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NEWSMAGAZINE



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AUGUST - 2025

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# ACCORDION TO DAN

Recently, while jumping off a crowded bus, on my way early in the morning to the mall, desperate for a quick double, double coffee, I saw a city crew paving a road. Commuters were rushing about with cellphones in use, trying to catch the Canada Line. Out of the blue a metaphor suddenly appeared—Yesterday's roads have seemingly been paved today with different priorities and destinations compared to when we were young. Thus, the following bit of going back in time.

### A Fond Old Time BC Memory

Its August 2025 and the PNE (Pacific National Exhibition) is still a major attraction! As a kid, do you remember what a thrill that event was and especially the good old Shrine Circus. When we were kids, it was our essential summer mission. Living in Gibsons Landing a few of us kids would pick blackberries and would sell them to local stores on the Sunshine Coast. Then take the old Black Ball Line Ferry—The Bainbridge, Smokwa or Quillite. Jumping first on a Sechelt Motor Transport bus with our hard-earned money for a fun time at the PNE. Wow! Did we ever have a great time!

Those were the days of radio hosts such as Bob Hutton and other local broadcast personalities who were broadcasting live next door close to the midway!

We played all the fun games and enjoyed the rides. There was just enough money left over to take in the circus and then hop on the bus and take the ferry ride home. The way of life then was different compared to today. As seniors, sometimes it seems almost like it was not so long ago, eh?

### Do You Remember The Boom Box Era?

CDs today have almost become ancient history. The market for them has since largely waved goodbye. So, I recently got myself a used GE boom box at a local thrift shop. Amazingly, the AM-FM radio and even the now almost prehistoric cassette player and recorder worked perfectly! It was around five bucks and boy, was I happy as warm apple pie with whipping cream on top, oh my!

I put on some home-saved old recordings of Jack Cullens's program, Owl Prowl, broadcast on 'Top Dog' CKNW. Listening to Jack Benny and all the old-time radio shows. One felt like being in 'seventh heaven'. Back to the days before constant breaking



news, inflation and cellular dependence...laughing my head off as the cassette's content kept getting better, there was nothing left from today's fast pace to trouble you.

Now here we are back in August and it's the summer of 2025. Unbelievable! Where have those years gone?

Thus the following.

### Show Biz Reflections

Do you remember the movie The Wizard of Oz and Judy Garland as she sang "Somewhere Over The Rainbow". What a memorable song. It still brings special feelings as those warm nostalgic years unload. It sometimes seems just like yesterday - not so long ago. An era far removed from today's lifestyle, entertainment and society in this new millennium. For example, such lyrics as "Put Another Nickel in the Nickelodeon", the Fred Allan show, Red Skelton, and do you still recall the singing voice of Dennis Day?

### How Time Itself Has Changed

It's amazing how time itself is now measured; very seldom do you see a watch that typically requires winding or a winding key for a grandfather clock with a pendulum. Checking the time difference between parts of Canada and Europe when making a long-distance call. Now people text or email. We still remember sixteen-millimeter film projectors, Cinarama, and Cinemascope. Musical movies such as South Pacific, Oklahoma that ran approximately 2 ½

hours. Epic movies that ran 3 or more hours like "Gone with the Wind" which became popular. Where has that all gone?

### Tongue Twisters

Is there anybody out there in senior land who remembers having fun with improving their pronunciation with tongue twisters? Here are a few to possibly practice this summer.

'Whether the weather be cold, or whether the weather be hot, we'll weather the weather whatever the weather, whether we like it or not!'

In Canada we grew up with terms like pecks, bushels, etc. Do you recall this one?

'Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers. How many pickled peppers did Peter Piper pick?'

How about trying this really challenging tongue twister?

A tutor who tooted the flute, tried to tutor two tooters to toot. Said the two to the tutor: "Is it harder to toot or to tutor two tooters to toot?"

Have fun!

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Photo: It doesn't take a Rhode's scholar to determine how many of today's roads lead to new destinations. (Photo: Dan Propp)

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## CIDER, CRITTERS & COUNTRY CHARM AT TAVES CIDERY AND FARM

By Ursula Maxwell-Lewis

What do alpacas, goats, chickens—and cider—have in common? A delightfully entertaining Fraser Valley farm known as Taves Estate Cidery.

This spring, Tourism Abbotsford and the BC & Yukon Chapter of the Travel Media Association of Canada introduced me to Loren Taves, a third-generation British Columbia farmer who has blended more than cider into a memorable Lower Mainland day trip.

Taves Estate Cidery is the latest evolution of the Taves family's long-standing farming legacy, which dates back to the 1930s. From humble beginnings as a fruit farm, the operation has grown into a multifaceted agritourism and craft cider destination.

Under the stewardship of Loren and Corinne Taves, the scenic 60-acre property now yields apples, berries, currants, and pumpkins.

"In 1990, we were growing about 60 acres of orchard—fully commercial—with some fruit sold off the farm," Loren told me. "We noticed people really liked our apples. In 1991, we started crushing



Loren Taves, third generation family farmer. Owner Taves Cidery, Abbotsford

our second-grade fruit that didn't make the retail cut and made apple juice (indicating a nearby, well-stocked shelf). People loved it. The next year, we brought in some goats—and people loved them too. I've had goats for about 30 years."

Geese soon followed—often heard honking at night. Clearly, the cidery-plus-farm-animals formula was working, and it has continued to thrive.

While exploring the guest area, I encountered some shy, endearingly toothy alpacas, photographed goats clambering onto the roof, and checked in with Big Red the rooster and Arthur the gander. Guinevere the goose honked a greeting (or a warning!) before I opted for the shady tasting enclosure to sample cider flights.

My cider experience was previously limited to Britain's Somerset ciders, but the tasting 'flights' assured me there was something to tempt most palates—and there was. My favourite was the light, dry, and refreshing 30th Anniversary Barrel-Aged Vintage Apple Cider. The bottle I brought home was saved to share with my daughter Hilary, arriving from Calgary for a summer working holiday.

Officially opened in April 2020, the cider barn offers a welcoming rustic space where visitors can enjoy cider tasting flights, growler fills, bottled releases, and cider-based cocktails or mocktails.

Taves' flagship offerings include the Barnyard Series, Billy's Best (classic semi-dry), Nanny's Nicest (semi-sweet apple pie flavour), Gander's Gooseberry, Rooster's Red Currant, and Ram's Black Currant. Whether you like your cider dry, tangy, fruity, or sparkling, there's something for every



2) Taves Cidery goats roam high and low

palate.

No reservations are needed during regular hours (Friday through Sunday). Guests can choose between two curated flight experiences: a semi-dry "Flight A" and a semi-sweet "Flight B," each featuring four 3-oz samples for approximately \$13.95.

The cidery is just one part of the broader Taves Family Farms experience. Seasonal highlights include the Applebarn, U-Pick goji berries, pumpkin and sunflower patches, hayrides, pony rides, and—in the fall—corn mazes.

Look out for a variety of special events throughout the year.

Taves Estate Cidery is located at 333 Gladwin Road, Abbotsford, BC.

For more information, call 604-853-3108 or email: [info@tavesfamilyfarms.com](mailto:info@tavesfamilyfarms.com)

*Ursula Maxwell-Lewis is a former publisher and managing editor. Contact her at [utavel@shaw.ca](mailto:utavel@shaw.ca)*

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FINANCIAL NEWS

by Rick C. Singh, Founder, President,  
and Financial Advisor,  
CPCA (Certified Professional Consultant on Aging)  
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The Role of the Executor, it's an honour to be asked but it comes with great responsibilities.

