

It's time for you to Take Charge of your Health!

Every day I speak with people who have a story about a healthcare nightmare they have endured. Stories about Insurance companies, medical providers and Drug companies fill my day with me shaking my head and wondering how everything got so messed up.

I'm not excluding myself or my office from this mess. Insurance, Government regulations and misinformation of all types, make my daily office life stressful and often leads to delays in essential care and not allowing me to help people to the level they deserve. But I have been in this messed up system for over 34 years, and I'm ready to escape from it.

The only way I can see to break free from our current medical model is to create an entirely new system that makes our current system obsolete. This new system will be based on one simple, but powerful foundation. You must learn to take charge of your own health again!

As I have explained over the last few weeks, we are in the third generation of US citizens that have relied on our doctor's, insurance companies and Big Pharma to dictate what is a "covered" or "non-covered" medical expense. Plus, "non-covered" medical expenses are so inflated that only people who

have plenty of money can even think about buying these types of services on their own.

But as I also explained last week, 1 out of every 5 dollars is spent on healthcare today in the US. Each of us pay our bills to our providers and insurance companies every month. Imagine how much money you

would save if you were healthy and didn't need medication or that next test or procedure? What if you could dramatically decrease your insurance premium because you didn't have anything wrong with you?

With 90 percent of our current healthcare costs being attributed to poor lifestyle

habits, what if someone could provide you with all the tools you need to build and live a healthier lifestyle for little or no money out of you pocket every month? Plus, provide you with a sounding board of like-minded people who you could hang out with and talk to.

Your new tribe would care about you, not your money and didn't try to shame, guilt or scare you into anything you didn't feel comfortable with. These people would also hold you accountable for what you say you want out of your life because they love you and only want the best for you.

This entire system will be

home-based. You would learn about your health at your own pace in your comfy clothes. You would have access to Certified Health Coaches and local providers when you decided you needed them. This education is designed not to sell you anything or be biased to any one product or service. You would get all sides of the story so you could make an informed decision on what is best for you and your family.

Isn't it time for you to decide what you need, why you need it and make it affordable for everyone, no matter how much money you have?

I think so!



Real Life Wellness

By Dr. Bill Hemmer

Try this salad this spring — especially the dressing

Like most of you, I am really looking forward to spring. When the weather warms up, I tend to cook lighter and healthier. And what could be lighter and healthier than a nice big salad?

So, I am reprinting a recipe from one of my very first columns from several years ago. A good friend, Nancy Larson, sent me this recipe. She said it was a favorite at their office luncheons.

What really makes this salad special is the homemade salad dressing. My husband and I use this special dressing all the time and rarely use store bought dressing anymore. So even if you don't want to use all the ingredients

in this salad, try the dressing!

This recipe does make a really large amount of salad, great for large gatherings.

Favorite Tossed Salad

Submitted by Nancy Larson

Romaine leaves, torn in pieces
red leaf lettuce, torn in pieces
head lettuce, torn in pieces
mushrooms, sliced
bacon bits
red onion, diced
green onions, chopped
shredded Provel cheese
grated parmesan cheese
grated Romano cheese

Dressing:

1/4 cup olive oil
1/4 cup cider vinegar
1/4 cup sugar
1 pkt Italian salad dressing mix

When I make this salad, I like

Let's Cook

By Linda Hoskins



to use shaved Parmesan cheese rather than grated. Also, when I make the dressing, I buy Zesty Italian dressing mix. I make the dressing, keep it in a cruet and store it in my pantry. Do not refrigerate this because it will get very thick and hard to pour. Don't worry, this dressing keeps for several weeks.

This next recipe is for a lovely and delicious cake that my mother in law introduced me to years ago. I have seen this cake under many names, but the name my mother-in-law used was Better than Robert Redford Cake, and so that is what I will use here. This is a great dessert to serve after a

big meal because it is light and refreshing.

Better Than Robert Redford Cake

1 box yellow cake mix with pudding
1 lg can crushed pineapple
1 cup sugar
1 box French Vanilla instant pudding mix
2 cups milk
8 oz. Cool Whip

Make cake in a 9x13 pan according to package directions. Meanwhile, mix pineapple, undrained, and sugar in a saucepan, bring to a boil. Let boil for 5 minutes, stirring frequently.

After removing the cake from the oven, poke lots of holes with toothpicks or a skewer all over the top of the cake. (make LOTS of holes for

best result). Pour the pineapple over the top of the cake. (do all this while the cake is still warm from the oven). Let cool completely.

Make pudding as directed on the package. Spread over cooled cake. Refrigerate for a few minutes to get the pudding well set. Frost with Cool Whip. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

If you have a recipe to share, please send to letscook!@heraldpubs.com or mail to Mascoutah Herald, PO Box C, Mascoutah IL 62258. If you write out your recipes, please write clearly. If I have to guess at what you wrote, I will not publish the recipe. Thanks so much, and Happy Cooking!

Reports of my death greatly exaggerated

So I discovered I was dead today. I mean, I was still walking around the house, eating breakfast, playing Wordle and telling my wife bad jokes, but according to FaceBook, I am no longer among the living.

You see, I recently connected with my high school's alumni committee via FaceBook. The alumni committee was preparing for the 50th-year high school reunion for the class of 1973. Part of the program the alumni committee was putting together included a section devoted to recognizing those classmates who had passed away. In the FaceBook post, the committee had listed the names of all the classmates from 1973 who were no longer with us (i.e. dead).

While I was reviewing the names, I was saddened to learn that this list of deceased classmates was so lengthy because I had known so many of these former students throughout

elementary school and high school. This list was in alphabetical order and I was really surprised when I got to the names beginning with "B" and saw MY NAME on the scroll of the deceased.

