

senior review

FREE

June 2025

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

Summer Time! *By Dave Olson, Realtor®, RE/MAX EXCEL*

As I look out my office window, I see a beautiful American Flag flying gracefully, the grass is brilliant green, and the trees are bursting forth with new leaves to soak in the summer sun. Birds sing joyfully, all types, sizes and colors of them, home for the summer. We’ve got the windows open and the fresh air is wonderful. Summer is here!

It’s once again time to do all our favorite things outside. Everything is better when done on the patio, porch or in the yard, so head outside and enjoy it!



game on the radio while playing cornhole or horseshoes.

You can’t mention June without speaking about Father’s Day. If you have a Dad, be thankful that you do and make him feel special this year. I lost my Dad quite a while ago now, but I still remember how he shaped me and made me a better person. If your Dad is still with you, thank him for being your Dad and tell him you love him. If you’ve lost your Dad take some time to remember your times together with a smile.

Mother’s Day plants and flowerpot gifts begin the gardening season. Warm days for growing and milder nights allow our garden plants to stay outside and ensure they won’t be nipped. Get a little dirty and welcome back the amazing time of growth that Summer brings.

Summer is a great time for impromptu days. It doesn’t require a lot of planning to take long walks or have a small picnic or go to parks. None of these enjoyable experiences cost very much and they are so good for us as they draw us out of our typical surroundings, making memories together. When it’s warm and nice, we don’t need a coat and can make these small adventures traveling lightly. Summer is a great time to take in an outdoor concert or car show. Don’t forget to fire up the grille for some backyard grilling, and it’s also the best time of year to catch a ball

If you’re a Dad, take a few moments to give thanks for those wonderful kids and your amazing family memories. My memories are very sweet and I’m sure yours are too. For the Dads reading this, I hope the family recognizes you by showing their love for you in their own unique way. If they offer to take you somewhere, GO! Time together is the rarest gift we can share and we should share it whenever we can. If they give you a gift or have the kids draw you a picture, smile big and hug them hard. Tell them you love them. Everyone needs to hear that.

June is the true beginning of Summer and I hope you take time this year to make the most of it. We all know how short the warm months seem to us here in the Frozen Tundra, so don’t let them get away from you. Enjoy your June!

10 Ways to Get More Fiber

This nutrient does so many good things for your body, from aiding weight management and quelling inflammation to protecting against heart disease and type 2 diabetes. Yet, only 7% of U.S. adults eat enough. Not that we don't try. Problem is, we need lots of the stuff—25 grams a day for women, 38 for men. To really hit your quota, you'll need a decent chunk with every meal (and snack).

CHECK OUT THESE FIBER-RICH FOODS BELOW



Avocados (5 g per 1/3 avocado)



Artichokes (5 g per 1/2 cup)



Rye Crispbreads (5 g per 3 crackers)



Chickpeas (7 g per 1/2 cup, cooked)



Beets (5 g per 1/2 cup)



Popcorn (3 g per 3 cups popped)



Raspberries (10 g per cup)



Cocoa Powder (2 g per Tbsp.)



Pears (6 g for 1 medium fruit)



Red Lentils (8 g per 1/2 cup, cooked)


Source: Karen Ansel, M.S., RDN

Feed your face with superfoods!

SUPERFOOD: Broccoli

COMPLEXION POWER: SMOOTHING

This cruciferous queen packs a serious crunch and a vitamin C punch. Broccoli is loaded with C, which boosts collagen production to soften fine lines and wrinkles.



Check back here for more superfoods to satisfy your skin's cravings!

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Annuities for Retirees: Features, Benefits, and Drawbacks

By Cole Bruner, President of Buska Retirement Solutions and Buska Wealth Management

As retirement approaches, many individuals begin shifting their focus from growing wealth to preserving it and ensuring a reliable income stream. Annuities are one financial tool that could help achieve this goal. Designed to provide consistent payments over time, annuities could offer peace of mind—but they also come with trade-offs that retirees should consider.