Appointing an executor may be one of the most important decisions related to an estate plan. Being trusted as an executor to carry out someone's wishes after they've passed can be one of the biggest responsibilities an individual can take on. Estate administration is ever evolving and is more challenging today than ever before. Understanding what may be in store for a future executor can be helpful for those choosing one and those being chosen for this critical role.

What is an executor?

An executor is usually a person but can also be a trust company named in a will. The executor collects and oversees estate assets, pays the deceased's debts, and divides what remains of the estate among beneficiaries named in the will to inherit the estate. There can also be more than one named executor (co-executors or alternate executors).

Duties and liabilities of an executor

The duties of an executor can be broad and span multiple years. As a starting point, our Checklist of Executor's Duties provides a robust list of tasks for your reference to help keep you on track.

The process starts when a person passes away. The executor may be part of making funeral arrangements and collecting important documentation such as the deceased's will and tax returns.<sup>1</sup> Assets—including financial, physical, and personal effects—will need to be accounted for and safeguarded on behalf of the estate's beneficiaries. Contacting various third parties can be important and time-consuming to make sure all bills are paid, accounts closed, and insurance claims are made.

Before distributions can be made, it's important for the executor to address the deceased's creditors and complete all tax returns. Should any claims be made against the estate (for example, dependent's

relief), the executor must remain neutral when working towards a resolution. Generally, the executor is not personally liable for the deceased's debts or any financial obligations of the estate. However, an executor can be found personally liable if the estate assets are distributed to beneficiaries before payment of all estate debts. In such cases it's important to resolve all outstanding estate debts before making a final distribution to beneficiaries.

At various points in the estate administration process, the executor may find that professional help is required. Where appropriate and necessary, the executor can enlist the help of an accountant or lawyer to help with tax returns or legal issues that may arise. Such professional services are expenses for the estate and not for the executor personally.

Finally, after the assets of the estate are collected, all debts and taxes are paid, and claims against the estate are settled, the executor can distribute the remaining value of the estate to the beneficiaries according to the instructions in the will.

Insolvent estate and declining to act

What happens if the estate doesn't have enough assets to cover the deceased's liabilities? When an estate is insolvent, provincial legislation may dictate the order of distribution from the estate, including prioritizing the payment of various expenses. Given the significant challenges that come with an insolvent estate, an executor may consider simply declining to act.

An executor can decline to act for solvent estates as well. It's important for an executor to make this decision prior to acting in any capacity for the estate. The process for declining (or being removed as an executor after acting) can be difficult and costly. This can be avoided by having a frank discussion with the person considering naming you as executor while that person is alive.

Executor compensation

An executor is entitled to compensation, which would be taxable income for the executor. Generally, this compensation is a percentage of the estate's assets, ranging from 1% to 5% of the deceased's estate. Fair compensation for an executor's services is based on many factors, including (but not limited to):

- gross value of the estate
- complexity of the work involved
- amount of skill, time, and specialized knowledge required.

Clarifying executor compensation in your will can avoid potential conflicts with beneficiaries and may help reduce the tax burden for the executor.

Considerations for choosing an executor

When deciding who should be your executor, consider these questions:

- Do they have the time to devote to estate administration?
- Are they willing and able?
- Do they possess integrity, objectivity, and good judgment?
- Are they financially and administratively inclined?
- Are they familiar with your affairs?

Ideally, your chosen executor will be a resident of the same province as you. Having an executor living in another province or country can add delays, complexity, and costs to your estate administration. It can also make the already difficult role of executor even more challenging.

Individuals such as a spouse, family member, or friend may be cost-effective choices, but consider whether they have the skills to administer your estate and manage the expectations of your beneficiaries. A lawyer, accountant, or trust company may cost more, but they may have the skills and resources necessary to manage all the tasks before them.

The role of the executor is growing in scope and complexity. Estate administration may take years to complete. Assets of the estate may be numerous and located in multiple jurisdictions around the world. As such, care should be taken when naming an executor (including co-executors and alternate executors) who's willing and able to see your wishes through.

Executors, you're not alone. You can enlist the help of professionals to guide you through the challenging aspects of the estate. Remember, the role of the executor is a critical one; at times rewarding, but not without its challenges.

Understanding what may be in store for a future executor can be helpful for choosing one and for being chosen for this critical role.

1 The Canada Revenue Agency has produced their own checklist called "What to Do Following a Death." This can help estate representatives with income tax and benefits related items of the deceased individual.

If you have any questions about any of the above you should speak with a lawyer, or a Notary. You can also contact Rick Singh at CRS Financial Group. Call 604-535-3367 or email: rick@crsfinancial.ca. or visit us at our office in Rosemary Heights, Surrey at Suite 220-3388 Rosemary Heights Crescent, Surrey BC. V3Z 0K7.

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## THE PHARMACIST REVIEW

By Lyle Sunada and Christine Cheng, R.Ph.

### GUTpro: An Alternative to Healthology's GUT-FX for Gut Health

GUT-FX by Healthology was my top-recommended and top-selling supplement for gut health. With Healthology's entire product line, including GUT-FX, now suddenly discontinued, many loyal users are searching for reliable replacements. After thorough research, I recommend Natra's GUTpro as a standout alternative, as it shares several key gut-supportive ingredients and benefits. Let's look at how GUTpro compares to GUT-FX, ingredient by ingredient, and also explore other Natra products that can fill the gap left by discontinued Healthology formulas.

#### GUTpro vs. GUT-FX: Key Similarities

GUT-FX was designed to help repair the intestinal lining, reduce inflammation, and support a healthy gut environment. GUTpro shares these core goals, featuring several of the same evidence-backed ingredients:

- L-Glutamine

An essential amino acid that helps repair and

maintain the intestinal barrier, supporting gut integrity and addressing issues like "leaky gut."

- N-Acetylglucosamine (NAG)

A building block for gut lining structure that promotes healing and helps reduce inflammation.

- Aloe Vera

Renowned for its soothing, anti-inflammatory properties, helping calm irritation in the digestive tract.

- Slippery Elm Bark

Forms a protective, mucilaginous layer in the gut lining to ease discomfort and support tissue healing.

Together, these ingredients help repair and strengthen the gut lining, soothe digestive inflammation and discomfort, and promote overall digestive wellness and nutrient absorption.

#### What Extra Benefits Does GUTpro Offer?

GUTpro doesn't just match GUT-FX—it expands on it. Additional ingredients include:

- Prebiotic fiber (inulin) and apple pectin to feed beneficial gut bacteria.
- Bacillus coagulans, a resilient probiotic strain for microbiome balance.
- Deglycyrrhizinated licorice (DGL) and vitamin B6 for added digestive comfort and immune support.

These additions make GUTpro not only a substitute but potentially an upgrade for some users.

#### Replacing Other Healthology Products with Natra Alternatives

If you used other Healthology formulas, Natra offers these replacements:

- Liver Support  
O Replace LIV-Great with Natra LIVsolution.
- O Shared ingredients: Milk thistle, dandelion, turmeric, artichoke, NAC.

O Extras: Beetroot, kale, spirulina, L-Alanine.