Although at first I seemed to be in a rush to inform the alumni committee that I was still alive, I have thought about staying mum. I'm thinking that I should show up to the reunion with no notice whatsoever and surprise the class of 1973 with one of its members coming back from the dead. Can you imagine the looks that I would get? Of course, no one would probably recognize me anyways.

I can't really blame the alumni committee for thinking I had left the land of the living. After all, since high school, I have moved away from home, gotten a job in a different city, got married, and moved 13 times in four different states.

It was as if I was a fugitive trying to escape the law.

My return from the other side reminded me of a famous Mark Twain quote, "The reports of my death are greatly exaggerated." I also recall a birthday card that read, "Heard you were dead. Glad I was wrong. Happy Birthday!"

Getting back to the 50th Anniversary of high school graduation, I think it will be interesting to attend the festivities. I am anxious to see how my classmates have aged. Of course, it is the 50th anniversary of their high school graduation, and nobody, (I don't care how much plastic surgery they had) will look the same as when they were 18-year-old, fresh-faced youths with a bright future ahead of each of them.

I have many questions about my former classmates that I am curious to have answered. Will those graduates

So there I was

By Pete Buckley



who were identified as jocks, still play sports? Will they have had injuries to their knees, elbows or shoulders? Will the cheerleaders still be petite and underweight? Will the greasers still have their leather jackets and smoke cigarettes?

How many graduates went on to college? How many own their own business? We would all be 67-68 years old by now, so how many alumni are retired or still working? Who did the Class of '73 marry and were their spouses fellow classmates? Will the Valedictorian be a successful

multi-millionaire? Will those students who were frequently given suspensions for disciplinary reasons now have prison records or did they make a 180-degree turn and become successful citizens?

I have been waffling about whether or not to attend our 50th high school reunions. I read on the internet that if you think things improve with age, attend a class reunion. But seriously, I know it takes a certain amount of guts to go to your class reunion.

Some of my classmates have opined that they wish to

postpone the 50th reunion another year in hopes that they will finally lose that elusive 10 pounds. Others still hold grudges or recall embarrassing events that had occurred in high school that they don't want to revisit. However, I subscribe to the High School Reunion Truth that Elizabeth Dunkel wrote about in Lifestyle magazine. "A lot has changed and who you were then isn't who you are now. The same is true for everyone else." Dunkel continued, "Now it's time to talk about the present, how the world got to be the way it is, politics, cultural events, and how we plan to live our old age."

So I think I will attend our 50th high school reunions. In any case, whoever shows up, the rich, the poor, the in-between, I am sure they will be happy to learn that one of their classmates has come back to life.

Need to level the playing field in sports tournaments

I got an email this week from the IHSA, informing me that Maine South High School's football team, a Class 8A state quarterfinalist in 2022, had been placed on probation and forced to forfeit their nine wins for last season.

Their crime? Playing players who didn't reside in their school district. I'm sure you're asking yourself why in the world would a small town ink-stained wretch like myself care enough to write about it, so here's your answer.

Because it's the latest piece of evidence that public and private schools aren't playing on a level playing field. You see, the state champion in 8A, Wilmette Loyola Academy isn't held to the same district requirements. Under IHSA

rules, private school athletes can come from anywhere within a 30 mile radius of the school. That means anyone living from roughly Zion to the north and Oak Lawn to the south, including the entire city of Chicago, are eligible to suit up for the Crusaders.

It also might help explain why six of eight football state champions in 2022 were private schools. Four of the top five girl's golf teams were also private. Boys' soccer? Ditto. Two of three champions were private schools. Class 1A was even more slanted, as the top four teams in the state (and seven of the top eight) were all private institutions. Girls' tennis? Private school. Girls' volleyball? Three of four classes were won by private schools.

Hook, Line and Sinker

By Tony Hooker



In 1A, private schools finished 1st and 2nd, and in 3A, private schools finished 1st, 2nd and 3rd. In 2A, a private school finished 2nd.

The slant isn't contained to just high schools, either. Junior high athletics are also dominated by private schools. In the recently completed boys' basketball finals, the top four teams were all private institutions. Girls' 1A cross country

saw eight of the top 10 spots claimed by private schools. Same with the boys. Eight of the top 10 schools.

There are 1,292 public high schools in Illinois, compared to 274 private institutions. Likewise, there are 3,168 public elementary schools, compared to 971 private schools.

I could keep going, but I'm sure you've gotten the point by now. That private schools have

an inordinate amount of athletic success compared to their public counterparts is beyond question.

Now for the tough question. How do we level the playing field without punishing the kids? Currently, the IHSA uses a 1.65 enrollment multiplier to try to reach a balance, but as evidenced by the list above, it's not been effective. The IHSA has no such multiplier, as far as I could discover.

One possibility is to limit the number of tuition waivers issued to athletes. To be honest, I don't even know if this is a thing, but I fear that it could be. Tuition for Loyola Academy, the aforementioned football champs, is \$19,250 per year, according to their website. A tuition waiver of

that size would be a significant enticement. Of course, limiting the number of scholarships could potentially keep kids from attaining a desired private education.

Another possibility would be to increase the enrollment multiplier significantly. This wouldn't limit academic opportunities but might level the competitive balance a bit.

A final, less desirable option would be to have separate tournaments for private and public schools, which to my way of thinking would dilute both tournaments.

To be sure, families choose to send their children to private schools for many reasons other than athletics, but the numbers don't lie. The field of play isn't level, and that's