapter or state need more information on holding elections please visit a VBA.org or contact me with any questions. nrekowski@avva.org

I wish to remind everyone that tracking your VISTA hours is very important. You can find the forms on our AVVA website.

Wishing you all Easter blessings.

Region IV

Jeri Wallis Region IV Director

AVVA Florida State Association Report

We have been assisting with the AVVA Chapter Representative elections coming up in April and accepting letters of intent for our State Officer election which will be in June. We would like to take this opportunity to thank AVVA National for supporting us with the membership issues that we were having. We are grateful for the enormous support that was received from VVA Florida State Council and members around the state in reaching out to our AVVA membership.

We partnered with VVA Florida State Council to create the "Loving You" Fund (a widow/widower fund). To date funds raised are \$3,200.00 and grants paid out \$500.00. This fund creates additional financial assistance to VVA/AVVA

members who lose a spouse (or significant other). The recommendation comes from the individual's chapter which helps to enhance their support to the individual. The committee consists of three AVVA members and two VVA members in the state. Please feel free to contact me should you like information regarding this fund or our support.

The new By-Laws model was received from National AVVA and draft will be presented for vote at our June election meeting. We encourage all AVVA members in the state to consider running for the positions up for election which are President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. Those letters of intent may be sent to our Election Chair, Sharon Frazier at 12534 Parkwood Street, Hudson, Florida 34669.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne Blohm-Weber, President
(386) 986-9153 avva@fsc.org

Region VII

TIME FLIES WHEN YOUR ARE SERVING YOUR VETERANS AND COMMUNITIES

Since becoming the Region VII Director my life has become exciting, very busy and rewarding. My states have been very busy as follows:

ARKANSAS

I traveled to Arkansas in December to attend the Arkansas State Council Meeting. I was very honored to meet the veterans and associates in Pine Bluff, Arkansas. I will always say you will take something valuable with you from every meeting that you attend that you can share with everyone. My valuable information is the program that employees of Walmart that volunteer for an organization can turn in their hours to Walmart with the name of the organization that they volunteered for and that organization will receive a donation from Walmart. I had the opportunity to spend some quality time with Anna Stafford. She will be running for State Representative in June. Very informative trip for me. Thank you Arkansas for the hospitality.



LOUISIANA

I traveled to Lafayette, LA in January with my husband for him to attend the VVA Council of State President's meeting. It was amazing and the AVVA worked so hard in preparing meals that were all about the culture of Louisiana. Everything you could have possibly wanted was prepared for the attendees to eat. If this is a sample of what is in store for New Orleans be prepared to be amazed. We only paid for ONE meal while in attendance. We toured the Tabasco Plant and the tour was so informative and "Have you ate Tabasco Ice Cream". Shall I say "BEADS" off to the Associates from the State of Louisiana? They spent many hours preparing for this meeting for our veterans and their spouses.

OKLAHOMA

I made two trips to Oklahoma: One trip to attend the first Agent Orange Town Hall meeting in Lawton, Oklahoma that had an attendance of over 300 veterans and associates. The Lawton Chapter of the Associates was well represented and associates from Texas and Arkansas were there to support Oklahoma. This was a successful meeting. Wanda

Ross traveled from Tulsa to be in support of this informative meeting.

I attended the Oklahoma State Council Meeting in October and was very pleased with the Oklahoma Associate's meeting. They have five elected representatives that have been faithful to support their veterans within their communities. During their meetings an Agenda is followed and a discussion of how they can help veterans and their families is shared. State Representative, Wanda Ross gives added support and states that we are here and will try to help or get them the information to aid them in the care of their veteran. This may be the most positive word they may have received. As Wanda states the saying goes—they wear many hats.

