



MEMORIES MUSINGS

By Cheri Sims

Cheri lives, writes and gardens in Charleston.

I am officially tired of winter. I love the snow but the cold is really bothering me this year. I am sure there is a reason, probably my age, but I am cold and don't like it. No, I won't move to Florida, I would miss the cold!

Don't forget to feed the birds and squirrels. As I have previously mentioned I was able to get the bird feeder in place just before I moved in, so I have new furry and feathered friends to look after. This summer I will erect another post with a flat feeder in hopes of attracting doves. They do not seem to like enclosed feeding stations and Hubby always made flat boxes to install on a 4x4 post. I am excited to see what I can construct.

For those of you who have asked about Arthur, CW and Garfield, the stray cats at my old house; they are doing well and I am thankful that, when they are

away, new owners are letting me feed the cats. I have not seen Arthur or Garfield for a week now and have always wondered if they had homes but I am pretty sure CW does not have a home because he is at the house to greet me every morning. He either is sitting on the animal heated pad on the chair or curled up in the warm bed under the chair. He still has a bit of reserve toward me but will let me pet him; but I have yet to be able to pick him up for a cuddle. I am still trying to catch him to find him a forever home but he will not go near a humane cat cage.

After all my years of feeding stray cats I still do not understand how they survive living out of doors in the winter. I worry about them and do my best to help but I wish there were no stray animals. Every once in a while I will watch a rescue video on YouTube but they are so heart wrench-

ing I find that I can't watch them often. If you have an animal shelter in your area they could probably use extra food and shelter items and now is a good time to donate. It is a good way to dispose of extra blankets instead of throwing them away.

Out of the onset of boredom I started a new project in the laundry room this week. I had intended to have a new ceiling installed but found out it is a new ceiling but with a knock down finish, which I really do not like. When my contractor returns I will have him skim coat the ceiling and I plan to have him add small crown molding above the new border I am putting up. I know this process sounds backwards but he is quite good at working around my projects. I finally finished the kitchen border and fixed a couple bad places in the living room border; which had decided to come loose from the wall. It was the first border I worked on last winter and I purchased a container of bad wallpaper paste. No problem, I removed the offending pieces and reapplied new ones. All is well.

It is too cold to finish the painting on the enclosed back porch; even

though it has a heating vent I can't seem to get it very warm. This is Mittens and Pitou's condo room and I just can't understand why they like laying out on the cold porch instead of inside the warm house. I bought them a new piece of cat furniture to match their condo. Pitou has started scratching on the wicker settee and I don't want her to ruin it. The new piece looks like a three legged footstool and one leg is a wood scratching post and one is a rope scratching post. So far they are just looking at it. I even tried to show them how to scratch on it but Mittens just looked at me like I was crazy. I sure am glad no one was looking in the window to see me scratching on the post; they would have thought I had really turned into a crazy cat lady!

Winter baking has always been a favorite way to pass time for me but now I tend to read more recipes than I actually make; probably because I should not eat all that I would like to bake. Realizing that I have this hobby but now have fewer mouths to feed in the house and not knowing what to do about it has been a conundrum. As I was cleaning up my wallpapering mess I got the urge for

oatmeal bars and I decided to make a batch after supper. I found this recipe on Taste of Home last year and they are really delicious. Most oatmeal recipes tend to be dry but this one is moist and gooey because it uses quick oats instead of old fashioned and the dates add to the moisture.

As I was mixing my batter I suddenly got this silly idea; why not share them with the birds and squirrels? I made a recipe of oatmeal bars and after baking half the recipe for me I added bird seed and stale peanuts to the other half of the recipe and baked them for the birds. It might sound silly but I have to do something constructive with all this extra time at home. I don't tend to sit still very well and I can only watch so much TV so why not bake for the animals?

Stay warm!
Date Oatmeal Bars (Human recipe)
Ingredients
 * 1 cup chopped dates
 * 1/2 cup water
 * 1/4 cup sugar
 * 1-1/2 cups quick-cooking oats
 * 1 cup all-purpose flour
 * 1 cup packed brown sugar
 * 1/2 teaspoon baking

soda
 * 1/4 teaspoon salt
 * 1/3 cup butter, melted
 * 1 large egg white,
 room temperature

Directions
 * Preheat the oven to 350°. Place dates, water and sugar in a small saucepan; bring to a boil, stirring constantly. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, until thickened, about 5 minutes, stirring constantly.

