

Discovery puts a new wrinkle on aging

I know you probably get tired of reading about my slide down the far side of life's hill, but you gotta realize, this is all new to me. I've never been old before. It's my first time, and I don't have the instruction manual.

I've been aware for a while now that there's more sand in the hourglass below me than above me. But most of the indicators have been slow and subtle.

The gray hair was first on the scene. First, it was one hair near my ear. Easy enough to pluck. But pulling out one gray hair invites five more to show up.

I really didn't mind that change. Not at first. My face has always been a little plain and round. My hair and eyes were the same color of brown, like milk chocolate melted over a cue ball.

The gray was an improve-

ment, I thought. The stippling at the temples added character in a classic fashion. Distinguished, maybe, if I may be so vain.

As it crept up the alleyway in front of my ears, it also spread down and started infiltrating my mustache.

For a minute, it was a nice blend — not so much salt and pepper; more like snow-sprinkled shoe leather.

When I'd let my beard grow out, the gray – really, white — was a little sporadic. A patch here, a blotch there — like tiny islands on a black sea.

Within a few years, there were more white than dark whiskers, but it was fine because there were really no other geriatric symptoms. And let's face it, my mug needed a little color; or, in this case, I guess a little less color.



Ramblin' Man

By David Porter

I really expected the gray migration to keep climbing, but it didn't. It filled out more around the temples, but the spread shifted to the back of my neck and down my chest. The top of my head is still dark, but my forehead is now a five head.

The hair on my neck is pretty much all white now with a distinct line between it and the back of my head like a sideways skunk. I don't care. I don't look at

the back of my head, anyway.

None of that really bothered me because I didn't feel any different. That's a nice thing about hair: the mane feels no pain.

Next in my metamorphosis were the eyes. I've always had big, brown, cow eyes, but gravity and time have reshaped them with little crows' feet on the outer edges. A tiny mole under my right eye, barely noticeable in my youth, has become more

pronounced.

I didn't hate it. My daughter commented that my face was becoming more interesting. That's the closest thing to a compliment that I'm going to get from her, so I'll take it.

Life has a way of whisking you around like a delicate quiche until it's stirred too much and now you're an omelet if you're lucky — scrambled eggs if you're not.

I was changing clothes yesterday and caught a glimpse of myself in the mirror. When I raised my arms to put my shirt on, I noticed that my triceps look like an accordion, and my elbow looks like a sad clown face.

Ugh. I'm wrinkled. I can no longer deny that old age is here.

Oh, there were precursors to this. The faucet on my bladder leaks, and my internal heater needs a new regulator. If my

body was a car, I'd trade it in, but I wouldn't get anything for it, so I might as well keep driving it till the wheels fall off.

Oddly, the wrinkles are more distressing to me. The internal workings can be fixed with medications and surgeries if they get bad enough. But nobody can see them. The wrinkles are harder to hide.

So, if you see me walking around all summer wearing a long-sleeved shirt, it's not because I'm cold. It's just vanity. But, yeah, also probably cold.

© Copyright 2026 by David Porter who can be reached at presseditor1@gmail.com. I guess there's nothing left to do but sit on the front porch and yell at the traffic: Slow down, ya punks!



When I was a teaching assistant (TA), the roof over where the TA's cubicles were, sprang a leak over spring break. When we came back, one of the “paper-mache” acoustical ceiling tiles had gotten soaked with water and fallen in a soggy mess on the floor, right in front of the fire escape. A maintenance crew quickly replaced the tile. But the next time it rained, the new tile suffered the same fate as its predecessor. Somebody finally figured out that it would be a good idea to fix

the roof before replacing the ceiling tile.

Fast forward to the present day. The Reflecting Pool in Washington, DC was, the President decided, in dire need of renovation. It was leaky, and the water was dirty. The thing to do was have the bottom of the pool cleaned, repaired, and painted blue. He decided to award a no-bid contract to a company owned by one of his Florida neighbors. The price ballooned from 1.8 million dollars to over 14 million dollars. But the job

got done, and the pool was refilled just in time for the president's birthday party. The Administration proclaimed that the pool had been fixed “for good” - the paint job would “last for 40 or 50 years” and “There'll be no leaks, no anything.”

But within a few days, the blue paint was no longer visible. It was obscured by an algae bloom which made the water take on the color and opacity of split-pea soup. Squadrons of low-level employees deployed chlorine tablets, then poured in gallon bottles of 12% hydrogen peroxide in order to clarify the pool. I'm not sure how much of the stuff they poured in, but it would take a lot to clarify the Reflecting Pool. According to Allied Chemical's web site, the proper “dose” of 30% peroxide is 2 cups per 250 gallons

for a “shock treatment” to knock down an existing algae bloom. That works out to over 3000 gallons of 30% peroxide for the pool's 6.5 million to 6.75 million gallons of water.