Key Features of Annuities for Retirees

Annuities are contracts with insurance companies in which you contribute a lump sum or series of payments. In return, the insurer promises to pay you a regular income—either immediately or at a future date.

For retirees, the most relevant types include:

- **Immediate Annuities:** Begin providing income within a year of purchase, ideal for those who need income right away.
- **Deferred Annuities:** Start payments at a later date, giving your investment time to grow tax-deferred.
- **Fixed Annuities:** Offer predictable, stable payments, which could be especially comforting in retirement.
- **Lifetime Annuities:** Guarantee income for the rest of your life, helping you avoid the risk of outliving your savings.

Benefits for Retirees

1. Guaranteed Income for Life

One of the most attractive features for retirees is the promise of a stable income, often for life. This provides a financial safety net, ensuring that even if other savings run low, you'll still have money coming in.

2. Peace of Mind

The predictability of fixed annuities could ease financial anxiety. Unlike stocks or mutual funds, annuities aren't affected by market volatility, so your payments remain steady.

3. Tax-Deferred Growth (for Deferred Annuities)

If you don't need income right away, a deferred annuity allows your money to grow without immediate tax implications, preserving more for future use.

4. Customization Options

Many annuities allow you to add features (called riders) such as inflation protection, long-term care coverage, or benefits for a surviving spouse. This flexibility could help tailor your annuity to fit your retirement lifestyle.

Potential Drawbacks

1. High Fees and Charges

Some annuities, especially variable ones, come with substantial fees. These could erode your returns and reduce the overall benefit of the product. Always ask for a breakdown of all charges before buying.

2. Limited Access to Your Money

Annuities are not very liquid. Withdrawing money early could

lead to surrender charges and tax penalties, especially if you're under age 59½ (for deferred annuities). Even in retirement, access could be restricted depending on the contract.

3. Inflation Risk

Fixed payments may lose purchasing power over time due to inflation. While inflation-adjusted annuities exist, they generally offer lower starting payouts and could cost more.

4. Complexity

The wide variety of annuity products and options can be confusing. It's essential to fully understand what you're purchasing and how it fits into your broader retirement plan.



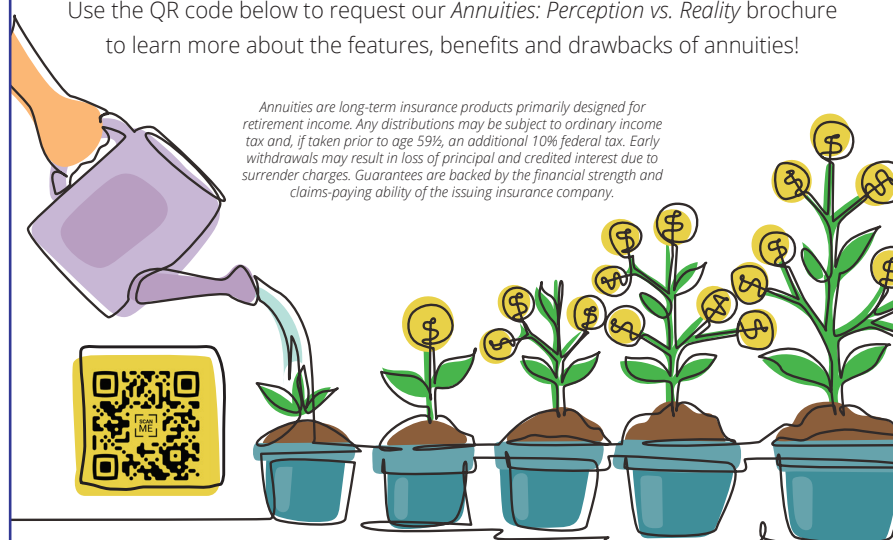
Final Thoughts

For retirees looking to create a reliable income stream and reduce financial uncertainty, annuities could be a valuable piece of the puzzle. However, they aren't a one-size-fits-all solution. Take time to review your needs, compare options carefully, and consult with a financial services professional. When used wisely, annuities could help turn your retirement savings into a secure and lasting source of income.