* In a large bowl, mix oats, flour, brown sugar, baking soda and salt; stir in melted butter and egg white. Press half of the mixture into an 8-in. square baking pan coated with cooking spray. Spread carefully with date mixture; top with remaining oat mixture.

* Bake until lightly browned, 20-25 minutes. Cool in pan on a wire rack. Cut into bars.

(Adapted from a taste of Home recipe) <https://www.tasteofhome.com/recipes/date-oatmeal-bars/>

Animal Recipe, same as the human recipe but add:

* 1 Cup birdseed
 * 1 Cup peanut butter
 * 1/2 cup honey
 * 1 Cup stale nuts or other fruits or seeds and bake as directed
 * Bake as directed above.



REAL LIFE WELLNESS

By Dr. Bill Hemmer

How much Viral Baggage are you carrying?

We've all been infected with viruses our entire life. Our Immune system has developed over millions of years to detect, kill, remember and protect us from future infections. But the same can be said for a virus. It has spent millions of years attempting to hide, kill cells then avoid detection and live inside of us because unless a virus is inside a host... it's not alive.

There has been a lot of focus by the media about "COVID long haulers" who will continue to have symptoms after they have been infected. This is just another example of a virus doing everything it can to stay and live inside a host once it has infected you. There are many different types of viruses we can carry around for life. The most well-known example is the Herpes virus

that causes shingles. If you had chickenpox as a kid, you have a small level of that virus always living inside of you.

The bottom line is... the smaller your viral baggage is at any given time, the more room you have to fight off new viruses wanting to come in, and the healthier you remain.

Think of it this way. You have a bunch of virus-infected cells hanging around inside of you just waiting until your immune system gets worn down. Once your immune system gets weak, the virus inside of those cells can begin to replicate and infect new cells around it. This also allows any new viral infection to come in and over-

power your immune response and make you sick from the outside. Then a small piece of this new infective virus can be added to the viral baggage you carry around in the future.

This is what has been happening to all of us our entire life. The good news is, no matter how much viral baggage you are currently walking around with, there are safe effective lifestyle changes and treatments you can do to help decrease your viral baggage. None of these lifestyle changes or treatments are drastic, but they do take discipline, thought and consistency.

The most important lifestyle change you can do to take out your viral

trash is to move! Your immune system is transported around your body by your lymphatic system. Your lymphatic system is found in every part of your body, including inside your skull. The biggest problem with the lymphatic system is that it doesn't have its own pump like blood does from the heart. The only way lymph fluid moves throughout your body is by you moving.

One strategy virus uses to infect you and keep you sick is by zapping your energy, so you don't move around too much. If you don't move, your immune cells can't get into the area and kill the infected cells. This is how your viral baggage continues to grow.

Another extremely important way to take out the viral trash is to decrease as much white sugar and flour from your diet as you can. Both substances decrease your immune response dramatically and when you combine eating these substances with lack of motion, you are handing over the keys to your body to the viruses so they can become permanent residents inside of you. All of this leads to a chronically high viral baggage, or long hauler symptoms.

Next week, I will discuss some simple treatments that will help you take out this viral trash more effectively.

LifeSpan Center's tips and tricks to healthy eating: diet and nutrition

"Healthy living" to most people means both physical and mental health are in balance or functioning well together in a person. In many instances, physical and mental health are closely linked, so that a change (good or bad) in one directly affects the other. Consequently, some of the tips will include suggestions for emotional and mental "healthy living."

All humans have to eat food for growth and maintenance of a healthy body, but we humans have different nutrition requirements as infants, children (kids), teenagers, young adults, adults, and seniors.

For example, infants may require feeding every four hours until they gradually age and begin to take in

more solid foods. Eventually they develop into the more normal pattern of eating three times per day as young kids. However, as most parents know, kids, teenagers, and young adults often snack between meals. Snacking is often not limited to these age groups because adults and seniors often do the same.

Tips:

* Eat three healthy meals a day (breakfast, lunch, and dinner); it is important to remember that dinner does not have to be the largest meal.

* The bulk of food consumption should consist of healthy foods, such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk products.

* Incorporate lean meats, poultry, fish, beans,

eggs, and nuts (with emphasis on beans and nuts) into a healthy diet.

