

# senior review

FREE

March 2026

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A Senior Magazine for Living a Healthier, Smarter and More Active Life in Wausau

## The Dawn of Spring By Dave Olson, Realtor®, SRES™ RE/MAX EXCEL

“It was one of those March days when the sun shines hot and the wind blows cold, when it is summer in the light and winter in the shade.”  
Charles Dickens, Great Expectations

These words describe the paradox of March wonderfully in a quote from one of the greatest writers of all time. I cannot think of a better description for the dawn of Spring that we know as March. Warm, yet cold. Sunny and warm inspiring the anticipation of warmer days, then that anticipation slammed shut with wet snows to keep winter alive a bit longer.

Budding of green, yet the bright white clings to the earth, unwilling to give way. The paradox of March in our beautiful Wisconsin.

In my work as a Real Estate agent, I often get to express what each of the Wisconsin seasons is like to out of state clients moving here. My descriptions of the dawn of Spring and its stunning renewal of outdoor life are one of my favorite things to share with them. The joy of fresh Spring air with the first open windows of the year. Coming forth from our winter cocoon to hear new birds singing as they return from warmer places. The lengthening of days. Cold nights, warm sunny melting days. Maple sap running to bring us that sweet northern nectar we love as Maple syrup, the world's best is cooked right here in our home state each Spring. I get to describe that and explain to folks just



how amazing the seasons are here, especially Spring. Everyone asks about the long harsh Winters, and I of course share how we cope, but I also eagerly explain to them the joy and anticipation that comes when we near the end of our long Winter here.

The title of Dicken's work, “Great Expectations” precisely describes our spirits as we look forward to the dawn of a new and glorious season here in our beautiful state. Spring has a far deeper meaning for us hardy Wisconsinites. Our Winters ARE longer, colder, and darker

than many other places, so the sweetness of the dawn of Spring is extra sweet because of our long wait. We look forward with great expectations to April and May when the transition completes its journey and Spring completely arrives to stay. It is the “great expectations” we have in the tidbits of Spring as it teases in March that lift our spirits. Spring teases that warm our hearts in anticipation of the end of Winter and the beauty of Spring's glory.

It is early February as I write this piece, but just thinking about what March has in store for us has my heart happy and warming my soul from the inside out. My prayer for each of you is that you will be filled with Joy from the inside out too, and your anticipation of Spring to come will take seed in you with the teases of Spring offered in March.

## Mint Condition!

### CHECK OUT THESE THREE UNIQUE BENEFITS OF MINT

**Helps You Run Longer** - Feeling like you don't have the stamina to run around the mall? Try flavoring your water with peppermint oil. Adding a drop (.05 mL) of peppermint oil to about 2 cups of water daily for 10 days helped men run nearly 15 minutes longer on the treadmill, according to a study from the *Journal of the International Society of Sports Nutrition*.

**Boosts Your Memory** - Keep your shopping list or to-do list top of mind with peppermint tea. In a study presented at the British Psychological Society, people who sipped a cup of peppermint tea before taking a memory test performed better than those who drank chamomile tea or hot water.



**Tames Your Tummy** - Peppermint-oil supplements (one to two 0.2 mL capsules three times a day) may ease abdominal pain caused by irritable bowel syndrome (a condition that affects up to 15 percent of Americans), according to a review published in the *Journal of Clinical Gastroenterology*. Another study, from the University of Adelaide in Australia, found that mint's cooling properties may calm hypersensitive nerves in the gut that trigger IBS pain.

Source: *EatingWell Magazine*

### GET EAGLE EYES!

When scientists analyzed the diets of more than 100,000 men and women who were for 35 years in the Nurses' Health Study, they found those who ate the carotenoid equivalent of 2½ cups of carrots each week lowered their risk of advanced macular degeneration (a leading cause of vision loss) by 25 to 35 percent.



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# The Unique Challenges Women Face in Retirement

By Kailey Berendsen, Vice President of Buska Retirement Solutions and Buska Wealth Management

Retirement is often portrayed as a well-earned season of freedom and fulfillment, but for many women, the path to a secure retirement comes with unique and often overlooked challenges. While women today are more financially engaged than ever, systemic and life-cycle factors continue to create obstacles that can impact long-term financial security if not addressed with intention and planning.

One of the most significant challenges women face is longevity. On average, women live several years longer than men, which means their retirement savings must last longer. While a longer life is something to celebrate, it also increases the risk of outliving assets—especially when rising healthcare costs, inflation, and long-term care expenses are taken into account. Planning for a 25- to 30-year retirement is not uncommon, and it requires careful income and risk management.