- Sleep Support

O Replace Sleep-Great with REMsleep.

O Shared: Melatonin, GABA, L-theanine, L-tryptophan, valerian, passionflower.

O Extras: Magnesium bisglycinate, lemon balm.

- Cholesterol Support

O Replace Cholesto-Less with CHOLESTcontrol.

O Shared: Plant sterols, red yeast rice, CoQ10.

O Extra: Fish oil concentrate.

- Lung Health

O Replace Lung-FX with RESPIRfree.

O Shared: NAC, fenugreek, ginger.

O Extras: Skullcap, black cumin, thyme, forsythia, astragalus, magnesium ascorbate.

- Joint & Inflammation Support

O Replace Pain-FX with INFLAMMAease.

O Shared: Turmeric, boswellia, white willow bark.

O Extras: Bromelain, NAG, hyaluronic acid, type 1 & 2 collagen.

#### Conclusion

While Healthology's trusted GUT-FX is no longer on the market, Natra GUTpro is a compelling alternative for those seeking to maintain gut health. And with Natra's broader lineup, it's easy to find solid replacements for other Healthology favorites—so you don't have to compromise on your wellness goals.

*Lyle Sunada is a compounding pharmacist and NAMS Certified Menopause Practitioner specializing in hormone balancing and alternative medicine at Cloverdale Pharmasave. Everything mentioned in the article is available In-Store.*

## CANADIANS ARE FACING FINANCIAL PRESSURES - THE CPP OFFERS HOPE

Are you feeling financially stressed? It's easy to see why people are feeling this way. Canadians are facing affordability challenges that impact everything from gas and groceries to retirement. Saving for retirement can seem daunting when you're struggling to pay rent, and the cost of living continues to rise. Fortunately, for Canadians there is hope with the Canada Pension Plan (CPP).

A recent survey from CPP Investments reveals that most Canadians are worried about running out of money in retirement. Young people are especially concerned, with the majority of Canadians aged 18 to 24 reporting significant anxiety over financial decisions.

Retirement savings head start: Fortunately, there's good news. Canadians have a head start on



their retirement savings with the CPP. It aims to replace up to 25 per cent of the average worker's pensionable earnings. With enhancements introduced in 2019, this rate will increase to approximately 33 per cent for future generations. The pension is indexed to inflation and you receive benefits for as long as you live.

Think of your retirement income like a table; the CPP is one leg, but you'll need other legs for support, as well. Retirees can rely on Old Age Security, employer pensions, personal savings and investments. Each of these sources can play a crucial role in your overall retirement strategy.

Planning for financial security: Understanding your financial situation and planning can reduce stress and give you the confidence you need to feel good about retirement. Managed by CPP Investments, the fund today has more than \$675 billion in assets, making it one of the largest pension funds in the world. The CPP is projected to be sustainable for at least the next 75 years, providing financial support for generations of Canadians.

A successful future starts with a successful plan. Through your contributions, you're already building a solid foundation for a secure retirement. And with its benefits payable to you for as long as you live and indexed to inflation, you can rest assured that your savings will keep pace with the rising cost of living. Feeling financially secure is about more than just numbers; it's about confidence. Knowing that the CPP will be there for you can help reduce financial anxiety.

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## WRITE AS I PLEASE

By Mel Kositsky

Comedian Rodney Dangerfield may have said it best. He created a show business career out of his one liner “I don’t get no respect”.

Imagine how drivers feel today when they go to a corner station to fill their vehicles up with gas. How annoying it must be to pass that same station just hours later and find that the price per litre has dropped significantly.

For seniors on a tight monthly budget – and for all drivers – they must be feeling very “disrespected” by a greedy industry.

The price at the pumps has always been a controversial topic and Canadians have been overpaying for years as compared to our American friends south of the border. The price of gas has been a major political football and remains unregulated despite all the government rhetoric and numerous studies.

Most people will blame all orders of government for the high prices at the pumps as they continue to impose various taxes and fees. Even with the removal of the “carbon tax” earlier this year, prices remain higher than they should be – and are ever changing.

Do you remember when Canadians created long lineups at the border crossings? Media reports mostly said it was due to high gas prices, as well as dairy products. While the amount of cross border shopping trips has dropped due to the current political climate, nothing much else has changed except there are shorter lineups.

Study after study has been done over the years yet the gas companies get away with setting their own prices and receive no penalties for what appears to be obvious collusion. No other industry would get away with such blatant price fixing.

You have to wonder why government agencies, such as the Canadian Competition Bureau, have not cracked down on this national scandal. For years the BC Utilities Commission has been collecting data under the Fuel Price Transparency Act but little has been done.

And do not expect them to do anything -- because governments collect more revenue when the gas prices are higher.

Electronic signage has made it easier for station operators to change the advertised price at will. And now loyalty programs also allow the cashier to give consumers another specified discount at the pumps.

That is why the real price of gas remains a mystery. No one knows what that price actually is – and most people are too busy to really be bothered about it. They have tuned out.

The bottom line is that people need to drive their vehicles and when the vehicle is low on gas, it has to be filled to continue to operate. There is no

other choice.

That is why most gas stations raise their prices in the early morning and keep it high until the afternoon drive home is over. Then the price is lowered for a few hours in the evening. Smart consumers have already recognized this pattern and are carefully managing their fuel consumption.

It pays to keep the tank almost full and top it off when you can – especially when you see the price drop. If you wait, the cost is likely to be much more when you really need it.

There is no need for governments to do any more costly reports by high-priced consultants. It is easy these days to do a cross-country comparison through social media. There are lots of angry motorists willing to contribute their comments and share the local prices at any given moment.

One such thread began on Facebook in July with a visitor driving through Langley noted the price of gas was \$1.49.9 per litre as opposed to \$1.61.9 in the Whistler/Pemberton area. The comments that followed included prices in many parts of B.C. and across the country. Of note were these responses: \$1.04 in Winnipeg, \$1.99 in Powell River, \$1.19 in Airdrie (just north of Calgary), \$1.13 in cottage country just north of Toronto, \$1.67.9 in Gibsons, \$1.33.9 in Abbotsford, and \$1.33 in Fernie.

The wide range of prices really make you wonder what’s going on – and why major media outlets never report it. Oil companies are usually not major advertisers, so that should not stop them.

It is a bit strange to watch a television news broadcast and they tell you to hold off filling up your vehicle for a day or two because a drop in price is coming. It’s like they want to take credit for giving you an “big” tip but rarely do they properly explain what’s really going on behind the scenes, or hold anyone accountable for the fluctuating prices.

While some of the price differences have to do with taxes at both the federal and provincial levels, many people seem to have already forgotten about the “carbon tax” federal election earlier this year. Prices dropped for a while but have consistently increased despite no new taxes being imposed – yet.

With all the climate change activists wanting to get rid of gas-powered vehicles in favour of electric ones, gas companies can continue taking advantage of consumers as the political battles continue.

Most financial experts will say the two most important purchases people will make in their lives are a home and a car. Both have become unaffordable to many of us. Even the used car market has become overpriced.

The confusing transition to electric vehicles is also frustrating to most. Attempting to make these cars more appealing has come at a considerable expense to taxpayers, with federal and provincial governments spending billions of dollars on EV rebates and charging infrastructure.

They continue to impose mandates, with stiff penalties, on new cars and trucks being sold in this country, yet consumers are not buying into this strategy. And sales of EVs are down.