TEXAS

I attended The Texas State Council meeting in Beaumont. This state always has a theme and a cause for their meetings in each community. The Associates of Texas meeting is on Friday night and it was well attended from Associates from all over Texas. Associates attend the opening ceremony for

the VVA on Saturday and at this meeting there was a BINGO in afternoon for the Associates. This was an extremely well attended meeting with beautiful door prizes for the winners. There is always a basket or tree with items for a drawing (fund raiser for the state) and this time it was filled with lottery scratch off tickets and Ms. Suzie Meeks was the winner and one of the tickets was for \$1,000. Congratulations Suzie. There has been a quilt handmade that Ms. Merle Morris that is also raffled off. This meeting deemed a very nice amount of money for the Associates of Texas.

Chapter 100 of Killeen continues to meet with the deployed and returning military and provides brownies and lots of other refreshments to our heroes. It is a sendoff or a welcome home. This has been going on for several years and Ms. Lynn Kennedy has been an avid supporter. JOB WELL DONE ASSOCIATES.

Chapter 574 of El Paso is involved in city wide events scheduled for August 2016 for a Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans" day celebration. Associates have been working on this for almost a year with many special events planned.

They are helping to gather stories from our veterans for this event. AVVA creates nice baskets, 50/50 raffles and prepare and serves great dishes for their monthly meetings. They are presently working very closely with VVA in the planning stages to present *Congressman Beto O'Rourke, also a member of 574 Associates, with a VVA National Award.* Congressman O'Rourke was the first to sign in support of the Agent Orange Bill. Congressman O'Rourke is amazing he is all about Veterans in El Paso, Texas and the USA. I follow him every day on his journey as a Congressman on Facebook.

I traveled to Longview recently to attend their chapter meeting. Their meeting is held in a local restaurant. This meeting was well attended. They also have baskets prepared to raffle and the money raised is to support their chapter scholarship. I was presented with some beautiful handmade angels to attach to my key chain. They will also be making over 150 more to be sent to the Texas State Council Meeting that will be held in Victoria, Texas in April.

Chapter 404, during the Christmas Parade, handed out toys instead of candy that were donated to the children standing on the side watching the parade. It was a very cold night, but the warmth from their smile lit up our hearts. We also gave 150 Hygiene Bags to the Veteran's Resource Center in Amarillo. (My Chapter).

I am very proud to be representing the AVVA of Region VII. My associates are working hard helping our veterans in each state.

Oklahoma

Wanda Ross State Representative

I was elected in March 2009 to serve as the Oklahoma AVVA State Representative and am pleased to report that each of the 5 elected representatives have been faithful to support the veterans within their associated chapters and the veterans within their communities.

We gather at our state meetings (April and October) and share what we have gathered as concerns by many veterans and family members.

We try to help in giving or getting information. To direct someone to a VA facility near their home or care that we know of that can help that veteran and their family. We hear of veterans and their wives going through the run around. As we can agree sometimes good care and what is needed is hard to come by in a timely manner. Just to give the veteran's caregiver the added support that we are here and will try to help or get them the information to aid them in the care of their veteran may be the most positive word they may have received.

Many of our chapter representatives are active within their communities with other veteran causes in lending added support. As the saying goes-they wear many hats.

Region VIII

John Birch Region VIII Director

Prior to November 21st, 2015 I was asked if I wanted to go on a road trip and after a little question - answer period I threw my name in the hat as a passenger for my next Agent Orange/Toxic Exposure Town Hall meeting!

This meeting was held at the Portland, Oregon V.A. Regional Center at 1300 hrs. The event was hosted by Gary McAdams and the Rose City Chapter 0392 and with the blessing of the VA administration this event will happen every 90 days if possible.

The town hall panel consisted Gary Lisnee (VVA member) and Tanya Lisnee, (daughter), Linda Mooney (wife), Jim Monger (US Army Vet Gulf 1991 and a Veterans advocate at DAV) They testified to what the effects of their service cost them through exposure from the Vietnam era to present era as the panel of speakers attested to.



Mr. Monger was able to expand on the modern era Veterans exposure due to his service and working with dis-abled Veterans from the War on Terrorism.

With the moderator skills of Mr. Tom Owen it was a great town hall meeting.

Every time I have an opportunity to attend a Town hall meeting I somehow come away with more knowledge, some sadness for the families and their stories but feeling good knowing that I was part of something that may have helped someone know why and there is a way to get that helps. It takes time I know.

