

Columns

‘Feels like’ temperature feels like a conditional number

I’m looking at the forecast and trying to figure out this “feels like” temperature. It’s supposed to get up around 93 degrees today but it will feel like 107.

For some people, when the temperature goes above 75, it feels like 107. For others, 93 degrees feels like a good day to take the boat out.

Temperature is a pretty personalized thing. If you tend to sweat a lot, or you are out running under the noon sun on asphalt that is bubbling up, you’re probably going to feel warmer than me. Feels like 107 to you; feels like you should take a break to me.

When my wife gets the temperature in the house down to her comfort level, I feel like I’m inside a meat locker. But her comfort seems to depend on the time of day and the location. At night, in bed, she may

be covered with just the bed-sheet. On my side, I have the sheet, a blanket, a quilt and then another blanket doubled over on top of that. What’s the “feels like” temperature? Feels like I need to find another blanket.

But a few hours earlier, we could be in a restaurant. I’m in short sleeves and she has a jacket on. I don’t get it.

I suppose there’s a difference in how you want to feel depending on what you’re doing. If I’m up moving around, I’m fine. But if I’m lying still trying to get to sleep, I want to be warm. But not just warm; I want to be covered up to my neck. There’s probably a psychological study needed there.

It’s weird, though. You could go on a picnic and to the swimming pool on the same day at the same temperature and be too cool at one and too warm

at the other. What it “feels like” depends on what you’re doing.

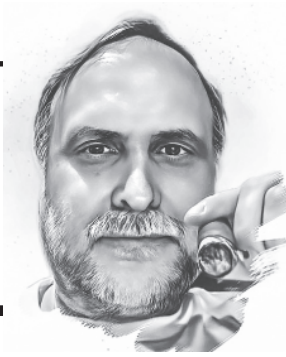
In the summer, 70 degrees is a cool day. In the winter, it’s a warm day. You might put a light jacket on in the summer but wear short sleeves in the winter. So how does the “feels like” temperature figure in there?

Another thing. We all know that a shade tree will cool you down while the direct sunlight can drill a hole through your head. So, is the “feels like” temperature in the sun or in the shade? I assume it’s in the direct sun. So here’s a thought: Get under a shade tree. You only have to move one letter to turn hades into shade.

How do they even figure what the “feels like” temperature is? Well, I looked it up, and you’re welcome. According to Mr. Google, they take the actual temperature and the

Ramblin’ Man

By David Porter



humidity and the wind speed and they make a calculation. It didn’t say what that calculation is. Maybe that’s a trade secret.

So, I did a little thinking and came up with my own calculation. I take the same numbers — the temp, the humidity and the wind speed — and then I ignore them. Instead, I step outside and decide whether I’m going to wear shorts today or a jacket. Maybe I’ll put some ice in a tumbler and carry a

drink with me.

Regardless, stuff has to get done, so it doesn’t really matter what the temperature is or what the “feels like” is. I don’t need to know the numbers. I get that we like to see the number at least for the sake of small-talk. “Ooh, it’s a scorcher out there.” “Yeah, s’posed t’git up to a hunnert today.”

But it will feel like 110. Well, that’s it. I’m not getting out today. A hundred, I can do, but if it’s going to feel like

110, that’s just too much.

Now, I’m not going to make any comment on global warming or climate change. I’ll leave that to the politicians and other dimwits. It’s August in Illinois. Do the math.

OK, I will make a comment: Yes, people affect climate, and yes, people should be cognizant of how they impact the environment, and yes, we should take better care of our planet. But, outside, today? It’s August. It’s Illinois. It’s hot.

At least till I crawl into bed tonight. Then I “feels like” I need to find my mittens.

© **Copyright 2023 by David Porter who can be reached at porter@ramblinman.us. Perhaps the disparity with the bed covers is just one more reminder that my wife is way more warm-hearted than I am.**

Your brain is writing checks your body can’t cash!

