



MEMORIES MUSINGS

By Cheri Sims

Cheri lives, writes and gardens in Charleston.

April 28 is National Blueberry Pie day, I am all for baking a pie today but blueberries are not in season thru August. This makes me wonder just who designated this National day, to be observed before blueberry season. Scott Roberts has taken a great deal of time in composing a very interesting web page listing all the National food days of the year. (<http://scottroberts.org/completing-listing-of-national-food-days/>) I perused the designated food days of the year; many of them don't make any sense and are not aligned with growing or harvesting seasons.

Potato Head Day and National Raisin Day. There is no growing time for potato heads (it is a toy) but I associate potato heads with Christmas gifts so I would have made this day in December were I making the National Food Day list but how did a toy get on a food list? I can get behind oatmeal cookies and raisins on this day but oats and grapes peak in the fall so why not make these National days correspond with their harvest?

Mother's Day is Sunday, May 9 and that is also National Butterscotch Brownie Day and National Moscato Day. The Moscato grape is one of the oldest grapes grown in the world, primarily in Italy, but this is certainly a fitting day to raise your glass to celebrate Mom. We can also celebrate National Bird Migration Day, National Lost Sock Day, Lilac Sunday and National Babysitters day on Mother's Day this year.

Where am I going with this bit of trivia, or what am I doing you might ask? I am going "Absolutely nowhere and doing absolutely nothing"; which reminds me of the 1969 Edwin Starr, Pop original song "War"; which

has an infectious beat and was a war protest song. Hubby told me a long time ago not to listen to the words, just enjoy the music.

I was stumped for a subject matter for this week's article and somewhere along my web surfing I discovered how the national days of the year seem to correspond with nothing in particular, which seemed a perfect aimless subject since I am writing this as it is snowing outside, which has my mind really messed up since I was out gardening in shorts last night! This reminds me of the Kevin Bacon six degrees of separation game we used to play; "A party game called "Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon" attempts to link Hollywood actors through their movie roles the way Milgram's small-world experiment linked people through letters. You start with a random actor, then name another actor from one of her movies, then name an actor who has been in a movie with that second actor, and continue until you get to someone who's shared the screen with Bacon — trying to make the connection in six steps or fewer". <https://www.shortform.com/blog/six-degrees-of-kevin-bacon/>.

Trivia games are fun and trivia is also a great way to spend time on the computer. Sometimes a subject pops into my mind and for lack of anything better to do I research it. This past month I have researched the word "archipelago" which is a chain, cluster or group of islands, but I have no idea

why this word popped into my brain. I then wondered what the most remote island in the world is and learned, "With a population of no more than 50, Pitcairn Island is the most remote island in the world, located 3,240 miles (5,215 km) from the coast of New Zealand. The island is inhabited by the descendants of sailors from the HMS Bounty, a Royal Navy vessel that was the scene of a mutiny in 1789". Now this is some place I would really like to visit.

Thanks to a virus update I looked up the drug "Ivermectin" which is being used to treat the virus but is considered harmful to humans. It is used to treat parasitic agents and has many side effects. Wow this drug sounds horrible to me but this information encouraged me to look up what common food that naturally kill parasites in the human body. Lucky for me I will eat garlic, onions, pumpkin seeds, carrots, raw honey and coconut so I hope to continue to be parasite free!

I then looked up the worst foods for the human body and almost laughed out loud. The offending foods are microwave popcorn, soda, canned tomatoes, pizza, white bread, sweetened cereal, French fries and chips. I know people who live on these foods alone. I was surprised that coffee and cocoa were not in these lists of bad foods. A link on one of these pages led me to unhealthy household products of which laundry detergent and non stick pots and pans top the list.

Also noted were "10 Toxic Household Items You Should Throw Away Now", plastic food containers, air fresheners, perfume, fabric sprays, cleaning products, cosmetics, and antiperspirants, (<https://www.everydayhealth.com/>).

I guess we should go back to living in caves! I am not surprised at this list. It seems everything useful or yummy is bad for us. Speaking of bacon, these bacon, oatmeal cookies are delicious. My Granny and Aunt used to make them all the time when I was little, although they also used the bacon grease in the recipe. I have not made them for many years but now seems like a good time to indulge.

Enjoy your random thoughts.