I wish you all success in 2016.

Congratulations John Birch Region VIII Director

John recently retired after a long career with the Oregon Department of Corrections. Best wishes John, you will be busier now than when you were working.



Region IX

Elayne Mackey Region IX Director



Arizona Casey Farrell President

Elections were held for AZ AVVA State Officers on Saturday, Jan 16, 2016.

The new officers are: L to R: President - Casey Farrell, Vice President - Sue Crego, Secretary - Sandra Cornejo, Treasurer - Brenda Noriega.

We have a great bunch of people. We hope to continue serving our veterans to best of our abilities for many more years to come.

I would like to thank Sue Crego, the past AZ State President for all that she did while in office. Sue was a pleasure to work with and so dedicated to AVVA & VVA. Enjoy your free time Sue!

~Elayne Mackey

California – Elayne Mackey President



CA AVVA President presents a \$264.00 check to Justin Bond, CEO/Founder of, Our Heroes' Dreams. Our Heroes Dreams mission is to improve the lives of our warriors and their families, by helping them to accomplish their dreams that they otherwise wouldn't be able to accomplish because of their disabilities. We were proud to be able to donate to this worthy cause.



Guam AVVA Chapter 668 supports and participates in various Military, Local, Veterans and Chapter Activities, i.e. Memorial Day, Veterans Day, State Liberation Day Parade, and December Christmas Caroling at a skilled nursing home.



(cont. with above picture – Guam AVVA)

Seated L-R: Margaret Mendiola Ann Pablo Cil Mendiola, Avva Liason. cont.

Standing L-R: Emma Aguon, Mary Munoz, Terry Aguon, Lee Baza, June Guillermo, Mary Cruz, Terry Cepeda, and Mary Blas.

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***Welcome Guam AVVA to the Updates. It is so good to have you all with us.***

### ***Committees***

#### ***Election - Elayne Mackey Chair***

Every year is a busy year for the Election Committee. It may be a National Election year or a state/chapter election year. Either way we are busy and do enjoy what we are responsible for.

2016 finds us assisting in state and chapter elections. Materials and information are sent to the Regional Directors; asking them to forward to their states and states to their chapters.

Our goal is to reach our membership. In doing so we feel that a better election may be held, in the best interest for all involved.

Recently we assisted the state of PA in a Go to Meeting (GTM) held for all the PA Chapter Presidents/Representatives. This meeting was at the request of the PA AVVA State President. We had a great turnout with many comments and questions asked. Everyone felt that this was a positive experience.

The Election Committee encourages you to become familiar with Section 5 of the Policy & Procedure. (Elections)

Also in Section 1 of the Policy & Procedure you will find - Positions & Responsibilities of all officers, directors and representatives.

Thank you for making sure that your respective elections are done properly. This is very important, especially when any type of election requires a vote.

#### ***Membership – Cathy Keister Chair***

The “Once in a Life Time” sale ended Dec 31. It was a great success! We signed up 494 New Life Members and over 658 off our members choose to become life members. Total new and renewing life memberships as of Dec 31, 2015 1152. However these are not the final numbers, the office is still processing memberships that were post marked by Dec 31. Those figures will be available soon.

Please note, the staff was overwhelmed with all the VVA and AVVA life memberships to be processed, they are working to catch up. It may be some time before you receive your new membership cards. If you have not received yours by May 1 please contact the membership chair at [membership@avva.org](mailto:membership@avva.org).

Together Always

Cathy Keister/Casey Farrell  
Membership Committee Co-Chairs

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VISTA Hours – Jeri Wallis Coordinator

I want to thank everyone that has been sending their VISTA hours. There has been numerous hours entered in to the database.

I want to make sure we get every hour in for this first full year of this program. The deadline to get me your hours up through February 29, 2016 is April 10th. Look for the outcome in the next UPDATES.

Vista hours form:

<http://www.avva.org/forms/program/vistaform.pdf>

In Remembrance

We would like to add a new column to the Updates.