Educate yourself on annuities

You may think you know about annuities, but many people aren't fully educated about the role they could play in a retirement strategy.

Use the QR code below to request our *Annuities: Perception vs. Reality* brochure to learn more about the features, benefits and drawbacks of annuities!



Annuities are long-term insurance products primarily designed for retirement income. Any distributions may be subject to ordinary income tax and, if taken prior to age 59½, an additional 10% federal tax. Early withdrawals may result in loss of principal and credited interest due to surrender charges. Guarantees are backed by the financial strength and claims-paying ability of the issuing insurance company.

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Noticing the Clutter: Avoiding Burnout Blindness

by Jen Miller, Rellim Senior Day Care

You know that feeling when your closet or purse is finally neat and organized—but then, before you know it, it turns into a cluttered, hot mess? You don't realize how bad it has gotten until you can't find that one item you need.



Caregiving is the same way. Burnout does not happen overnight—it builds up quietly. Without regular relief, stress accumulates until there is a breaking point. That is why prevention is essential!

One of the biggest emotional hurdles caregivers face is the shift in roles—from being a son, daughter, or spouse to becoming the full-time organizer, health manager, or decision-maker. Often, caregiving is a 24/7 position. It gets more complicated when a loved one resists the very support meant to help them (and you).

In those moments, it helps to consider who your loved one is and what they value. Many women connect deeply to purpose and relationships—offering them the chance to “help out” at a center or visit a friend may feel more natural than suggesting they need help. Men may respond more to feeling useful—being asked for their opinion or presence at a chili feed or woodworking activity. It's less about convincing and more about inviting them to stay engaged on their own terms.

It can also help to be honest: *“I’m doing everything I can, but I can’t keep this up alone. It would really help me if you tried this so we can do this long-term.”*

Sometimes, knowing it is for you—not just for them—opens the door.

Another barrier? Misunderstanding what self-care really means. It's not just a bubble bath or a walk in the park. For caregivers, self-care can mean bringing in services that lighten the load—like senior day care, respite care, or outsourcing lawn care, errands, or housekeeping. Letting go of a few tasks doesn't mean you're

letting your loved one down—it means you're making space to keep showing up with energy and compassion for caregiving to be sustainable.

Caregiving is one of the most meaningful things a person can do. But meaning doesn't make it easy. And love doesn't cancel out limits. The goal isn't to be everything—it's to stay well enough to be present, kind, and connected.

Small adjustments now—before burnout takes hold—can protect both the caregiver and the relationship you're working so hard to preserve. Don't wait until you're overwhelmed—reach out to local senior resources, support networks, or aging services to explore the options available to help you and your loved one thrive.

Signs You're Near Burnout

- Always tired, even after rest
- Irritable or emotionally flat
- Lost interest in things you once enjoyed
- Forgetting appointments or making mistakes
- Feeling resentful, guilty, or overwhelmed
- Can't recall the last time you did something just for you

If this sounds familiar, pause, reassess, and reach out for support.



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History of Tomatoes

Long before tomatoes were popular in salads and sandwiches, they were promoted as medicine. In the early 1800s, many Americans found them unappealing and even thought they were poisonous. This changed in 1834 when Ohio physician John Cook Bennett touted tomatoes as a cure for ailments like indigestion and jaundice, despite his claims lacking evidence. He also introduced tomatoes in pill form, reinforcing their medicinal image. This health craze faded by the 1850s, but tomatoes gained culinary popularity with the advent of ketchup.



The first tomato ketchup recipe appeared in 1812 by Philadelphia scientist James Mease, but it took off after the F. & J. Heinz Company launched their version in 1876. Heinz's use of vinegar for preservation made it shelf-stable, and their clear glass bottles highlighted the product's purity. Starting in 1896, Heinz adopted the number "57" for branding, a combination of his lucky number five and his wife's favorite number seven, despite it having no relation to product varieties.