But, just as with the saga of the ceiling tile, there were also well known underlying problems which had not been addressed. One is, the ground beneath the pool is unstable. It shifts and subsides, which causes seams to part. There will be future leaks to plug. And the thousands of feet of pipe connecting the pool to its filtration station are old, leaky, and harboring algae, which will insure continuing algae problems until they are replaced.

Also unfortunately, the blue paint, being darker than the original surface, absorbed more heat, thus

raising the temperature and making the algae grow even faster. This too had been foreseen, but, as with the leaky pipes, the Cassandra-like warnings had been disregarded.

The good news is, the blue paint is becoming visible again. The bad news is, this is because it's already peeling off and floating to the surface, less than 2 weeks after the pool was refilled.

And just to top it off, the company that did the paint job is named Greenwater Services. Its parent company - the J.J. Cafaro Trust - is owned by the prez's previously-mentioned Florida neighbor, John J. Cafaro - who in 2001 pleaded Guilty to conspiracy to bribe (then) US Representative James A. Traficant, Jr. Mr. Cafaro then turned States' evidence against Traficant, who was

expelled from the House, subsequently convicted of bribery and racketeering, and imprisoned until 2009.

And no matter where in the present Administration you look, similar stories are in plain view. If academic degrees in corruption were awarded, this Administration deserves far more than the perfunctory BS granted by default to any Administration. (I trust that the reader knows what BS stands for.) So, by the authority vested in me as Village Idiot, I hereby award the current Administration honorary degrees of MS (More of the Same) and PHD (Piled Higher and Deeper) in Public Corruption.

Welcome to The Swamp.
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Philo Library weekly news, programs

We hope that all the dads around Philo had a very nice- Father's Day. And, we espe-

cially hope the dads of the kids who came to our first painting workshop enjoyed their present. The kids came

The morning sky

We haven't talked much about the morning sky this month, but there's plenty to see there, too. Tomorrow morning Saturn rises due east at roughly 1:30am. Mars rises two hours later in the east-northeast. If you use binoculars, you'll find Mars is just below and right of the Pleiades or Seven Sisters star cluster. Use binoculars if you have them. If you want a real challenge, on the morning of July 4th, the planet Uranus appears just above Mars, but you'll need a telescope

In the night sky

By David Leake



or some good binoculars to see it. Uranus is not quite ten times farther away from us than Mars and will appear as a small blue dot. Mars will slowly brighten ahead of a close approach to Earth next February, a point called opposition. Don't confuse Mars

for the red star Aldebaren which sits below the planet which makes an appearance at 4:30am, about the start of the predawn glow, The yellow star Capella keeps a watchful eye further to the left or northeast.

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF SELF STORAGE SALE

Please take notice Savoy Self Storage located at 116 E Church St, Savoy IL, 61874 intends to hold an Auction of storage units listed below to enforce its privilege against the following parties at the facility for default of payment of Rent. The sale will occur as an Online Auction via www.storagetreasures.com on 7/13/2026 at 09:00 AM. Khalid Shawkat unit #109; Danielle Chenoweth unit #114 Brittny L Remole / Brittny Remole unit #307; Dzmitry Kulik unit #431 Kotia Fairman unit #433; Dane Hun unit #522; Shateshia McFarland unit #554; Pamela Harding unit #607 Momore Koroma unit #Parking 19 Martha Gudeman unit #Parking 29 Michael Ventura unit #Parking 8. This sale may be withdrawn at any time without notice. Certain terms and conditions apply.
6095-966076
published 06/24, 07/01/2026

up with ideas of what they wanted to paint and did an excellent job.

We still have three programs left for Summer 2026 and the Reading Challenge for kids from birth - high school grade 12 will continue until August 1. If you haven't heard about the Reading Challenge, stop in or call and we can explain the program to you. It's a great way to keep kids reading (or being read to) during the summer months.

Programs remaining are:

June 24, Wednesday, Champaign County Forest Preserve, "Scaly Encounters" starts at 1:30 p.m. in the Library's meeting room.

The next two programs we request you register so we know how many kids we'll have and supplies will be available for everyone:

June 25, Thursday, 1:00

p.m. Painting - bird house/ heart box

June 30, Tuesday, 1:00 - 2:00 p.m. Outdoor Games

And, don't forget our Community Cookbook. Between now and August 1 we hope all the cooks in Philo Township will contribute favorite recipes which will be compiled into a Community Cookbook. We have forms for this project at the desk in the Library. Don't forget next time you're on Main Street, stop in the Library and pick up a recipe form or two to share your favorites with friends and residents of Philo township.

Next week, hopefully a delivery of new books should be arriving,. Check this column for a list of available reading materials. Until then...thanks for reading!



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Please contact the office for more information 217-688-2422
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