In Remembrance will list those that have recently passed.

Our information is received from VVA Chaplain Father Phil Salois.

This information goes to Diane Nicholson, Region 6 Director. Diane then sends sympathy cards, on behalf of AVVA, to the families of the deceased, if there is an address.

We may not have all of the names of the deceased but we would like to remember those that we have received.

Joe Baltierra ~ California Chapter 982

Doris Duncan ~ Wisconsin Chapter 767

Brenda Ellefson ~ North Dakota Chapter 941

Suzie Ryde ~ California. Chapter 571

Virginia Sawchuck ~ Nevada State President ~ Chapter 17



***Death leaves a heartache no one can heal,
love leaves a memory no one can steal. -
From a headstone in Ireland***

Widows and Families:

Vietnam Memorial Funds In Memory program honors Vietnam veterans whose lives were cut short as a result of their service in Vietnam, but are not eligible for inscription on The Wall under Department of Defense guidelines. In Memory is a way that all Vietnam veterans can be honored on the National Mall.

For information on how to have your loved one entered into the In Memory Honor Roll visit the VVMF web site vvmf.org/InMemoryProgram. The 2016 ceremony will be held on June 18th.

The plaque that honors these veterans was dedicated as a part of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in 2004. **It reads:**

“In Memory of the men and women who served in the Vietnam War and later died as a result of their service. We honor and remember their sacrifice.”

The original plaque did not weather the elements, it is in need of repair and redesign so AVVA formed a Task Force to explore the redesign and repair of the plaque. Dealing with government agencies is always a slow process; however, we are now at the final stages of the repair. AVVA along with the support of VVA will be meeting in the next several months with the agencies to review our suggested repair. It is the goal of AVVA and the Task Force to make this an honorable memorial to those it represents. This plaque will one day represent more of our Veterans than The Wall. We are dedicated to making their place in history an honorable memorial.

If you need assistance registering your loved one, we are available to assist you.

Cathy Keister (ckeister@avva.org)

In Memory Task Force Chair

St. Patrick's Day

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Every year on March 17, the Irish and the Irish-at-heart across the globe observe St. Patrick's Day. What began as a religious feast day for the patron saint of Ireland has become an international festival celebrating Irish culture with parades, dancing, special foods and a whole lot of green.

The Irish have observed this day as a religious holiday for over 1,000 years. On St. Patrick's Day, which falls during the Christian season of Lent, Irish families would traditionally attend church in the morning and celebrate in the afternoon. Lenten prohibitions against the consumption of meat were waived and people would dance, drink and feast—on the traditional meal of Irish bacon and cabbage.

Saint Patrick, who lived during the fifth century, is the patron saint and national apostle of Ireland. Born in Roman Britain, he was kidnapped and brought to Ireland as a slave at the age of 16. He later escaped, but returned to Ireland and was credited with bringing Christianity to its people. In the centuries following Patrick's death (believed to have been on March 17, 461), the mythology surrounding his life became ever more ingrained in the Irish culture: Perhaps the most well-known legend is that he explained the Holy Trinity (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) using the three leaves of a native Irish clover, the shamrock.

Today, people of all backgrounds celebrate St. Patrick's Day, especially throughout the United States, Canada and Australia. Although North America is home to the largest productions, St. Patrick's Day is celebrated in many other locations far from Ireland, including Japan, Singapore and Russia.

Approximately 1 million people annually take part in Ireland's St. Patrick's Festival in Dublin, a multi-day celebration featuring parades, concerts, outdoor theater productions and fireworks shows.

Leprechauns are a type of fairy, though it's important to note that the fairies of Irish folklore were not cute Disneyfied pixies; they could be lustful, nasty, capricious creatures whose magic might delight you one day and kill you the next if you displeased them. They are often described as wizened, bearded old men dressed in green (early versions were clad in red) and wearing buckled shoes, often with a leather apron. Sometimes they wear a pointed cap or hat and may be smoking a pipe.