Bacon, Oatmeal Cookies Ingredients

- * 8 ounces sliced bacon, cut into 1/4" squares
- * 2 1/4 cups cake flour
- * 1 teaspoon baking powder
- * 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- * 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- * 1 cup (packed) dark brown sugar
- * 2/3 cup sugar
- * 1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, room temperature
- * 2 large eggs
- * 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- * 1 cup old-fashioned oats
- * 2/3 cup raisins

Preparation:

1. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper. Cook bacon in a large skillet over

medium-low heat, stirring occasionally, until deep golden brown and crisp. Using a slotted spoon, transfer bacon to paper towels.

2. Whisk flour and next 3 ingredients in a medium bowl. Using an electric mixer, beat both sugars and butter in a large bowl, occasionally scraping down sides, until well blended, 2-3 minutes. Add eggs one at a time, mixing well between additions. Add vanilla; mix on medium speed until pale and fluffy, 4-5 minutes. Mix in dry ingredients.

3. Fold bacon, oats, and raisins into batter and stir until evenly incorporated (dough will be sticky; chill briefly for easier handling, if desired). Using a 2-ounce ice cream scoop or 1/4-cup measure and forming dough into balls, scoop batter onto prepared sheets, spaced at least 3" apart. Chill dough for 1 hour or cover and chill overnight. 4. Arrange racks in upper and lower thirds of oven; preheat to 375°F Bake cookies, rotating pans halfway through, until edges are light golden brown and centers are still slightly soft, 20-22 minutes. Let cool on baking sheets for 10 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; let cool completely. DO AHEAD: Can be made 3 days ahead. Store airtight at room temperature. <https://www.epicurious.com/recipes/food/views/bacon-oatmeal-and-raisin-cookies-394670>



REAL LIFE WELLNESS

By Dr. Bill Hemmer
Inflammation Loads the Gun, a Virus Pulls the Trigger

I was listening to a webinar given by one of my favorite professors, and he talked about this concept. The COVID-19 virus is here to stay, just as the Influenza viruses and Norovirus and Adenovirus. Viruses are not going away...ever!

So, then the question becomes, how can you prepare yourself and your Immune system to recognize and have an appropriate response to all these critters? We have all had colds, then got over them. We have all got the flu and got over it. This is what our Immune system does. We get infected, then it creates antibodies to fight and kill the invader, then move on with your life.

Continued chronic in-

fection problems only occur when you have too much inflammation in your body before you get infected. If you get infected while you have a high inflammation load, your chances of having long term symptoms and complications from the infection go way up. The opposite is also true, if you are not inflamed, your Immune system does its job and you kill the infection, create antibodies and move on.

We all have some inflammation every day. It is normal to have a very low daily level of inflammation. Inflammation is the first step of any healing process. But, if your body can't turn down or shut off your inflammation

response, it causes all kinds of problems metabolically. Thankfully, there are easy effective ways to decrease your inflammation every day.

The most important thing you can do to decrease your inflammation is to eat non-inflammatory foods. The worst foods to eat are high sugar foods. Sugar gets into the cells and burns very poorly. Sugar creates all kinds of toxic byproducts and free radicals that keep your inflammation at a very high level and these toxins are not easily cleared. All of this adds to your daily inflammation.

The next thing you need to do to decrease your inflammation is to move. Movement pumps your lymphatic

fluid around your body. Your lymph fluid is your body's trash, debris and Immune system transport system. Your Lymphatic system doesn't have a pump of its own. Compared to your heart, which is the pump for your circulatory system. The only pump for your Lymphatic system is you moving.

This is why if you are having a lazy day and just sitting around, you can begin to have swelling and puffiness around your ankles and feet. Fluid that is supposed to circulate from your feet and legs simply pools because of gravity. This can lead to the tissues becoming more acidic and can lead to tissue problems and more inflammation.

The final thing you can do today to decrease your inflammation and remain ready to take on any type of infection is to have a good mental attitude. Mental stress causes physical problems. Your brain controls how you react to stress and if your ability to handle mental stress is low, it will increase the amount of inflammation your body will carry.

So, just remember, we will never outrun all the viruses, bacteria, parasites and critters that are around us every day. But the Good Lord gave us an unbelievably strong Immune system to fight and destroy those things. We just have to be sure to keep it tuned up.