By the numbers:

- Tomato varieties grown worldwide **10,000+**
- Speed (in miles per hour) at which ketchup flows out of Heinz glass bottles **.028**
- Year a Heinze employee coined the term "quality control" **1912**
- Tomato seeds sent into space as part of the Tomatosphere project **600,000**










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Kate Larson, Artistic/Musical Director
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SCAM SPOTLIGHT

IMPOSTER SCAMS

Do you have a cell phone? What about a landline? Are you on social media? Do you receive mail? If so, you've probably experienced a scam. Imposter scams are when a scammer pretends to be someone of authority or from a legitimate organization. They sometimes even spoof the call, which means they can have the caller ID show up as "Medicare" or "IRS" to look legitimate. If you receive a call from a number not in your contact list, do not answer. It could be a scammer impersonating any number of organizations.

What you need to know about imposter scams!

Medicare

- Medicare will not call you to verify your information, or to ask if you received your new Medicare card.
- DO NOT share your Medicare Number.
- DO NOT share personal medical information.
- DO NOT share your personal doctors name or their contact information.

Government

- Government agencies will not call you out of the blue, including the IRS and the Social Security Administration.
- DO NOT share any of your personal information.
- DO NOT share your Social Security Number.

Grandparent

- Never send money to people you do not know.
- Never send gift cards or another odd payment method.
- Immediately check with loved ones even if they tell you not to contact anyone.
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) can clone voices, know who you are talking to.

If you are contacted by a Medicare imposter, report it!

Contact the Wisconsin Senior Medicare Patrol at 888-818-2611

Report other imposter fraud to the Federal Trade Commission at [ReportFraud.ftc.gov](https://www.ftc.gov/report-fraud)

This project was supported, in part, by grant number 90MPPG0102, from the U.S. Administration for Community Living, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C. 20201



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Faith: The Quiet Force That Shapes Lives

By Carl A. Trapani, MA, MS, LPC, Chippewa Manor Campus Chaplain

Among the many definitions for faith, one of my favorites is: "a firm belief in something for which there is no proof." I have had faith since childhood. I believed that Santa Claus visited us every Christmas. The presents I opened on Christmas mornings were all the proof I needed. Other children tried to tear down my faith in Santa, but I persisted in believing and arguing for his existence until I was six. Then, late on Christmas Eve, I awoke and found my mother putting presents under the tree. While my faith in Santa Claus was shaken, something inside me yearned for greater realities I could trust and believe in. Eventually I transferred the force of faith into other things.

The Essence of Faith

At its core, faith is the ability to believe without having complete evidence. It's what drives someone to take a step forward when the path ahead is unclear. Religious faith, for many, provides a moral compass and a spiritual sense of purpose. It connects individuals to something greater than themselves. It offers comfort during difficult times and provides guidance in decision-making. But even outside of religion, faith plays a vital role in everyday life. It can be the confidence things will improve, trust in a friend's loyalty, or belief in one's own potential.

Faith is part of being human. Most importantly, faith leads us to find hope, which helps us see beyond the problems to the possibilities. Hope helps us take responsibility for our choices. Hope stretches and energizes us to continuous growth and development. Hope urges us to go against the odds and do the impossible. Hope gives life meaning. Without faith and hope, life is empty and miserable.

Faith in Daily Life

People demonstrate faith in countless ways: In relationships, by trusting others and believing in their good intentions. In careers, by pursuing goals with no guarantee of success. In healing, by believing that recovery is possible. This kind of faith allows people to persist. It doesn't eliminate fear or doubt, but it gives us courage to act despite them.

The Strength of Faith in Adversity

It is often during the most difficult times that faith reveals its power. When life is out of control—loss, illness, betrayal—faith becomes a source of endurance. It doesn't always change the outcome, but it



changes the experience of the journey. With faith, people find meaning in pain and hold on when reason alone says to give up. Like any inner strength, faith can grow over time. The longer a belief is held, the stronger it becomes.

Faith is Personal

Faith looks different for everyone. For one person, it may be seen in prayer and religious rituals; for another, it may be facing depression or other illness with quiet determination. What's common is the

underlying belief: that there is hope, that life holds meaning, that love endures. In a world often filled with uncertainty and doubt, faith is the thread that ties us to hope—and to each other.