In their book "The Element Encyclopedia of Magical Creatures," John and Caitlin Matthews trace leprechaun legends back to eighth-century legends of water spirits called "luchorpán," meaning small body. These sprites eventually merged with a mischievous household fairy said to haunt cellars and drink heavily.

Other researchers say that the word leprechaun may be derived from the Irish leath bhrogan, meaning shoemaker. Indeed, though leprechauns are often associated with riches and gold, in folklore their main vocation is anything but glamorous: they are humble cobblers, or shoemakers. Shoemaking is apparently a lucrative business in the fairy world, since each leprechaun is said to have his own pot of gold, which can often be found at the end of a rainbow.

According to Irish legends, people lucky enough to find a leprechaun and capture him (or, in some stories, steal his magical ring, coin or amulet) can barter his freedom for his treasure. Leprechauns are usually said to be able to grant the person three wishes. But dealing with leprechauns can be a tricky proposition.

As with many old legends and traditions, the image and nature of the leprechaun has changed over time and has been updated (and in some cases sanitized) for a modern audience. Lucky the Leprechaun, mascot of the General Mills breakfast cereal Lucky Charms, is probably the best-known fairy of his type.

Announcement:

If you were the recipient, or know someone who was the recipient, of the Member-of-the-Year or Fellowship Award between the years of 1999-2009, please contact the President with the following information:

- (1)** Recipient's name
- (2)** State
- (3)** Award
- (4)** Year won

shobbs@avva.org

423-364-6385



APRIL 2016 Full Board Meeting

April 7 - 9 2016
Doubletree by Hilton Hotel
Silver Spring, MD

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**National Leadership and Education  
Conference - 2016**

**JULY 19 - 23, 2016**

Hilton Tucson El Conquistador Golf & Tennis  
Resort  
10000 North Oracle Road, Tucson, Arizona, 85704

**AVVA Products**

<http://militarybest.com/associates-of-vietnam-veterans-of-america.html>

**Membership Application**

[http://www.avva.org/forms/membership/IndividualAppForMembership\\_fill.pdf](http://www.avva.org/forms/membership/IndividualAppForMembership_fill.pdf)

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Local Events:

If your AVVA Chapter or State is holding an event that you would like to share with all of our membership, please send an email to the National Secretary, avva2003@cox.net, giving the details of your event, so that we can publish the information for you on this web page. Be sure to include the date(s) and time(s), place, reason or goal of the event, etc. We will set up a link to a page especially for your local events, so that everyone can share information and perhaps attend each other's occasions.

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**AVVA Elections**

**State:** Elects January 1 through June 30, 2016 - even numbered year

**NEW: No State Absentee Ballots**

**At Large Representative:** January 1 through June 20, 2016 – even numbered year

**NEW: Notarized Ballot Not Required**

**Chapters:** Elect April 2016 - even numbered year

**Election Chair**

Policy & Procedure Section 5 - pg. 16

Send Election Results Form: **30 days**

**Please be sure to check Section 5 and Section 1 of the Policy & Procedure to find:** positions, qualifications, duties and other important information.

**To access the Policy & Procedures look under Governing Documents icon.**

**Need help?**

Contact your State Representative/President; your Region Director or the Election Committee