Maybe it’s time for Canadian governments to do a reality check and change its attitude about gas-powered cars. Most people still need them and will drive them. Electric vehicles alone are not going to save the planet and should be a choice for consumers – not forced on them.

## 4 GREAT REASONS TO COME OUT OF RETIREMENT



Reaching retirement is the goal for so many of us, but once people get there, some find that it just isn’t for them. Whether you’re considering a return to fulltime work or a part-time position, here are a few good reasons to take the plunge:

1. Increase your income. There’s nothing wrong with taking a job for the money, and some retirees may find that their fixed incomes aren’t covering everything they want to do. Taking on a new job can give you greater financial freedom and helps maintain your sense of independence. The best part is, you get to set the terms of how long you want to work for—when you’re ready to leave again, you can.

2. Enjoy a routine—on your terms. One challenge many retirees face is a lack of structure to their days. Keeping busy and having a schedule both help people stay more mentally and physically healthy. Taking on a fulltime, or even part-time job helps create a routine, while fighting the boredom and lack of direction some retirees may experience.

If you’re starting a new position, make sure to prioritize a work-life balance that works for you. This is an opportunity to work not because you have to, but because you find it fulfilling, you enjoy the challenge or even just want to stay busy.

3. Build new relationships. Many retirees report feeling isolated, or that they don’t enjoy the same level of social interaction that they used to. Re-entering the workforce can be a great way to meet new people and grow your social circle. Workplaces often bring together people of different ages and backgrounds, offering a chance to build relationships with people you wouldn’t otherwise have gotten to know.

4. Make a difference. Take the example of one Canadian couple, who had retired after successful careers in the mining sector. They came out of retirement to join the Technical Assistance Partnership project, supported by Global Affairs Canada. Bringing their decades of experience, they went to Kosovo and Malawi to help those nations’ mining industries operate more sustainably.

The skills and experience you’ve earned can make a difference in ways you may never have considered. You can start by listening to this couple’s story, as well as other local leaders making a global impact, in a new podcast at [tap-pat.ca/canadian-changemakers](http://tap-pat.ca/canadian-changemakers).

[www.newscanada.com](http://www.newscanada.com)



## 4 WAYS TO BOOST YOUR RETIREMENT SAVINGS



When you're just starting out in your career, retirement can seem like it's too far away to imagine. But the sooner you start planning for your retirement, the more money you'll have available to experience your dreams. Here are four things to consider when planning for retirement.

**Start as soon as you can**

You've likely seen charts and graphs showing how every dollar you invest today can grow multiple times over a long period of time. These charts visualize the power of compound interest. If, for example, you invest \$1 in an account that will earn you 5 per cent

per year, at the end of the first year, you'll have \$1.05. But in the second year, you'll earn interest on the dollar and the 5 cents. The larger the initial investment and the longer the investment period, the more your money will grow.

**Maximize your RRSPs and TFSAs**

There are two popular federal government programs that many Canadians use to help fund their retirement: Registered Retirement Savings Plans (RRSPs) and Tax-Free Savings Accounts (TFSAs). Both are similar in that they allow you to invest money in various financial products, including mutual

funds, stocks and bonds. The difference is that you get a tax deduction for anything you invest in an RRSP, but the money is taxed when you withdraw it. There are no immediate tax savings with the TFSA, but the money in your investment grows tax-free for as long as you leave it in the fund. One great way to capitalize on both is to invest enough in your RRSP to qualify for a tax refund, and then invest that money in your TFSA.

**Employment benefits**

Once upon a time, most Canadians counted on a pension to pay for their retirement years. While many careers still include a pension plan, they're increasingly few and far between. A more common option today is for an employer to offer matching contributions to your RRSPs. If you're in the market for a new job, factor in the benefits of working for employers who offer a pension or matching funding for retirement savings in your decision-making process.

**Have a side hustle**

For many of us, when we envision retirement, we picture ourselves signing off permanently. But the reality is that many people find the switch from a 40-hour workweek to zero hours somewhat boring.

Some find satisfaction in volunteering their time or doing other charitable work. But if you're worried about financing your retirement, perhaps you could turn your career skills or hobbies into a side gig. If, for example, you worked as an accountant, perhaps you could do people's taxes for them. If you were a writer of some sort, maybe you could pick up some freelance work. If you have worked in construction, set up a business doing small renovation projects.

Find more financial literacy tips and free resources at [abcmoneymatters.ca](http://abcmoneymatters.ca).  
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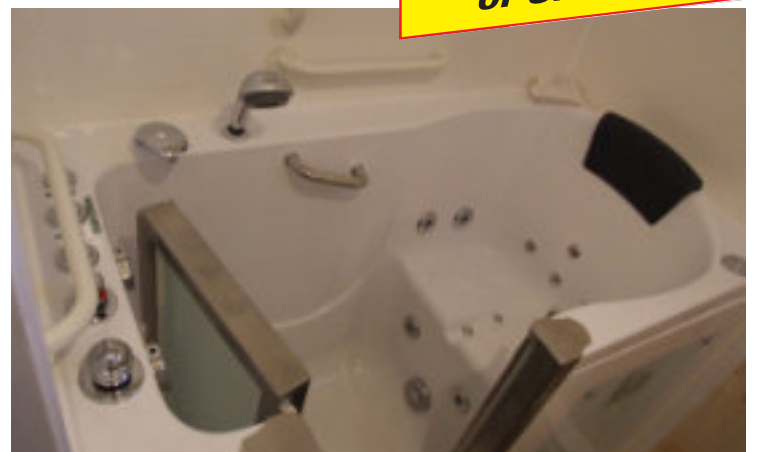
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5 ARTHRITIS-FRIENDLY ACTIVITIES TO KEEP YOU MOVING

Warmer weather is here, and that means it's time to enjoy the sunshine while staying active. Whether you're looking to strengthen muscles, improve flexibility or simply enjoy the fresh air, incorporating daily movement can help improve overall health, especially when managing arthritis. Here are five low-impact, arthritis-friendly outdoor activities that are gentle on your joints and full of fun:

- 1 Walk it off: Take it one step at a time Walking is a fantastic way to re-immers
- 2 Dive in: Cool off with aquatic activities



- Low- or no-impact activities like swimming and water therapy are fantastic if you're experiencing joint pain or stiffness. The buoyancy of the water takes the pressure off your joints while still allowing you to build strength and improve your cardiovascular health.
- 3 Meditate and move: Embrace low-impact exercises Outdoor low-impact exercises like cycling, yoga and Tai Chi are great for your body and are often described as meditative. These activities help keep you physically fit and promote mental well-being, helping you feel rejuvenated and centred.

- 4 Forest therapy: Connect and heal with nature Forest therapy, also known as "forest bathing," is a beautiful way to experience the healing power of nature. Immerse yourself in the serene environment of parks, woods or forests and mindfully soak in nature's calming sights and sounds. It's a peaceful, restorative activity for both the body and mind.
- 5 Gardening: Find wellness in your own backyard Gardening is a fun and rewarding way to stay active while enjoying the outdoors. Whether you're planting flowers or growing veggies, it's a great way to get some gentle exercise and soak up the sunshine.