I am now convinced that the power of belief (faith) is as powerful as the forces of gravity, and as consistent as the speed of light. Faith is more than belief in the unseen—it's a powerful force that anchors people through times of uncertainty, fuels their resilience, and offers them hope in moments of emotional darkness. Whether rooted in religion, personal conviction, or trust in others, faith is often the quiet, steady confidence that gives life meaning and direction. So, whatever your faith, keep it growing!

Carl Trapani, MA, MS, LPC serves as campus Chaplain at Chippewa Manor. He has more than 50 years of pastoral service and professional counseling experience. For more information please call (715) 723-4437 or email him at carl.trapani@chippewamanor.com.

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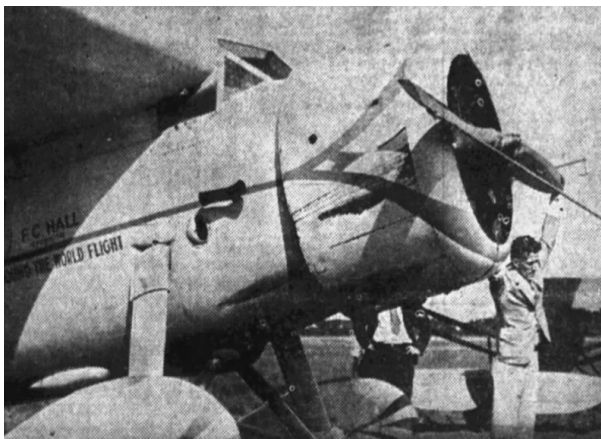
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Dusting Off Some Local History: “Gone Through Those Cow Barns”

By Greg Kocken, Archivist, UW-Eau Claire, Kockeng@uwec.edu

Americans in the 1920s and 1930s were fascinated with the daring feats of aviators. Reports of record-breaking flights and ground-breaking achievements were front page news across the country and here in the Chippewa Valley. Many of these aviators, like Charles Lindbergh and Amelia Earhart, achieved celebrity status. Cities and towns across the country yearned for appearances by these aviators, often through contracts negotiated with promoters.



Pilot Willie Post and Navigator Harold Gatty refueled while resting at Eau Claire's airport. After refueling, the pair soon departed for their next destination.
Eau Claire Leader August 10, 1931

In August 1931, aviators Wiley Post and Harold Gatty were scheduled to appear at the Wisconsin State American Legion meeting at the fairgrounds in Chippewa Falls. The American Legion sold tickets and on the day of the event spectators filled the grandstand, awaiting the arrival of Post and Gatty. During their approach, Post noted that the field and obstacles around it would make landing impossible, so the pair opted to fly south and land at the airport in Eau Claire. Addressing their decision to pass over Chippewa Falls, Wiley Post stated, “The ‘Winnie Mae’ is a fast powered plane, and comes to a landing at speed of sixty or seventy miles an hour—one would have gone through those cow barns.” Although the crowd gathered in Chippewa Falls were disappointed, word spread quickly in Eau Claire and a few hundred people descended on the airport for the chance to meet Post and Gatty and see the “Winnie Mae.”

In 1931, Wiley Post and Harold Gatty were at the height of their popularity. A year earlier, Post and Gatty circumnavigated the globe in a record 8 days and 16 hours, surpassing the record of 21 days

set by a Zeppelin in 1929. The pair drew crowds comparable to Charles Lindbergh everywhere they went. Wiley Post and “Winnie Mae” would go on to continue breaking records. In 1933, Post became the first aviator to circumnavigate the globe alone. The following year, Post pushed the “Winnie Mae” into the stratosphere on a flight from California to Cleveland. The plane could not be pressurized so, instead, Post wore a suit that could be pressurized, pioneering pressurized flight.



Today, the Winnie Mae is in the collection of the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum.