**Submissions to the Updates may be sent to:**

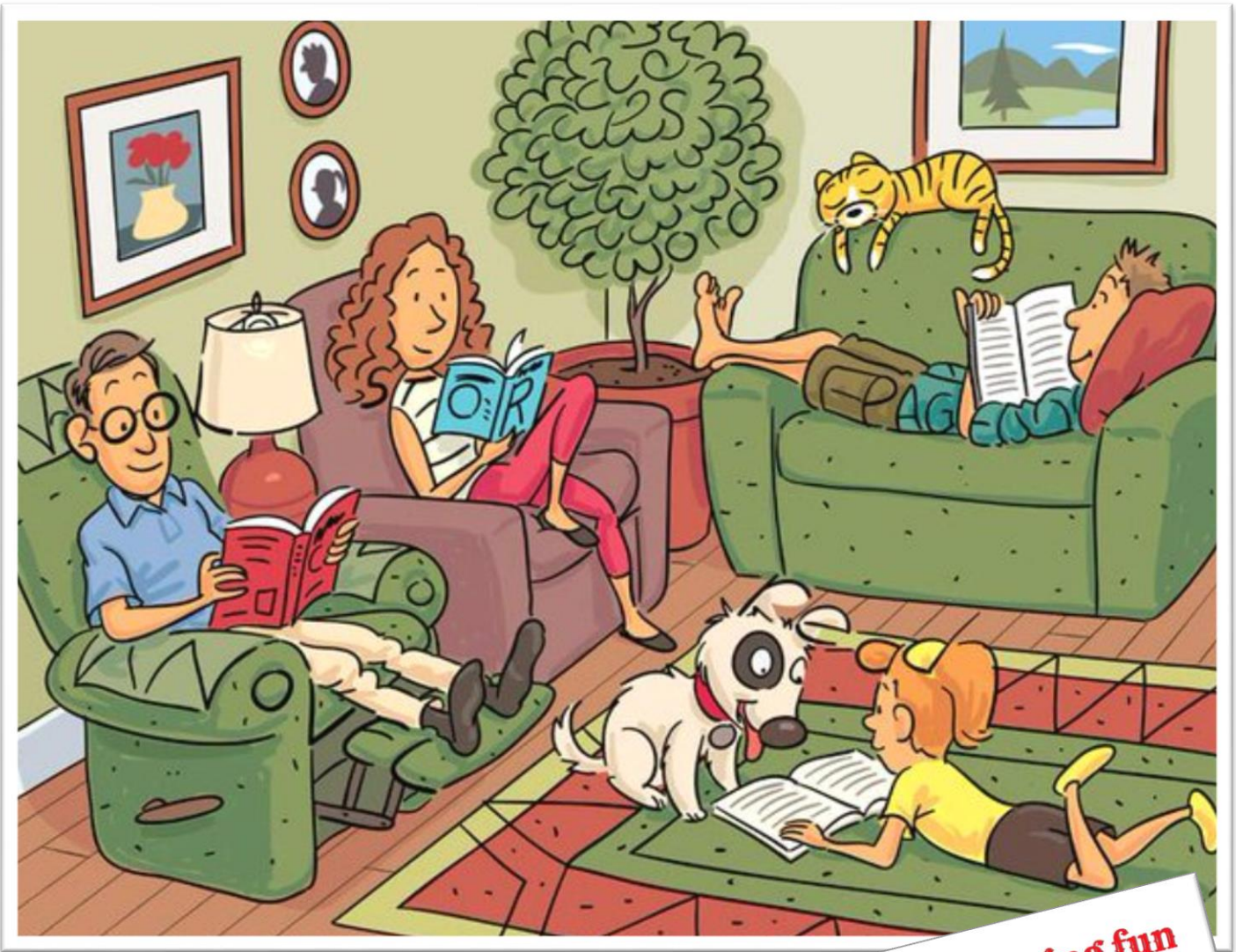
Elayne Mackey [mmm4evr1@aol.com](mailto:mmm4evr1@aol.com)

Beverly Pounds [bpounds@avva.org](mailto:bpounds@avva.org)

**Next issue: June 2016**

## Just for Fun

Find six words in this drawing



### Answers to puzzle on pg. 15

Easter eggs turned chocolate in the 19th century, and were produced mainly in France and Germany. The production of these eggs didn't really take off until Cadbury began mass producing them thanks to the introduction of a pure cocoa. Since then, the production of chocolate eggs (and bunnies) has greatly increased, and Easter is now the second day of the year with the highest sale of candy -- after Halloween, of course.



## **Keeping Your Brain Active: 10 Tips for Improving Your Brain**

by Ed Zimney, MD

**1. Take up video-gaming.** Action video games improve eye-hand coordination, improve spatial visualization skills, and increase the number of things that you can visually attend to simultaneously.