Find more wellness tips from Arthritis Society Canada at [arthritis.ca/living-well](http://arthritis.ca/living-well). [www.newscanada.com](http://www.newscanada.com)

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# LOCAL LEADERS, GLOBAL IMPACT: CANADIANS MAKING A DIFFERENCE ABROAD



Canada is known for a few of its exports, like oil, wood and precious metals, but there's a new Canadian resource that's making a significant impact across the world: its people. Local leaders are using their expertise and knowledge to make the world a better place in some amazing ways. Here's just one example: Strengthening healthcare in Nigeria. The west African nation has one of the continent's largest economies, but Nigeria has faced decades of challenges since decolonization in 1960. Nigeria's healthcare system has struggled to overcome a lack of infrastructure and investment, and a "brain drain" of skilled healthcare workers leaving the country to look for opportunities elsewhere.

Healthcare access is uneven across the country, with rural areas often going underserved, especially in access to high-quality maternal and neonatal care. But two Canadians, Seyi Kakanfo and Tracey Foster, have been working to change that for Nigeria's 236 million citizens. Seyi and Tracey are both participants in Canada's Technical Assistance Partnership (TAP) project. It's an initiative supported by Global Affairs Canada that recruits experts in a variety of industries and takes their experience abroad to partnering nations. "The objective of the team is to improve the quality of healthcare for women, newborn children, adolescent youths at the rural community level,"

Seyi said in a recent interview on Canadian Changemakers, a podcast that features many experts and their projects around the globe. The two women have brought their leadership skills and organizational management knowledge to Nigeria's healthcare system. They're providing training and guidance and helping to build a stronger framework for patient care, especially for the more vulnerable or underserved populations. With their help, the healthcare system is building its capacity and reach. "There's a real desire to make the most of any opportunity, and that really stays with me to this day," said Tracey. Become a local leader. Nigeria is just one partner country benefitting from Canadian know-how and experience. There are opportunities all around the world in fields including firefighting, education, data management, climate policy and more. Whether you're looking to start a second career, or you've got a passion for your area of expertise, there's a chance to apply it to making a real difference overseas, and to make the world a better place. Hear Tracey and Seyi's story, as well as other local leaders making a difference around the world, at [tap-pat.ca/canadian-changemakers](http://tap-pat.ca/canadian-changemakers). [www.newscanada.com](http://www.newscanada.com)

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# 5 HOME RENOVATIONS THAT WILL SAVE YOU MONEY



Home renovations can transform your space, making it more beautiful, functional and valuable. But did you know some upgrades can also save you money in the long run? Here are five smart renovations to consider:

1 Seal air leaks. Air leaks around windows, doors, cracks and even ceiling light fixtures can let out warm or cool air, making your HVAC system work harder. Air sealing is an affordable and effective way to reduce energy costs, increase comfort and create a healthier indoor environment -

making it a perfect first step in any renovation.

2 Upgrade your windows. Did you know that up to 30 percent of your home's heating energy can escape through the windows? Start small by re-caulking or weather-stripping to seal drafts and consider replacing your windows with more efficient models in the long run. These fixes can cut energy costs while keeping your home comfortable.

3 Conserve water with modern fixtures. If your bathroom or kitchen fixtures are old or leaky, now's the time to make the switch. Modern low-

flow showerheads, faucets and toilets are designed to conserve water without sacrificing performance. These upgrades can lower your utility bills and help the environment at the same time.

4 Invest in energy-efficient appliances and systems. Energy-efficient appliances are a great way to reduce your utility bills while helping the environment. Think beyond the basics - like a new fridge or washer - and consider upgrading your heating system. Replacing a furnace or boiler with an electric heat pump, for example, can provide reliable heating and cooling year-round while saving you hundreds of dollars every month.

5 Embrace eco-friendly landscaping. Eco-friendly landscaping offers more than just curb appeal; it can save you time and money, too. Native plants and shrubs require less maintenance and water, while strategically placed trees will eventually provide shade in summer to lower cooling costs. This approach is a win for both your wallet and the planet.

Funding your next home renovation project To make these eco-friendly renovations more affordable, explore available rebates and grants, like the Oil to Heat Pump Affordability program, which offers upfront payments to help low- to median-income households switch to cleaner heating sources. Additionally, the Canada Greener Homes Loan provides interest-free financing for energy-efficient upgrades. Some municipalities, provinces or territories may also have local incentive programs to consider.

Learn more about funding for eco-friendly home renovations at [canada.ca/heatpumps](http://canada.ca/heatpumps). [www.newscanada.com](http://www.newscanada.com)

### Did You Know?

#### WHY ANIMALS ARE SURRENDERED TO URBAN SAFARI RESCUE:

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- 2. **LONG LIFESPAN** – MANY SPECIES LIVE FOR DECADES, REQUIRING A LIFETIME COMMITMENT.
- 3. **LEGAL RESTRICTIONS** – OWNING EXOTIC ANIMALS MAY BE ILLEGAL IN SOME AREAS.
- 4. **SIZE AND DANGER** – AS ANIMALS GROW, THEY CAN BECOME TOO LARGE OR DANGEROUS TO MANAGE.
- 5. **HIGH COSTS** – THE EXPENSE OF PROPER CARE AND FEEDING CAN BE OVERWHELMING.

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TO PROVIDE PUBLIC AWARENESS OF WORLDWIDE ANIMAL CONSERVATION EFFORTS AND ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN THOSE EFFORTS.

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# Shell Busey the HouseSmart guy

By Shell Busey

In the last items #5 & 6 in my July 2025 editorial, I mentioned “Shell Busey’s Home Improvement Services” and “Shell Busey’s Home Improvement Referral Network” — both owned and operated by a young, capable past employee of ours.

Unfortunately, he has had a return of a very serious back ailment, causing him to take an early retirement. A very difficult decision to make, even though he was nearing his original family plans.

Before any of our readers think there goes Shell back to business — “unfortunately,” not. I guess it’s time for my swan song. At 83 years of age, you have to pull the curtains sooner or later.

All of my former service trades and referral service trades are very well respected in all of their services. As the old saying goes:

**“All good services are never forgotten, but all poor quality work spreads like a wildfire.”**

If you have been using my name-branded services or trades over the years, you may have a business card that you have had on file for years. Please, check their promotional data and make sure they are aware of your past history — and that it is still current with your past experiences.

You can call me if you would like to confirm that their services are still ongoing. **All my endorsements and referrals will end August 1st, 2025, due to my retirement.**

After over 60 years in all aspects of home improvement services, my sweetheart wife of nearly 61 years and I are going to do some Western Canada traveling. Our health is very good — walking is one of our best health formulas.

**What are we going to do??**

Well, Frankie and I have been very involved in volunteering in our community for the local Cloverdale Food Bank, as well as Frankie with their clothing for kids & adults, delivering hot meals to seniors, and working with many volunteers reaching out to help within our community.

Other activities include being members of the Surrey/Cloverdale Heritage Railroad, Surrey Heritage Truck Museum. We are both members of **PROBUS** (ladies & gentlemen retired business folks). (Interested? Google PROBUS clubs in your area.)

We also support **Zajac Ranch for Children** in the Fraser Valley. (Google Zajac Ranch Office in Vancouver & Fraser Valley — an absolutely wonderful place for children.)

This column is not stopping — lots more to come!