* Choose foods that are low in saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, salt (sodium), and added sugars; look at the labels because the first listed items on the labels comprise the highest concentrations of ingredients.

* Control portion sizes; eat the smallest portion that can satisfy hunger and then stop eating.

* Healthy snacks are OK in moderation and should consist of items like fruit, whole grains, or nuts to satisfy hunger and not cause excessive weight gain.

* Avoid sodas and sugar-enhanced drinks because of the excessive calories in the sodas and sugar drinks; diet

drinks may not be a good choice as they make some people hungrier and increase food consumption.

* Avoid eating a large meal before sleeping to decrease gastroesophageal reflux and weight gain.

* If a person is angry or depressed, eating will not solve these situations and may make the underlying problems worse.

* Avoid rewarding children with sugary snacks; such a pattern may become a lifelong habit for people.

* Avoid heavy meals in the summer months, especially during hot days.

* A vegetarian lifestyle has been promoted for a healthy lifestyle and weight loss; vegetarians should check with their physicians

to be sure they are getting enough vitamins, minerals, and iron in their diet.

* Cooking foods (above 165 F) destroys most harmful bacteria and other pathogens; if you choose to eat uncooked foods like fruits or vegetables, they should be thoroughly washed with running treated (safe to drink) tap water right before eating.

* Avoid eating raw or undercooked meats of any type.

Tips for special situations:

* People with diabetes should use the above tips and monitor their glucose levels as directed; try to keep the daily blood glucose levels as close to normal as possible.

* People with unusual work schedules (night shifts,

college students, military) should try to adhere to a breakfast, lunch, and dinner routine with minimal snacking.

* People who prepare food should avoid using grease or frying foods in grease.

* People trying to lose weight (body fat) should avoid all fatty and sugary foods and eat mainly vegetables, fruits, and nuts and markedly reduce his/her intake of meat and dairy products.

* Seek medical advice early if you cannot control your weight, food intake, or if you have diabetes and cannot control your blood glucose levels.

BUSTED! Good Riddance, Rodents.

Mice giving you a fright?
 Call Crist Termite - they do it right!
 The Sentricon difference. No more colony. No more problem.

Crist Termite & Pest Solutions, Inc.
 David Crist
 217-543-2890
 207 N Oak Street • Arthur, IL 61911

VISA MASTERCARD DISCOVER <https://cristtermite.com>

Explore 4-H in January creates First Aid kits

The 4-H programs in Coles, Cumberland, Douglas, Moultrie, and Shelby Counties are bringing youth a new way to "Explore 4-H". Each month there will be a different exploratory kit offered for all youth - not just 4-H members. Each of these kits will be associated with a 4-H project area that youth can enroll in for a project.

In January, 54 youth created first aid kits, which falls under the Health 4-H project.

During a time of remote learning and early dismissals, youth are staying home for longer periods of time. With this project kit and training on how to use the kit, members are better prepared for accidents that may happen. Each member built their own first-aid kit and learned the purpose of the items in the kit. Lucas Ruhoff of Sarah Bush Lincoln Community Hospital Community First Aid Group led the workshop.

Two sessions were offered based on the participant's age. Cloverbuds are members who are 5-7 years of age while 4-H members are 8-18 years of age.

Cost for the kits was partially funded by a 4-H Innovation Grant offered through Illinois State 4-H. Thank you to our sponsor.

The February "Explore 4-H" project kit is building a trebuchet. A trebuchet is a type of catapult and part

of the Junkdrawer Robotics Project area. 4-H members (8-18 years of age) will build a larger scale model, while Cloverbuds (5-7 years of age) will build their model from popsicle sticks. More information can be found at our website: <https://extension.illinois.edu/events/2021-01-30-explore-4-h> or leave a message at 217-543-3755.

- Hardwood
- Vinyl
- Carpet
- Tile
- Laminate

COUNTRYSIDE FLOORING
 NELSON CHUPP
 551 E. CR. 300 N. • Arcola, IL 61910
 Ph. 217-268-3669

5 1/2 miles east of Arthur South on Country Club Rd. Turn left at 4-way stop sign
 2 1/2 miles west of Arcola South on Country Club Rd. Turn left at 4-way stop sign

PORTER
 Auto Body

Serving You at 2 Convenient Locations

1607 Madison - Charleston 2116 Lake Land - Mattoon
 345-7832 234-8855