**2. Strengthen your memory.** Memory is our most vital mental faculty. Strengthening memory is an important component in lessening the odds of developing Alzheimer's disease.

**3. Learn a new word every day.** Learning new words not only enriches one's understanding of the world, but also enhances the brain's language centers and the prefrontal lobes where judgment and executive function are mediated. [You can learn a new word every day by subscribing to this feed from Answers.com.]

**4. Engage in spelling exercises.** Spelling forces you to mentally "see" the word prior to speaking it or writing it down. This exercises several language-related brain areas and circuits.

**5. Monitor your moods, fantasies, and self-talk.** If you find yourself immersed in upsetting or stressful scenarios, change your brain activity by switching to something that doesn't involve just your own concerns.

**6. Work off stress with increased physical activity.** A healthy brain requires good general health. You can decrease the harmful effects of stress on general health by exercising daily, but you should choose an exercise that appeals to you and that won't be considered a tiresome chore. Even just walking is fine. Walking four miles per week cuts down on the chances of later developing dementia by fifty percent.

**7. Take a twenty-minute nap every afternoon.** A daytime nap will produce nearly as much skill-memory enhancement as a whole night of sleep. So after you have taken a class or engaged in some other learning situation in the morning, consolidate that information by napping for a brief time in the afternoon after lunch when you're most likely to feel tired and fall asleep easier.

**8. Solve puzzles.** Different parts of the brain will be exercised depending on what kind of puzzle you choose. Crossword puzzles challenge the language and memory areas while jigsaw puzzles provide exercise for the parietal lobes. When you get proficient do the crossword puzzles in your mind without writing anything down and do the jigsaw puzzles with the picture side turned over so that you're working with shape and form alone.

**9. Work with your hands.** Few people other than musicians and surgeons are skilled in fine finger control. Whenever you perform an activity requiring finger dexterity you enhance your brain. Knitting, model-ship or model-train building are fine-taking up a musical instrument is even better.

**10. Pay more attention to your sensory experiences.** One of the most common causes of forgetting and poor memory relates to failures to register what is going on during the original experience. Practice sharpening your senses by identifying by name all of the herbs and essences you encounter in everything you eat. Challenges are as readily available as the nearest garde n, spice-rack, and wine-tasting group."



**Parents of stubborn teenagers rejoice, or at least relax: That adolescent attitude stems, in part, from the vagaries of brain development.**

The gray matter of the brain peaks just before puberty and is pruned back down throughout adolescence, with some of the most dramatic development happening in the frontal lobes, the seat of judgment and decision-making.

A 2005 study published in the journal Child Development found that the parts of the brain responsible for multitasking don't fully mature until we're 16 or 17 years old. And research presented at the BA Festival of Science in 2006 revealed that teens also have a neural excuse for self-centeredness. When considering an action that would affect others, teens were less likely than adults to use the medial prefrontal cortex, an area associated with empathy and guilt. Teens learn empathy by practicing socializing, the researchers said. So much for grounding them until they're 20.

- livescience.com

## ***Last But Not Least***

### ***Why not a chicken?***

Why does the Easter bunny distribute eggs? It turns out the egg-toting Easter bunny evolves from a mythic German goddess named Ostara, (Oestre / Eastre) who was the Germanic Goddess of Springtime

In ancient Anglo-Saxon myth, Ostara is the personification of the rising sun. In that capacity she is associated with the spring and is considered to be a fertility goddess. She is the friend of all children and to amuse them she changed her pet bird into a rabbit. This rabbit brought forth brightly colored eggs, which the goddess gave to the children as gifts. From her name and rites the festival of Easter is derived.

~Huffington post



*Q: What does the Easter Bunny get for making a basket?*

*A: Two points, just like anyone else.*

### ***HARD-BOILED EGGS***

For anyone who may not know, the best way to make "hard-boiled" eggs is in the oven! Place eggs in a muffin tin so they don't roll around, turn the oven to 325 degrees, and bake for 25-30 min. That's it! Not only are they tastier, but they are also much easier to peel.