# SUMMERTIME



Summertime	Barbeque	Sunshine	Swimming	Wildflowers	Sandcastles
Beach	Lake	Ocean	Fishing	Boating	Tubing
Waterskiing	Paddleboarding	Canoeing	Kayaking	Life Jackets	Sunbathing
Hiking	Towels	Water	Sea Shells	Cabin	Tent
Picnic	Icecream	Slushies	Sprinklers	Pool	Stay Safe

In fact, in closing my August column, please see the information on one of our family volunteer activities for a great non-profit.

**You and your children will absolutely enjoy going to see live animals — and it’s not a “zoo.”**

It is the Urban Rescue Society on 176 Avenue, South Surrey, just south of 16th Ave.

Keep in mind:  
**“When in doubt, don’t pout — let Shell help you out.”**  
**Till next month, God bless.**

## PREPARING YOUR HOME FOR EXTREME WEATHER

Forty years ago, Canada experienced 19 natural disasters per decade, on average. That number has now increased to 133. From extreme heat to wildfires and flooding, incidences of extreme weather are on the rise. While we can’t change the weather, there are things that can be done to prepare for major events and lessen their impact on our homes.

“With more people impacted by extreme weather, preparation matters,” says Carla Smith, Chief Climate Officer at Intact. “Small measures taken today can save time, money, and stress down the road. There are simple maintenance steps you can take to reduce the risk of flooding and wildfire to your home and they can typically be completed in less than a day.”

Wildfires. If you live near forests and grasslands, keeping combustible ground cover such as mulch

and plants at least 1.5 metres, about one and a half baseball bats, from the house perimeter is a must. Keep the lawn mowed to less than 10 centimetres, or about the height of a poap can, and plant low-growing, well-spaced shrubs and other fire-resistant plants. Adding a non-combustible three-millimetre screen to all external vents, except for the dryer vent, along with fencing made of cement fiber boards, metal, chain link or stone within 1.5 metres of the house can all help prevent wildfires from spreading.

Reduce the risk of flooding. The simplest way to help reduce the risk of flooding is with regular maintenance of your home, both inside and outside, twice a year. This includes removing debris from storm drains and cleaning out eavestroughs, checking for leaks in plumbing fixtures and appliances, testing your sump pump and cleaning out the backwater valve. Be sure to also keep obstructions well away from floor drains.

Beat the heat. There are many simple and cost-effective home upgrades available to help moderate temperature. Consider planting shade trees, growing vines over your brick walls, deck or balcony, as well as using fans for air circulation and installing heat-resistant glazing on windows. During periods of extreme heat, these steps will help lower the temperature of your home without solely relying on an air conditioning unit.

The reality of climate change is that Canadians are experiencing more wildfires, homes are being flooded from torrential rain events, and more people are being impacted by extreme heat.

Learn more about helping prepare your home for extreme weather events at [intact.ca/protection](https://www.intact.ca/protection).  
[www.newscanada.com](https://www.newscanada.com)



# THIS SUMMER'S HOT TREND? STAY LOCAL, SPEND LOCAL



Summer is here, and many of us are taking advantage of the warm weather and sunshine by staying right where we are. More than half of Canadians plan to travel within the country this season, according to a recent TD Bank Group survey.

89 per cent of respondents reported that they felt it's important to support small businesses this summer. They're being deliberate about it too, with more now researching shops, restaurants and attractions ahead of their trips. That research is helping Canadians—especially Gen Z and Millennials—plan: almost three-quarters are considering basing their travel destination on a specific business or attraction they researched.

The uptick in local travel and spending is a boon for small businesses across the country, many of whom have been uncertain how trade disputes and a potential economic downturn may shape their fortunes.

"It's encouraging to hear that Canadians are planning to support local small businesses as part

of their vacation plans this summer, as it helps both entrepreneurs and our local economies," says Julia Kelly, Vice President, Small Business Banking at TD. "It's particularly welcome news, as small businesses in many communities have been concerned about consumer spending slowing down."

Your summer adventures can be a great chance to check out some of the local attractions and businesses you might not have had a chance to. Here are some tips to help make the most of it:

- Going on a road trip? Try taking a different route than you're used to, and leave yourself open to saying "yes" to the local business signs you see on the roadside.
- The backroads have a lot to offer. Look for local food stands serving up great grub, as well as farms along your way. You can find good prices on fresh, high-quality produce, or even artisanal crafts.
- Headed to cottage country? Your local marinas stock lots of little supplies you might have

forgotten to pack, as well as some surprising gems like books, local art or DVDs for a no-internet movie night.

The important thing is to keep an open mind, and an appetite for something new. If you approach the season with the right mindset, you might surprise yourself to learn that the dream destination you've been looking for was right in your backyard all along.

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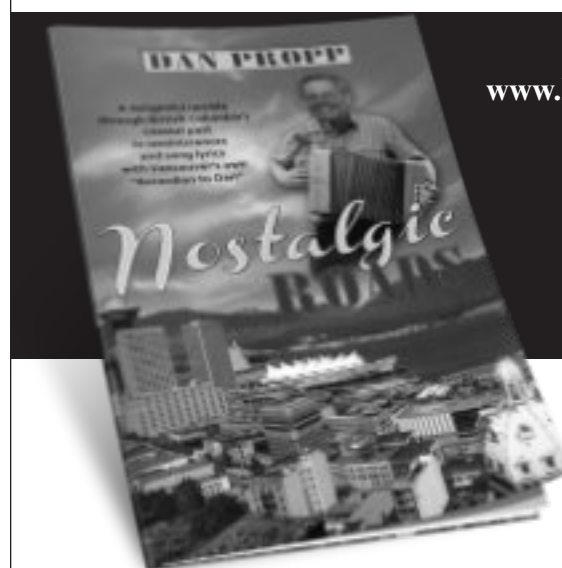
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## Straight from the Horse's Mouth

By Mel Kositsky

It was somewhat surprising to turn on the television on Saturday afternoon (July 19) and see not one – but two --mainstream media channels broadcasting top-notch horse racing “live” from the East Coast.

There was one hour of coverage of the \$1 million Haskell at Monmouth Park in New Jersey on NBC, which featured another great performance by a three-year-old colt named Journalism. FOX Sports devoted two hours of racing from Saratoga, the racing “mecca” in upper state New York.

That just doesn't happen much anymore and throws a wet blanket on those who maintain that racing is a dying sport. Yes, it is changing – and needs to reinvent itself -- but it is up to those involved with the industry to change with the times.

Broadcast giants like NBC and FOX would not be showing these races if they thought no one was watching anymore. And the next day, to the delight of racing fans in Canada, Rogers Sportsnet broadcast “live” both the Kings Plate trial and the Canadian Oaks from Woodbine in Toronto. These are Canada's major stake races for three-year-old colts and fillies.

With the Kings Plate being scheduled for Saturday, August 16, it is time to really showcase the sport to potential new fans. Major promotions are needed if racing wants to stay competitive in the gaming world. It is not known if a member of the Royal family plans to attend this year's race, but it would certainly boost up the ratings.

The English still know how to do it up right and love their horse racing. For those who watched the races from Royal Ascot in early July, again “live” on early morning television, the huge crowds and party-like atmosphere at the racetrack certainly makes you wonder why North American racetracks are on the decline.

It was great to see King Charles attend the races daily (considering all the concerns for his health). He certainly has inherited the love of racing from his mother Queen Elizabeth. And he has kept the Royal stable going although he did not have a winner at this year's meet.