Lake Land College Medical Assistant Program receives accreditation

The medical assistant program at Lake Land College received accreditation status from the Commission on the Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) in March upon the recommendation of Medical Assisting Education Review Board (MAERB).

Yeske said. "I am happy that we are able to provide quality education in a very rapidly growing career."

The Lake Land medical assistant program trains students in both administrative and clinical roles. In these positions, duties may include patient care, phlebotomy, injections and assistance with minor office procedures, scheduling and billing. The goals of the program are to prepare competent entry level medical assistants in the knowledge, skills and behavior learning domains.

the Certified Clinical Medical Assistant (CCMA) exam through the National Healthcare Career Association (NHA). Graduates of the medical assistant program at Lake Land have a 100% pass rate of passing the certification exam on the first try and are often highly sought after locally.

"The accreditation process evaluates multiple categories of the program or institution including curriculum standards, courses and goals, adequate facilities and equipment for training as well as several other aspects," Yeske said. "By attending an accredited program, you can be sure that you are making a good investment financially and that you can trust the education you are receiving."

Students who complete the program go on to take

a special admission program requiring applicants to meet a specific list of criteria to qualify for admission. In addition to the traditional classroom program offering, the program is also offered in a hybrid format, meaning all classes are offered online with two evening labs each week.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the medical assistant field is expected to grow by 23% through 2024, much more rapidly than the average oc-

cupation, and Medical Assistants earn an average salary of \$35,720 or an average hourly wage of \$17.17. The average wage for a Medical Assistant can vary depending on the industry in which they decide to practice.

For more information on the medical assistant program at Lake Land College, visit lakelandcollege.edu/high-demand-programs/medical-assistant/ or contact Molly Yeske at myeske@lakelandcollege.edu or 217-234-5055.

For more information about the EIU and ROE 9 partnership, visit the EIU website at www.eiu.edu/ed-prep/roe9/roe9.php. There, interested participants can find details on program requirements, cohort schedules, transfer courses, application procedures, and financial aid, and find a link to the program's "Get Started" page, where they can apply to the program. Those seeking additional information or wanting to speak with a program representative can contact Lucas at selucas@eiu.edu or by calling (217) 581-2524.

For more information about EIU, or to learn more about its growing assortment of programs and services, visit the university's website at www.eiu.edu, or call EIU's public information office at (217) 581-7400.

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Strategic partnership between EIU and ROE 9 opens doors for future teachers fall 2021

Eastern Illinois University and Regional Office of Education 9 have partnered to develop and deliver innovative programs to improve access to teacher licensure for adult learners living in the ROE 9 region, which encom-

passes Champaign and Ford County public schools.

The partnership program was developed for paraprofessionals already working in schools, those with bachelor's degrees who are interested in changing careers, and students who have completed some college coursework but are unable to regularly commute to Charleston to pursue affordable and accessible teacher licensure. Two programs will be offered—the first in Special Education (kindergarten through age 21), and the second in Elementary Education (Grades 1 through 6).

Program cohorts will begin in Champaign beginning Fall 2021, with once-per-week evening classes organized to accommodate those who are already working. Coursework will primarily take place in person at the Regional Office of Education 9 district office, located at 3358 Big Pine Trail, Champaign. The program's first candidates will be prepared

to student teach as early as fall of 2024, with student teaching experiences taking place within ROE 9 schools to facilitate field experiences in the types of settings program participants are interested in teaching in.

"We're excited to offer the professional education courses and field experiences required for licensure in special education and elementary education in Champaign County," said Dr. Stephen Lucas, associate dean of EIU's College of Education. "A distinct advantage of this partnership is the high-quality advising from both EIU and ROE 9, which will strategically enhance student success and enable participants to incorporate previous and even current coursework into their program requirements."

Another notable feature, Lucas said, is the program's flexibility. Program participants will have access to general education courses through EIU or at their local community colleges. Can-

didates also are able to take courses concurrently through EIU and their local community colleges to assist in fulfilling program requirements.

For more information about the EIU and ROE 9 partnership, visit the EIU website at www.eiu.edu/ed-prep/roe9/roe9.php. There, interested participants can find details on program requirements, cohort schedules, transfer courses, application procedures, and financial aid, and find a link to the program's "Get Started" page, where they can apply to the program. Those seeking additional information or wanting to speak with a program representative can contact Lucas at selucas@eiu.edu or by calling (217) 581-2524.

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