This has always been one of my favorite sayings. It describes my lack of ability to do things like I used to do in the past. Things like mowing the grass after a full day at the office. Ten years ago, it would have been no problem. Now, I need a little more time to recover.

This is an example of the continual daily stress put on each of us from four different points of view (Chemical, Physical, Mental and Social). The total of those four areas of stress is called your Allostatic Load. To handle these four areas effectively, we need to understand each of the four areas in detail and then have a plan of action to successfully

address each of those areas.

So, over the next few weeks, I’m going to tease out each of these four areas and then provide you with a step-by-step action plan to successfully address each area. I’m sure many of you have seen the Chemical, Physical and Mental words used often in my writings. This is my Triangle of Health. The Social aspect is something relatively new in my world. But as I will demonstrate, unless you have your tribe, you will never be able to withstand the onslaught of the stressor coming at you every day.

Let’s begin with Chemical stress. Our bodies have been built to handle both external stress and internal stress.

External Chemical stressors, like toxins or pollution have a chemical response on your body. So does an internal chemical stress (like getting an infection). Thankfully, we have an entire nervous system ready to address these stressors.

It’s called our Autonomic Nervous system. This system has two parts. The first part is called the Sympathetic Nervous system. This is commonly referred to as our “Fight or Flight” response. The second part of our Autonomic Nervous system is called our Parasympathetic Nervous system. This part is commonly referred to as our “Rest and Digest” response.

Real Life Wellness

By Dr. Bill Hemmer



The Autonomic Nervous system is controlled by a deep part of your Brain called the Hypothalamus. I explain the Hypothalamus like it is the carburetor of the Brain. It lets chemical stimulus pass that are necessary for survival but ignores chemical stimulus that is unnecessary.

When the Hypothalamus is

stimulated, it sends messages to the Pituitary Gland. The Pituitary Gland is considered the master hormone gland. It controls the production of many of the hormone systems of the body and only produces hormones based on what the Hypothalamus thinks your body needs to address your stress (in this case, Chemical stress).

But here is what happens to us as we get older and have lived through a stressful life. Our Hypothalamus gets tired and worn out. It sends fewer messages to your Pituitary Gland, which is also tired. With a weaker message come a weaker response to your Chemical stressors. Therefore, you need more time to recover.

This is one of the reasons the older you are, the harder it is for you to get over infections that used to take a few days to get over. Now it might take a week or more. But don’t throw in the towel just yet! We all have the ability to rebuild our stress handling mechanism. We will talk about that later.

Freezing homemade tomato sauce for the winter

Concerning the devastating fire on the island of Maui, I would urge you to donate to the “American Red Cross” or a charity of your choice to help with the rebuilding of the community and medical support for those in need. “American Red Cross” donation page at: (<https://www.redcross.org/donate/donation.html/>) or by phone at: (1-800-435-7669). NOTE: this information was captured from the “American Red Cross” website.

My family was directly affected by this tragedy; my cousin, her husband and three children were vacationing on Maui when the fires started. Their rental condo was in the path of the fire and they were forced to evacuate to the other side of the island. There was no lodging available and they had to spend a couple nights in their rental car. They were not able to leave the island until late Friday when extra planes were available. They could not go to Honolulu because Maui residents were being evacuated there first. My cousin stated that the devastation is far more serious than we are seeing on TV and the residents of Maui need all the help they can get.

Less important in life is my continued home freezing of fruits and vegetables given to me by friends and purchased at the farmers market. I have made one batch of tomato sauce and am working on my version of green peppers, chives and herb mixture to use for winter.

Memories and Musings

By Cheri Sims



The closest I can come to naming this is what Martha Stewart calls “peperonata,” but her version uses olive oil and I do not add olive oil to mine. I dice home grown green peppers with chives, basil, thyme and cranberry juice and cook down the mixture until most of the liquid is gone. I then freeze the mixture in pint jars to use in the winter. I have found that this is a great way to add flavor to winter soup and stew without having the fresh peppers and herbs.