Thoroughbred racing in Vancouver has been reduced to just two days a week, but they still put on a show despite a shortage of horses. They need to go all out on one of the biggest days of the summer meet -- BC Cup Day on the August holiday (Monday, August 4).

That afternoon of racing mainly features BC-bred horses competing in a number of restricted stakes races for very good purses. Owners and trainers need to self-promote their sport and treat the fans to an exciting holiday card. It may be the last “big” day of the season at Hastings Racecourse until BC Derby Day in September.

There are not many race dates at Hastings during August due to the annual Pacific National

Exhibition. There is only one Monday night card in late August when the PNE is closed, but a full racing schedule resumes following Labour Day.

Some seniors might remember being able to watch the races for free during the PNE. It was considered part of the attractions to the fair. There is a changed atmosphere there now with the City of Vancouver owning the land and the PNE looking to expand its operations and attractions. The future of racing there is cloudy, to say the least.

But industry organizations are actively engaged in planning for their future. The BCTOBA, HPBA and B.C. Breeders and Owners are involved with the newly created THOROUGHBRED RACING BRITISH COLUMBIA to be the one voice on behalf of the racing industry partners in negotiations with B.C. government representatives to request funding for the horse racing industry in B.C.

According to a news article on the Breeders' website, industry funding now comes from:

1. The handles from Hastings and Fraser Downs;
2. The TBC sites;
3. The Provincial Levies credits on that are received on 1 & 2 revenues less the costs to operate GPEB at both tracks for the year;
4. The slot revenue (25% of the net slots income-Hastings and Fraser Downs) this is split 50/50 between the two sectors-Thoroughbred and Standardbred;

The total revenue from 1, 2 and 3 above less the \$1M is taken off the top for the Industry Management Committee to distribute for marketing and business is then distributed amongst the Track Operator, Thoroughbred and Standardbred sectors. The distribution for the monies is decided by the HRIMC. Currently the split is 43.200% for the Track Operator, 33.635% for the Thoroughbred sector and 23.165% for the Standardbred sector. The monies for the Breeders Awards programs are 10% of the total that is given to the Thoroughbred Sector.

CTHSBC has offered to work with HPBA to provide programs that will enhance and promote racing with the development of breeding incentives that will bring back breeding and increase the foal crop for the betterment of Hastings Racecourse. The horse population at Hastings is dwindling because breeding has fallen off for the most part due to lack of funding. CTHSBC would like to be a part of the solution, we do not want the current status quo funding allocation to continue, which will eventually lead to the demise of Racing in B.C. and the TB breeding industry.”

B.C. needs to closely monitor what is currently happening in Ontario. An industry steering committee of Ontario horse people has commissioned a comprehensive economic impact study of the vast and diverse Ontario equine agricultural sector.

“If you are involved in the Ontario equine sector, your participation in the economic impact study is an investment in the future of Ontario's equine industry. This is an opportunity to tell the good news story about our sector.

The equine agricultural industry is a huge economic driver in Ontario, especially in our rural communities. However, it lacks credible data to illustrate that valuable contribution. The objective of this study is to clearly demonstrate that positive impact. There has not been a comprehensive economic impact assessment conducted of the overall Ontario equine sector since 2010, 15 years ago!

Accurate economic data is a powerful tool for advocacy whether with government, financial institutions, land use and planning departments, or the general public.

The equine industry faces challenges, from rising costs to urbanization pressures that threaten agricultural land. The results of the study will provide valuable data to policymakers, businesses, and agricultural equine sector stakeholders, helping them make informed decisions about investments, projects, and policies.

The participation of horse people and equine businesses across all disciplines - racing, show jumping, dressage, eventing, heavy horse, western events, breeding, and more - is not just beneficial, it is essential. This collaborative effort aims to quantify the industry's value, advocate for its growth, and secure its future. Without widespread participation, the study risks underestimating the industry's value, weakening its ability to compete for attention and support in a crowded agricultural landscape.

With the backing of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness, this study has the potential to elevate the industry's profile and ensure its legacy for years to come. Every stakeholder has a role to play — because when Ontario's equine community stands together, its impact is undeniable.

For more information on the study or to participate in the survey: visit <https://www.equineimpactstudy.com>. Data collection will occur over the summer with a final report produced by the end of 2025.”

### DO YOU KNOW ABOUT AGE-RELATED MACULAR DEGENERATION?

It's the leading cause of vision loss among older adults, affecting nearly 2.5 million Canadians, but awareness around age-related macular degeneration (AMD) remains low. It can significantly impact daily life and long-term eye health, so education and early detection are crucial. Here's what you should know:

What is AMD?

The condition begins when the macula, a part of your retina, becomes damaged. There are two forms of the disease, dry and wet. The dry form is the most common, accounting for 85–90 per cent of cases. The disease advances through three stages: early, intermediate and late. In some cases, the dry form can progress to wet AMD, a less common but more aggressive form that can lead to significant vision loss.

What are the symptoms?

At the early stage, symptoms are often unnoticeable but can rapidly progress, impacting vision and quality of life. In later stages, central vision can become very blurry or completely dark, making simple tasks like reading and recognizing faces difficult or even impossible.

Who's at risk?

Risk for developing AMD increases as we age, and research suggests that a family history of the disease can increase the risk further. Other factors like cardiovascular disease, prolonged UV exposure, smoking and diets rich in saturated fats also make the disease more likely to develop.

What treatments are available?

A healthy lifestyle and balanced diet can help slow the progression of dry AMD, but can't reverse it. The first treatment approved by Health Canada is a device called MacuMira, and it's currently the only available option for dry AMD. Research has shown that it improves vision significantly in most recipients.

The more Canadians know about AMD, its symptoms and risks, the better chance they have of protecting their vision well into the future. Ask your eye care professional about lifestyle choices that can support eye health, as well as available treatment options.

Learn more at [macumira.com](http://macumira.com).  
[www.newscanada.com](http://www.newscanada.com)



# INDULGE IN THESE GUILT-FREE, ARTHRITIS- FRIENDLY BROWNIES

Looking for a dessert that's as nourishing as it is indulgent? Say hello to these sweet potato brownies—they're moist, chewy and packed with surprising nutritious benefits that can help manage arthritis symptoms.

Bright-coloured vegetables like sweet potatoes are bursting with antioxidants that help fight inflammation and keep your gut bacteria happy. Cocoa, another rich source of antioxidants, brings a deliciously deep flavour and flavanols that could help reduce blood pressure and aid in blood flow. Who knew a brownie could double as a mini health boost?

**Sweet Potato Brownies**

Prep time: 5 minutes

Cook time: 30-40 minutes

Serves: 8

**Ingredients:**

- 1 cup (250 ml) sweet potato puree (about 3 to 4 small sweet potatoes)
- ½ cup (125 ml) natural peanut butter
- 1/3 cup (125 mL) maple syrup
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp (5 ml) vanilla
- 1/3 cup (160 ml) whole wheat flour
- ½ cup (125 ml) cocoa powder
- 1 tsp (5 ml) baking powder
- ¼ tsp (1 ml) salt
- 1/3 cup (160 ml) semi-sweet chocolate chips

**Directions:**

1 Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line an 8x8-inch baking dish with parchment paper.

2 Pierce sweet potatoes several times with a

knife and microwave for 7 to 10 minutes on high until soft. Set aside and let them cool down to room temperature. Slice them in half and scoop out the flesh. Blend in a food processor or blender until smooth.

