



MEMORIES MUSINGS

By Cheri Sims

Cheri lives, writes and gardens in Charleston.

Here I go again making provisions for the winter for another stray cat. The young tom cat who looks a lot like Mosey cat, who ran away when we moved in town five years ago, has started sleeping on the back porch, close to the food bowls. I did not see him much last winter but he pretty much moved in over the summer and every time I look at his pretty gray and white face I think of poor scared Mosey. I still can't touch the tom, he is very afraid, but he has started coming closer when I take out his breakfast. At first I was going to name him Mosey Two, like I named Mitten Kitten after old Mittens but somehow I just can't give that name away yet. I think I might just harbor the faintest hope that Mosey has survived so I began the search for a name.

I started with the French word for "Mosey" which is "Petit Tour" pronounced "petty tour" but that was too much like "Pitou" who lives in the house. I went through all sorts of names and somehow ended up with "Chessy". I have always loved the Chessy cat logo of the Chesapeake and Ohio railway and also had a sweatshirt with the cute little gray and and white cat on it and the image looks much like this tom cat; so "Chessy" it is. He does not seem to like the neighbor's

cats nor do they care for him but I am trying to make them all be nice to each other. We also have another black tom; who has been visiting often; he doesn't like any of the other cats either and hisses at me constantly but has no problem eating my food. I have been calling the black cat "Panther" but the neighbor kids call him a different name and since I am not really looking for two outside cats I might just say "hey cat" and try not to get attached. Yeah, sure!

As the weather began to turn "fallish" I decided I had better make some warmer accommodations for "Chessy", so I cleaned out old Mittens house, which Hubby built twelve years ago, and also painted a plastic house the previous owners had left here when they moved. Both houses have new bedding and are secure under the deck roof but since the deck has a rail banister I decided I might make a temporary winter setup so that the snow and rain would be lessened. After buying the plywood at the local lumber yard and having them cut it to my specified sizes a friend delivered them. As I stared at the ugly plywood I decided that putting that on my newly refurbished deck would not do so I spent a couple hours staining the wood to match the deck. Once the plywood was dry I inserted them under

the banister railing and patted myself on the back. I was afraid it would look tacky but it blends with the deck décor.

A couple weeks ago "Chessy" started laying in one of the lawn chairs on the deck and even stayed in his chair during a couple rain storms so later that evening I unboxed all the outside cat paraphernalia, winter feeding dishes, heat pads and chair pads; put them all in place and plugged in the pads and hoped this would help the stray cats adjust to winter. I apparently made so much commotion on the day I was preparing the plywood and deck that "Chessy" became a bit skittish and for a couple days would not come onto the deck except to eat. The black cat found the heated chairs quickly and has been sleeping on one of them. "Chessy" on the other hand has not returned to his chair and seems to prefer staying under the deck.

After yesterday's horrible rain the whole deck was soaked so I added another stained board over the top of the houses, by balancing it on the window sill and the banister. When I stepped back to look at it I was a bit dismayed, it looked unkempt so I decorated it with a fall wreath, picked a bunch of herbs and made a bouquet and added pumpkins and mums. It is not great looking but I think it will help keep the food and houses dryer. So far none of the cats have jumped up to investigate the new addition to the deck but they are sitting under it while enjoying a meal so all is well!

Later that day I received a text and picture from Janis, who bought my other house and co-parent CW cat and she asked if I recognized the



cat in the picture. My heart raced, I was sure it was stray cat Arthur, who eluded all attempts at being caught before I moved and also stopped visiting Janis; most likely because he is afraid of dogs and she has two or the cutest Shih Tzu puppies I have ever seen. Janis said that "Arthur" looked a bit thin but healthy and he did eat while he was visiting. I sure hope Arthur will return and learn to like "Woody" and "Teddy". Janis will be a good fur-mom and I have offered to babysit Arthur when they travel.

The Holidays are upon us and I just learned that "Hager Tree Farm" will be opening on November 20. You can visit their web site at "hagertreefarm.com" for more information. Their address is Ashmore, IL., but they are very close to Charleston and there is a map on the web site. I have missed walking the tree fields and selecting my own fresh cut tree and I think I will stroll around their live trees before deciding which tree is perfect for my viewing pleasure. The Hager Tree Farm is a beautiful tree farm; I love driving out there just to see the beautiful barn they built and when you step inside you are greeted by the best Christmas tree smell ever! They also make wreaths, swags and other evergreen decorations; check out all the pictures on their website.

There is one major crite-

ria; the tree has to be strong enough to hold cats. Yes, I said cats; at least one of my cats will venture into the tree every year but I have been so lucky that none of them has ever knocked the tree over nor have they ever broken anything. I don't scold the cats for being interested except when they try to drink the water; I discourage that.