My friends have a huge garden this year and they spent last weekend doing traditional pressure cooker canning. I admire anyone who uses this method; I am scared of pressure cookers and have limited myself to the freezing method.

They spent the whole weekend putting up zucchini, tomatoes, cucumbers, early squash, beans and peas and have turned a basement room into an old fashioned larder to accommodate all the jars. I think they must have bought out all the available canning equipment in town by the sound of their exhausting weekend.

I am excited to try their Southern pickled okra having

eaten it on a vacation in Georgia. I am not fond of the Northern way of cooking okra; for some reason, when I fixed it at home it seemed slimy and unappetizing.

I have another friend who vacations in Georgia every fall and this year I have asked her to bring back a couple pounds of fresh pecans. I have tried making pecan butter with store-bought pecans and it just does not taste the same as when it is made with fresh pecans.

The first time we had fresh pecan butter was on a fall trip to Savannah, Georgia, and Hubby and I both fell in love with the flavor. The hotel where we stayed served the fresh-made pecan butter with homemade biscuits and local honey and I had the same breakfast six days in a row. We brought back a couple jars and also tried some of the pecan butter we found closer to home but it, too, was not up to the standards of the Georgia pecan butter. For years I made mail order purchases from the store where we bought the first jar but they recently went out of business so I decided I would try to make it here at home.

When I was a baby we lived with my grandparents and I never ate store bought baby food, which by the way was first made available to the public in 1927 by the “Freemount Company” now the “Gerber Products Company.” Granny made all my baby food, I am told. To this day I make mashed green beans the baby food way but I freeze it and believe it or not it tastes just as good as when made fresh.

My mom told me that Granny would cook up a pot of green beans with nothing but a little salt in the water and one small onion. She would then run the beans through a sieve and can them in pint jars. I apparently ate a lot of green

beans back then and I love to make them Granny’s way every fall.

Fresh cauliflower from the garden is so much better than store-bought, in my opinion. One of my favorite summer recipes is cauliflower soup. I started making cauliflower soup with many other ingredients but over the years I pared it down to the ones I like the best. Sometimes I even eliminate the potatoes for a stronger cauliflower flavor.

Enjoy!

Cauliflower Soup

2 tablespoons butter
1 half cup chopped chives (or onion powder to taste)
2 large potatoes, peeled and cubed

2 cups chicken broth
1 head cauliflower, chopped
1 cup whole milk
1 teaspoon salt
black pepper to taste

1. Melt butter in a large pot over medium heat. Add chives; cook and stir until tender; about 5 minutes. Add potatoes; cook and stir until beginning to soften, about 5 minutes.

2. Pour in broth and bring to a boil. Stir in cauliflower, then cover, reduce the heat, and simmer until vegetables are tender, 10 to 20 minutes. Remove from the heat.

3. Purée soup with an immersion blender until smooth. Return to the stove and stir in milk, salt, pepper over low heat. Cook until heated.

An ‘occultation’ occurs tonight

I have an interesting sky event for you to watch tomorrow night. Binoculars will help but they are certainly not required.

Start tonight by locating the first quarter Moon in the south just after sunset. Yes it looks half-lit but the name comes from the fact the Moon is one-fourth of the way around the Earth in its monthly orbit. Tomorrow night there will be a star just to the left of the Moon. This is the reddish heart of our scorpion, Antares.

Antares is a red, giant star many times larger than our Sun. As the Moon orbits our Earth, it will proceed to pass in front of the star in an event called an “occultation.” Early

In the night sky

By David Leake



observations of such events showed us the Moon didn’t have an atmosphere as the star blinks out instead of fading out as it goes behind the Moon. And you can watch this happen!

The star should “disappear” at about 9:29 p.m. behind the dark side of the Moon then

reappear from the bright side at roughly 10:35 p.m. Check it out!

David Leake is retired Planetarium Director of Staer- kel Planetarium at Parkland College and co-founder of the Champaign-Urbana Astronomical Society, Inc.