### ***Copycat Wendy's Frosty***

1/2 gallon chocolate milk  
8oz Cool Whip  
1 can sweetened condensed milk



Pour sweetened condensed milk and Cool Whip into an ice cream maker and stir together. Add chocolate milk till it reaches the fill line. Turn on the machine and let the magic happen!



### ***SALVAGE BURNED COOKIES***

There's nothing like opening the oven and realize that your highly anticipated cookies have been scorched — and the friends you're hosting are coming in a matter of minutes. Don't panic and dump them into the trash, instead, steal a tip from Brenda of Downtown Dish and shave off the bottoms with either a box grater or microplane zester. What happens in the kitchen, stays in the kitchen, right?



### ***Easy Table Decorations***



## Ever Noticed Those Numbers on Egg Cartons Under the 'Best By' Date? Here's What They Really Mean.

For many grocery shoppers, the “best by” date is one of the first things they look for when picking up items such as milk and eggs.

But shockingly, when it comes to eggs, that “best by” date may not be the best indicator of freshness.

As Cosmopolitan reports, with the exception of baby formula, the “best by” marking on products is done at the discretion of the food manufacturer. In other words, the FDA does not require that egg producers mark their cartons with a “best by” date- it is up to the manufacturers to decide whether to do so.



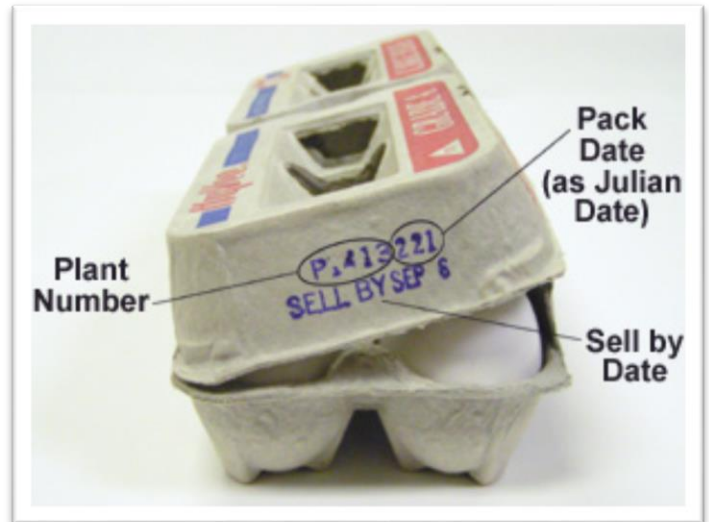
And according to Fresh Eggs Daily, that optional “best by” date is not telling of how old the eggs may be. Instead, Fresh Eggs Daily suggests looking at another label on the carton, which is usually found below the “best by” date.

That label includes a number, called the Julian Date, which marks the day of the year that the eggs were placed in the carton. For example, if the label contains the number 359, then the eggs were packaged on December 25.

This means that if a shopper picked up a carton of eggs containing the Julian Date of 359 on January 20, those eggs would be at least twenty-seven days old.

It is important to note that the Food Safety and Inspection Service says that, when refrigerated at forty-five degrees Fahrenheit, eggs should be good for four to five weeks beyond the Julian Date. As a result, regardless of what the “best by” label may say, the customer in the example above probably has another week or so to use the eggs before they go bad.

So if you're shopping for eggs and you see a Julian Date that is more than forty days old, it's probably best to pick up a different carton.



### Silly eggs...

**To have "egg on your face" is a very old saying.**

*What does it mean? It means to be embarrassed because you were caught doing or saying something in which you have no excuse or alibi to get your way out of it or blame it on someone else. In other words, yup, you did it!*

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"This recipe is certainly silly. It says to separate the eggs, but it doesn't say how far to separate them."

Gracie Allen

And in the old days to be an "egghead" meant to be brainy or intellectual. Today they just call that person a geek or nerd.



Answers to puzzle on pg. 11

- Read (dog's ear)
- Novel (arm chair)
- Book (man's glasses)
- Story (woman)
- Words (tree)
- Page (boy)