Career interruptions also play a major role. Many women take time away from the workforce to care for children, aging parents, or other family members. These pauses can reduce lifetime earnings, limit opportunities for advancement, and result in fewer years of contributions to retirement plans. Even short gaps can have a compounding effect over time, particularly when it comes to employer-sponsored plans and Social Security benefits.

Earnings disparities further compound the issue. Despite progress, women still earn less than men on average, which directly affects how much they are able to save and invest. Lower earnings can also lead to lower Social Security benefits, making personal savings and strategic planning even more critical. For divorced or widowed women, understanding survivor benefits and claiming strategies becomes especially important.

Another challenge is confidence—or lack thereof. Studies consistently show that women tend to be less confident in their financial knowledge, even though they are often highly capable money managers. This confidence gap can lead to hesitation around investing, increased conservatism with portfolios, or



delaying important financial decisions. Unfortunately, being overly cautious can limit growth potential and increase the risk of falling short of retirement goals.

Women are also more likely to face retirement transitions alone. Whether due to divorce or widowhood, many women find themselves managing finances independently later in life, sometimes for the first time. Navigating investment decisions, tax strategies, and income planning during an emotionally challenging period can feel overwhelming

without proper guidance and support.

The good news is that these challenges are not insurmountable. With proactive planning, education, and a personalized approach, women can build confident, resilient retirement strategies. Working with a financial professional who understands these unique considerations can help women make informed decisions, align their financial plans with their values, and feel empowered about their future.

Retirement planning is not one-size-fits-all—and for women, acknowledging the realities they face is the first step toward creating a secure and fulfilling next chapter.



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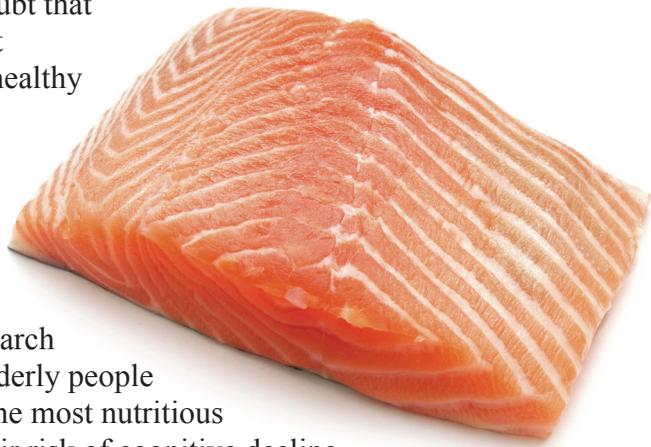


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# Brain Food – Brain Boosting Foods for Seniors

There is no doubt that a healthy diet contributes to a healthy body, but eating nutritious foods can also lower the risk of cognitive decline as we age. Recent research has found that elderly people who consumed the most nutritious food lowered their risk of cognitive decline by almost 25 percent, when compared to those with the least healthy diets.



Researchers believe that it is likely that a healthy diet has effects on cardiovascular risk factors and cardiovascular disease, and that this is an important mechanism for reducing the risk of cognitive decline.

So what foods make up a healthy “brain boosting” diet? Below is a list of some of the top brain power foods. Incorporating these foods into your diet can improve mental health, especially for seniors who want to protect themselves from cognitive decline.

## Salmon

Studies show that substituting salmon for beef or poultry a couple times per week can slow mental decline. Salmon, and other cold-water fish such as tuna, sardines and halibut, contain high levels of omega-3 fatty acids. Research suggests that omega-3s may help protect against Alzheimer’s disease and dementia, and have a positive effect on gradual memory loss linked to aging.

## Walnuts

Walnuts are rich in vitamin E, which works to trap free radicals that can damage brain cells, according to the Alzheimer’s Research Center. A recent study found that people who eat food with high levels of vitamin E had a lower risk of developing Alzheimer’s.

## Green Tea

Green tea contains enzymes, amino acids and vitamins that can help improve mental fatigue and boost brain function. It also contains a plant compound called EGCG, which may reduce inflammation, aid weight loss, and help prevent heart and brain disease.

## Eggs

Egg yolks are rich in choline, a nutrient that the brain uses to make a neurotransmitter that may be vital to maintain memory and communication among brain cells. A study by researchers at Boston University found that choline intake was associated with better performance on memory tests.

## Blueberries

Animal studies have shown that blueberries help protect the brain from oxidative stress and may reduce the effects of dementia. A study by Tufts University and the USDA found that a diet rich in blueberries improved short term memory loss and reversed some loss of balance and coordination in aging rats.

## Avocados

Avocados are packed with monounsaturated fat, which contribute to healthy blood flow. Avocados also lower blood pressure and reduce the risk of high blood pressure.

## Spinach

Spinach is an excellent source of folic acid, and studies have shown that eating spinach helps prevent dementia. Spinach and other cruciferous vegetables such as broccoli, cabbage and dark, leafy greens can help improve memory.