In 1935, Wiley Post perished during a crash as he was attempting to survey an air route from the United States to Russia using an experimental plane partially of his own design. Although the memory of Post has faded from our consciousness, two airports in the United States are named after him, and in 1979, the Post Office released a pair of stamps honoring him.



“Winnie Mae” and Post's pressurized suit featured on his postage stamp.

Is there a local history mystery or topic you want to know more about? Do you have a suggestion for an upcoming column of “Dusting Off?” Please contact Greg at the UW-Eau Claire archives. He would love to hear from you.

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Perspective is Everything

by Judy Soborowicz, Active Health Chiropractic

The Developer of Chiropractic, BJ Palmer, famously stated “Get the big idea, all else follows.” This big idea led thousands of chiropractic doctors to help millions of patients for over 125



years to focus on the health of the communication between the brain and the body. Movement and stabilization of our frame protects the delicate nerves which signal the brain. Small and large movements of joints in the body activate sensors which initiate signals sent to the brain. These signals carry information that help us to stay balanced and ensure adequate stability of our frame under constantly varying loads and conditions. Loss of movement in joints decrease the sensor firing, which causes the brain to act with less information. This is one of the reasons why every study done on the subject, has shown that movement maintains brain function, memory and cognition. Fully understanding this impactful truth leaves us with vast possibilities to establish and maintain health.

When injuries occur and joint segments do not heal with proper motion, the brain-body information is altered and our movement changes, leading to compensations. Sensors fire when movement occurs, when compensation patterns are retained, healthy movement may never resume. Ever bemoan your ‘bad knee’ or ‘bad hip’ they may be due to compensations which have both resulted in and caused nerve system stress. Dis-ease presents in many ways, including weak and/ or tight or painful areas, knee, hip, shoulder arthritis, posture problems, and overall decreased wellness. Patients with serious health issues such as Parkinson’s disease or Alzheimer’s always present with movement changes in the body.

Chiropractic adjustments gently restore movement to the joints, following injury improving sensors and signaling to the brain. The restoration of feedback to the brain alters both brain function and stability. Many have reported overall benefits of chiropractic such as better sleep, mood, digestion, hormones, ability to exercise, balance, posture and more. Brain function is everything, and the chiropractic adjustment, something so seemingly small, and non-invasive has such a great impact. Our brain controls and coordinates all movements, feelings and every single body system function. The animation of our life depends upon the capability of relaying signals both in and out via the nerve system.

Much is to be learned about the importance of healthy movement to the maintenance of our brain, memory and cognition. Greater understanding of the dynamic coordination of our whole being opens the door to acting toward prevention of serious health concerns. The recognition of the interplay and coordination of the parts of the human body give room for a holistic perspective and treatment approach. Movement is essential for brain function; brain function is essential for movement; this symbiotic relationship is a massive key to wellness for a lifetime.



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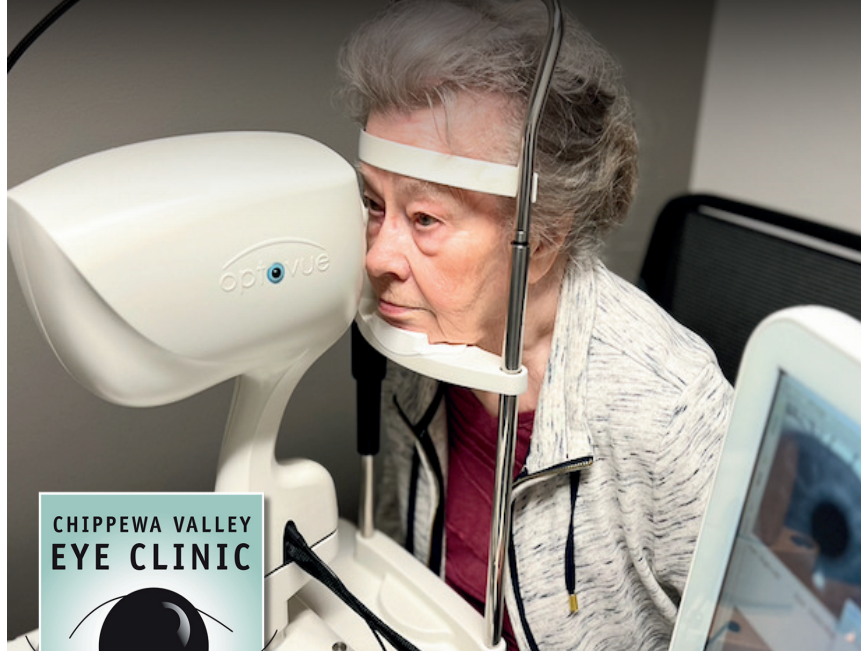
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Summer Driving Tips for Seniors: Stay Safe and Enjoy the Journey