3 In a medium bowl, mix sweet potato puree, peanut butter, maple syrup, eggs and vanilla until smooth.

4 In a separate bowl, combine flour, cocoa powder, baking powder and salt.

5 Add dry ingredients to wet ingredients and mix until combined.

6 Fold in the chocolate chips.

7 Spoon the batter into your lined baking dish and spread it out evenly with a spatula.

8 Bake for 20 to 25 minutes at 350°F until a toothpick inserted in the centre comes out clean. Once cool, slice and serve.

**Tips for the ultimate brownie experience:**

- Short on time? Swap the sweet potato for 1 cup of canned 100 per cent pure pumpkin puree.

• Want more crunch? Add ½ cup of chopped nuts for additional protein, fibre and healthy fats.

• Need to boost your fibre? Add a few tablespoons of chia seeds to the batter for additional soluble fibre.

• Peanut allergy? Substitute peanut butter with almond butter, soy butter or sunflower butter.

Find more arthritis-friendly recipes from Arthritis Society Canada at [arthritis.ca/living-well](http://arthritis.ca/living-well).

[www.newscanada.com](http://www.newscanada.com)



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# WORLD HERITAGE BORDEAUX PORT OF THE MOON

By Chris Millikan

Aboard an express train from Montparnasse station, we travel into southwestern France with daughter Jessica. Arriving at St. Jean station in Bordeaux within two hours, an Uber takes us to the Cyrano de Bergerac, moored on the Garonne River...and our riverboat ‘home’ for six days. Cruising three scenic rivers, daily shore excursions acquaint us with this distinguished wine region’s resplendent chateaux, estates and vineyards.

Inside a repurposed submarine base back in Bordeaux, the world’s largest digital arts centre bedazzles our senses. Vibrant images transform Bassins des Lumiere’s concrete walls, floors and water channels. Passionate flamenco guitars accentuate Antoni Gaudi’s sumptuous architecture; Pink Floyd’s rock anthems reinforce phases of Salvador Dali’s spectacular artworks.

Leaving Cyrano behind, we roll our suitcases to a nearby rental in the Chartrons district. Our spacious unit was created in one of many former warehouses. In others, vintners matured their wines in wooden barrels, ready for shipping. The neighbourhood’s Wine Museum offers us winemaking exhibits, a cellar visit, and an informative tasting. Another, Cite du Vin Museum provides additional wine culture understandings.

Rows of 18th and 19th century mansions shade our afternoon stroll along rue Notre-Dame. Stopping in a sidewalk bistro, we savour delectable dinners close to gothic revival Saint-Louis-des-Chartrons church.

Following chocolate croissant breakfasts, Jessica’s iPhone map guides us into the city’s historic centre. The riverside promenade soon takes us past Place des Quinconces, one of Europe’s largest plazas, and the northernmost part of the city’s 1810-hectare World Heritage site.

Known as ‘Port of the Moon’ since the Middle Ages, here the Garonne River’s crescent shaped bend forms Bordeaux’s historic harbour. Innovative planning conserves intact, its classical and neoclassical architecture. In 2007, UNESCO assigned heritage status to this magnificent old city.

Along the quay, a reflection pool covers over 3000 square meters. We watch families splash across Miroir d’Eau’s shiny black granite surface. Beyond

stands a young slave girl sculpture. The plaque recalls how 18th century’s traders bought, sold and exported African slaves to the Americas. Over 150,000 shackled men, women and children were transported in 480 such ‘shipments.’

Across the boulevard, Place de la Bourse aka Stock Exchange Square forms a striking multi-building marketplace. As well, this economic hub is the city’s most recognizable plaza. In its centre stands Three Graces. This spectacular white marble fountain features three bronze figures symbolizing the daughters of Zeus. The ‘Graces’ represent beauty, joy and fertility.

Narrow streets take us to Cathedrale Saint-Andre de Bordeaux. A future King of France, Louis VII married 13-year-old Eleanor of Aquitaine there in 1137, about forty years after its completion. We later learn its belfry and gothic flying buttresses were added in the 1400’s. Just opposite, the sumptuous Town Hall once served as the archbishop’s palace.

We return via the Grand Theatre of Bordeaux, home to the National Opera. Muses and goddesses grace the roofline. Alfresco bistros surround this baroque beauty. Shaded by a red umbrella, we sip refreshing drinks.

Proceeding toward Notre Dame Church, Jessica spots a Goya statue. A plaque notes that while working in Bordeaux, this celebrated 19th century artist designed wine labels! Farther on, an equestrian sculpture of Joan of Arc recalls her battle successes during the Hundred Years War.

Revisiting Place des Quinconces, we contemplate the magnificent Monument aux Girondins. This enormous central fountain honours Bordeaux’s revolutionary leaders executed during the French Reign of Terror. Lady Liberty tops its



towering column. Invoking Roman history, dynamic sculptures of charioteers, galloping horses and troopers adorn the fountain’s two basins.

In surveying the historic heart of this storied French port, we discover much more than a perfect glass of Bordeaux red!





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# 4 BEST PRACTICES TO CARE FOR YOUR EYES

Our eyes are constantly at work, whether it's the strain from looking at glowing screens, squinting from the sun, or drying out from indoor air vents. Unfortunately, eye health often gets overlooked in our daily routines. However, there are effective habits that can help protect your eyes at any stage of life.

Make sure you're eating well. A diet rich in vitamins A and C can help your eye health. Your body uses vitamin A to help build the rod cells in the retina that make it easier to see in low light. Vitamin C is an antioxidant that can help protect against cell damage. These nutrients can be found in carrots, leafy greens, citrus fruits and sweet potatoes.

Take it easy on your eyes. Staring at computers and phones for hours can lead to tired, blurry eyes and headaches. Your eyes have to work harder to read text on a screen, especially if you're viewing it from the wrong angle, or in poor lighting.

To give your eyes a break, try the 20-20-20 trick: every 20 minutes, look at something 20 feet away for at least 20 seconds. Additionally, consider using blue light glasses or adjusting your screen settings to reduce harsh glare.

Keep your eyes protected. From a day at the beach to working on a new DIY project, protective eyewear is a simple but important way to keep your eyes and vision safe. Sunglasses with UV



protection help prevent long-term sun damage, while safety goggles are crucial for shielding your eyes from potential injury when working with tools and chemicals, or during high-impact activities.

Get your eyes checked regularly. Regular, preventative eye exams should be part of everyone's health routine. Even if your vision seems fine, checkups help catch conditions like glaucoma and age-related macular degeneration (AMD).

Early detection means better outcomes and fewer disruptions to your daily life. Canada's population is aging rapidly, and AMD is the leading cause of vision loss among older adults, affecting nearly 2.5 million Canadians. Dry AMD is the most common form of the disease, making up 85-90 per cent of

cases. There's a treatment option available for the condition: MacuMira is the first medical device approved by Health Canada to address it, and which has been shown to reverse some of its effects on eyesight. It's currently the only treatment available, and one way to support your long-term retinal health and maintain vision.

Supporting your eye health doesn't require major changes. Small, consistent steps can make all the difference. From smart screen habits and nutrition to regular checkups, taking care of your eyes today can help you maintain clear, healthy vision for years to come.

Learn more at [macumira.com](http://macumira.com).  
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