## DO YOU LIKE TO LISTEN TO PODCASTS?

Do you want to know more about dementia and the research that is happening at the University of Wisconsin – Madison. If so, check out Dementia Matters with Dr. Chin. You can listen on podbean, spotify or iTunes.



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# Wausau Curling News *By Jim Force*

Over 300 senior curlers descended on Wausau Feb. 18-22 for the annual National Senior Men's Curling Championships.

The competition was nationwide, and included curlers age 55 and older—long-time curlers who refuse to give up the winter sport they love despite their advancing years.

The games were held at the state-of-the-art, eight-sheet Wausau Curling Center on the city's southeast side. Fans from Wausau and the surrounding area, as well as those following the 78 teams in the tournament, watched from the curling center's warm theater seating area. A host of Wausau Curling Club volunteers prepared the ice for the games, staffed the kitchen, operated the bar and clubhouse, and supported the curling teams on their visit to the Wausau area.

"This was the fourth time in the past 20 years that we've hosted this event in Wausau," said the event chair, Randy Brandner of Merrill. "It was great to see many of the same teams and curlers coming back for another crack at the trophies, as well as a number of new faces and teams out on the ice curling. I think the fact that the Winter Olympics were running at the same time prompted a lot of interest in the senior tournament."



Some key statistics: the oldest curler was 91, and the youngest 55. The team travelling the farthest to the games was from Anchorage, Alaska. Teams from 14 different states came for the event, and 15 curling clubs from Wisconsin were represented, including Wausau, Rice Lake, Medford, Eau Claire, Centerville, Green Bay, Kettle Moraine, Janesville, Madison, Wauwatosa, Lodi, Poynette, Monroe, and Arlington. Minnesota sent teams from eight different curling clubs. Other teams were from California, Arizona, Colorado, the Dakotas, Nebraska, Illinois, Ohio, Indiana, and Michigan.

Brandner—a senior curler himself and skip of the 2026 Wisconsin senior curling

championship rink—was proud of the many senior curler statistics at this event. "About 15 percent of our entrants were born in the 1930s," he pointed out. Fifteen percent were born in the '40s. Elmer Balko from Medford was the oldest curler (91) and his team—the Vaughn rink from Medford—had the oldest average age of its members, 84.8 years.

Many of the older curlers use a push stick to deliver the curling stones down the ice, avoiding the need to get down and slide of the ice as younger curlers do.

The United States Senior Men's Curling Association was founded in the fall of 1976. According to the association's website, the founding board members were looking to establish a National Championship for men over the age of 55. "From the beginning, the Spirit of Curling has guided the event—fair competition with an emphasis on camaraderie and the lasting friendships that people develop through curling," the association states.

Competition and trophies are arranged for three divisions—Seniors, ages 55-63, Super Seniors for curlers 64-68, and a Masters Division for curlers over the age of 68.

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# Things I Have Never Done By Ken Anderson, themayberryguru@gmail.com

As I continue to age and gather with family and friends, I find that conversations tend to dwell on all the things we have done in our lives. We talk about our childhoods, school experiences, careers, families, and, often, our health. We discuss our accomplishments and all the fun times that are forever etched into our memories. However, one thing we rarely discuss is everything we have never done.

I am not talking about major things in life that I wish I had done, but about the simple, everyday activities that so many people do that I have not experienced. For instance, in all 79 years of my life, I have never used an ATM. In fact, I am not even sure if I would know how to use one. I have never found myself in need of cash while out and about. I always carry sufficient funds to satisfy my needs, and if I ever do find myself short, I would use my credit card.

Another very common activity that most people do many times in their lives is to order a pizza to be delivered to their home. But not me. I love pizza, and we eat it quite often. But when I want pizza, I either buy a frozen one, go to a pizza place and eat in, or go to a



pizza place and pick one up to take home. But I have never had pizza delivered to my home. Just think of all the money I saved on tips.

I have also never gone on an overnight fishing trip with friends. Nor have I ever gone deer hunting. I have never skied or gone snowshoeing. I have never owned a motorcycle, boat, snowmobile, or ATV. But I have had three convertibles and a squad car. I hope that counts for something.

I haven't been big on entertainment either. I have never gone to a casino, Brandson, Country Jam, Disney World, or a five-star restaurant. But I did go to two World Fairs, and I frequently dine at Burger King. I have never bought a lottery or Powerball ticket, nor have I ever bet on a sporting event. I have also never hitchhiked or changed a diaper.

My life is not nearly as boring as it sounds. However, I am saving for my obituary all the things I have done in my life. Hopefully, you will read about it in newspapers a long way down the road. In the meantime, I think I will go get a pizza.

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