With the above delightful news I guess it is time to begin hanging my Christmas lights outside. I have already seen a couple men putting lights on the roof of their houses so I am in good company and not thinking too early. I would much rather hang lights in October and early November than when it is cold and snowing. I like to enjoy the placement of the strands and don't want to be hurried by inclement weather. Hanging lights outside can be quite peaceful if done in the right weather. I like to have all my lights in place so that I can turn them on Thanksgiving night.

Since my family eats pumpkin weekly in November I always try to find new recipes to serve and years ago I found a pumpkin fritter recipe on a British website and made them for years. I lost the recipe but recently found the one I am sharing. It looks to be the same recipe but I have added my changes. Enjoy decorating!

Pumpkin Fritters

- * 2 tbsp olive oil (I use peanut oil)
- * 1/2 small pumpkin, sliced into thick pieces
- * 3 rashers pancetta, thinly sliced (half a package bacon)
- * 1 stick rosemary
- * 1 garlic clove, finely chopped (I prefer tea spoon onion powder)

- * 150g/5 1/2oz plain flour
- * 2 free-range eggs, beaten
- * 150g/5 1/2oz Panko breadcrumbs
- For the gruyère and Parmesan cream
- * 200ml/7fl oz double cream
- * 100g/3 1/2oz grated Parmesan, plus extra to serve
- * 200g/7oz grated gruyère cheese

Method

* To make the pumpkin fritters, heat the olive oil in a pan and fry the pumpkin and the bacon for around 25 minutes over a low heat with the rosemary and garlic.

* Preheat a deep fat fryer to 180C (Caution: hot oil can be dangerous. Do not leave unattended.)

* Pour the flour onto a plate, the eggs on another and the breadcrumbs on a third plate. Remove the just-cooked pumpkin from the pan, reserving the pancetta for the dressing.

* Dip the pumpkin first in the flour, then the egg and then the breadcrumbs. Deep-fry until crisp. Carefully remove and drain on kitchen paper.

* To make the gruyère and Parmesan cream, bring the cream to the boil in a saucepan, remove from the heat and stir in the cheese to melt and thicken. Keep warm.

* To serve, spoon the gruyère and Parmesan cream into a serving bowl, add the fritters. Grate over more Parmesan. https://www.bbc.co.uk/food/recipes/pumpkin_fritters_15670



REAL LIFE WELLNESS

By Dr. Bill Hemmer

The 4 Ways to Live Your Best Life

Last week, I described my vision of building Your Best Life Meter. This meter is the balance between the amount of Inflammation you have on one end and your Immune System response on the other end. I have called this meter Inflammunity. When these two ends are balanced, you have all the energy, vitality and joy to live your Best Life.

This week, I want to begin to describe the 4 ways you can keep those two ends balanced. You have the abil-

ity to create your own health. You don't need anything other than a willingness to learn and be ready to take responsibility for your own health. Those two things will provide you with all the foundation you need to build your Best Life Ever.

The 4 ways you keep your Inflammunity Best Life Meter in balance are: Building a healthy lifestyle, handling Stress more effectively, having Healthy Bugs and finally having a Healthy Brain. Each one of these ways can

make a huge impact on your life. But bringing them all together multiplies the effect and leads to your optimum health (Your Best Life).

To demonstrate this point, Cleveland Clinic has a Functional Medicine clinic within its system of healthcare. Recently, it made the decision to have people who wanted to be members of this clinic go through a healthy lifestyle building program before they were ever admitted inside the clinic and granted membership. The results were amazing.

Simply by creating a new healthy lifestyle, 60 percent of the potential members resolved the problems they wanted to address even before they were admitted. This is the power of building and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. In my opinion, if you did nothing more than learn to live and protect a healthy lifestyle, almost all of your health problems would magically fade away.

Also, as I mentioned last week, there are 3 different sides to each of the 4 ways to live your Best Life ever. I have called these 3 sides the Triangle of Health for years. To build and maintain a healthy lifestyle your Mental, Chemical and Physical triangle must be sturdy and solid.

The mental side of the triangle is the power of goal setting. Every great accomplishment starts with someone saying, "my goal is to ____!" Motivation comes when you vividly imagine

what your life will look like when you have accomplished your goal. I believe goal setting is the most important thing you can do to move towards health.

Once you set your goal, then you can begin to work on the chemical side of the Triangle. Your diet fuels you and allows you to detoxify yourself. We all know how important a good diet is, but everyone's diet is different because of their unique make-up. You can't be afraid to try many different types of diets before you find the one that works best for you.

The third side of the Healthy Lifestyle Triangle is your fitness. Fitness means different things to different people. In general, some sort of cardiovascular exercise, strength training and flexibility routine are the cornerstone of fitness. Anyone, no matter how old, out of shape or unwilling to invest in your fitness, you can find something to continue to move toward fitness. If you don't move, you will never live your Best Life.

Next week, I will continue this discussion by describing the second Triangle of Health, Stress Handling. Don't miss it.

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