Essential warm-weather driving tips for adults 55+ to ensure a smooth, safe, and stress-free summer

Reprinted from <https://www.retirenet.com/>

Summer is a great time for road trips, visiting family, and exploring new places, but it also brings unique challenges for drivers. High temperatures, increased traffic, and summer storms can make driving more stressful, especially for older adults. Whether you're planning a long trip or just running errands, here are essential driving tips to help seniors stay safe and comfortable on the road.



Prepare Your Car for the Summer Heat: Hot weather can put extra strain on your vehicle, so ensure your car is in top shape before hitting the road.

- ✓ **Check the battery:** Heat can weaken your battery, leading to unexpected breakdowns. Have it tested before long trips.
- ✓ **Inspect your tires:** Hot pavement can increase the risk of blowouts. Check tire pressure regularly and look for signs of wear.
- ✓ **Top off fluids:** Ensure your coolant, oil, and windshield washer fluid levels are adequate to prevent overheating and maintain visibility.
- ✓ **Test the air conditioning:** A working AC is essential for staying comfortable during summer drives.

Beat the Heat and Stay Comfortable

- ✓ **Drive during cooler hours:** Early morning or late evening trips help avoid extreme heat and heavy traffic.
- ✓ **Wear lightweight clothing:** Light, breathable fabrics can keep you cool while driving.
- ✓ **Stay hydrated:** Bring a bottle of water to prevent dehydration, which can lead to fatigue.
- ✓ **Use sun protection:** Sunglasses and a sunshade for your windshield can help reduce glare and keep your car cooler.

Prevent Driver Fatigue: Long drives and heat can lead to exhaustion, making it harder to react quickly.

- ✓ **Take regular breaks:** Stop every 1-2 hours to stretch and rest.
- ✓ **Avoid drowsy driving:** If you feel tired, switch drivers if possible or take a short nap.
- ✓ **Eat light meals:** Heavy foods can make you sluggish; opt for snacks like fruit, nuts, or granola bars.

Stay Prepared for Emergencies: Even with the best planning, unexpected situations can arise.

- ✓ **Carry an emergency kit:** Include water, non-perishable snacks, a flashlight, jumper cables, and basic tools.
- ✓ **Have roadside assistance ready:** Keep the number for AAA or your insurance company's roadside service handy.
- ✓ **Charge your phone:** A fully charged phone ensures you can call for help if needed.

Watch for Summer Storms: Sudden downpours, thunderstorms, and extreme heat waves are common in summer.

- ✓ **Slow down in rain:** Wet roads increase stopping distances, so reduce speed and increase following distance.
- ✓ **Avoid flooded roads:** Never drive through standing water; even a few inches can cause hydroplaning.
- ✓ **Use headlights properly:** Turn them on in rain or low visibility, but avoid high beams in fog.

Enjoy a Safe and Stress-Free Summer Drive

By preparing your car, staying hydrated, and driving smart, you can enjoy a smooth and safe trip wherever the summer takes you. Whether you're heading on a scenic road trip or just visiting loved ones, these simple tips will help make your journey stress-free. Stay safe, and happy travels!

City of Eau Claire Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program

The City of Eau Claire Housing Division is taking applications for its Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program. The Rehabilitation Loan Program is Federally funded and offers loans up to \$20,000. This program is for homes in need of repair, not for extensions or cosmetic renovations.

Types of Eligible Work:

- | |
|-----------------------------------|
| - Electrical repairs or upgrading |
| - Roof & window replacement |
| - Carpentry repairs |
| - Plumbing repairs or upgrading |
| - Heating system replacement |
| - Energy saving repairs |
| - Accessibility Modifications |
| - Siding repairs or replacement |

Applicant Eligibility Requirements:

- | | |
|---|--|
| - City of Eau Claire resident | - Owner occupied (at least one year) |
| - The assessed value of the property may not exceed \$165,750 | - Good credit history |
| - Property must be a minimum of 25 years old | - HUD income guidelines apply: not to exceed 80% of area median income |



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“I Now Pronounce You...Ooops!”

By Kristi Gay, freelance writer

June is the start of wedding season for many couples, which may send you back down memory lane of your own weddings. If you're a woman, remembering the months of planning every detail to the menu to the bridesmaid dresses to the invitations to the music list. If you're a man that might mean remembering perhaps only the beginning of your bachelor party, as the end would have likely been fuzzy after several drinks, and if you're like many men, likely didn't care much about the details. I'm still fully involved in weddings even in my middle age being married 20 years, as both a weekend event server at Stout's Island Lodge in Birchwood, WI, where weddings are hosted every weekend, as well as the daughter of the owner Rustic Elegance barn in Bloomer, WI, which also hosts several weddings and receptions during the summer for which I help prepare the grounds. This article is more of a story time of wedding FAILS, most of which I have been personally involved in, to hopefully garner a chuckle and maybe help you reminisce about some of the crazy stories from weddings in your past.

As a 19-year old college student, I started bussing tables at the Eau Claire Country Club, which included clearing dishes and refilling waters to guests. However, for weddings, they had “all hands on deck” to get food to all guests as fast as possible. Seasoned waitresses would speed-walk around with humongous trays balancing confidently on one hand above their head holding two layers of covered plates, while whipping out a standing and setting the tray down. However, as an inexperienced busser, I had that big tray out in front of me, holding with two hands, barely making it around the crowded reception area, with no ability to set up a stand. But that wasn't the bad part. Somehow someone had me serve the meals to the head table. I had the common sense to serve the bride and groom first. But I will never forget the steps that followed me taking off the metal plate cover to reveal the filet mignon in a puddle of steak juice, aka cow blood. I walked behind the bride and attempted to place the plate down in front of her, but being the very first plate I dealt with, didn't realize the slightest tip of the hand sent the puddle of blood into her lap, pooling on the snow white dress. Mind you, this was BEFORE the first dance, reception, and basically the majority of the event. The last thing I remember was the entire head table swooping around her to problem solve and sap it up while I slowly backed away, all the way out the door, muttering, “I'm so sorry...I'm so sorry...”. And that was the day I simultaneously quit and was fired.

Wedding fail story #2 has to do with a wedding I was working for last summer, along with my teenage daughter who was 16 years old. This wedding party were PARTIERS, quickly downing beers as fast as I could deliver them the second the 4pm outdoor wedding completed. By 11pm every guest was literally plastered.

The staff usually makes their way into the lodge after the dessert is served and prepares “late night food”, typically pizza, for the second wave of hunger from guests and partiers. All of the sudden, the drunkest guy who was also the best man and around 30 years old, stumbles into the lodge. He is wearing his tux's white shirt, unbuttoned at the top with blood stains down the front, zero pants, and black socks, and has two bunches of bloody tissue hanging out of his nostrils. Apparently he had face-planted during the dance. But then he starts hitting on my 16-year old daughter, to which she could only laugh with pity. The crazy part was his girlfriend eventually followed him in to yank his arm away and yell at him for hitting on a child while also being bloody and pants-less.

I hope you enjoyed these stories and can remember some of your own. Or maybe you are revisiting the wedding season with your children, grandchildren, or late love affairs of your own. If so I have two tips: be careful of steak juice, and drink responsibly with your pants on!



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