



# Better Home Living

*The Newsletter That's Both Informative and Fun!*

May 2018

Volume 9, Issue 5

## Potential Allergy Complications Indoors

Nasal allergies affect about 50 million people in the United States and indoor allergens can aggravate them, according to the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America.

Pollen, mold, dust mites, and pet dander can all be irritating to sensitive individuals, and while air cleaning devices with HEPA filters are helpful, the best way to prevent allergy problems is to eliminate the source of allergens inside the home.

Many who suffer from severe reactions to pollen, for instance, retreat indoors during the worst parts of allergy season. Although this prevents most direct contact with outside sources, there are still ways that they can invade the home. Keeping windows and doors closed, even on days with beautiful weather, will help prevent new spores and plant matter from entering the house. Pets with long hair can not only contribute to pet dander but also tend to pick up pollen during the high-volume times of the season, so a spring haircut and frequent baths help to mitigate these issues.

Dust mites, which 8 out of 10 people are exposed to, can become a problem if left unchecked. Avoid heavy draperies and overstuffed furniture. Use plastic covers on items such as mattresses and pillows. Bedding, pillows or stuffed toys should be washed frequently in water that is at least 130 degrees Fahrenheit to kill the mites.

Vacuum frequently. Consider using a mask to reduce inhalation of dust.

Mold is best kept in check by controlling the humidity in the home. Air conditioners will help with decreasing humidity, but it might be necessary to employ a humidity monitor and dehumidifiers in areas prone to mold accumulation like kitchens and bathrooms. Fix leaks and clean visible mold immediately to prevent it from becoming a problem.

## Sweet Potato Vines for Summer!

Lovely sweet potato vines could once be found on sunny kitchen window sills everywhere.

And why not? Sweet potatoes are perfect for a kitchen garden plus they are beautiful and easy to grow. Best of all, everyone has the odd sweet potato now and then. That's all you need to start your garden or just a lovely plant.

Growing a sweet potato vine is also a great way to introduce kids to plants.

It's easy to do. Get a small jar you would normally throw out -- maybe a pickle jar. Fill the jar halfway with water. Now put your sweet potato in it, making sure the top one-third is exposed. Typically, people insert toothpicks into the side of the potato to hold it out of the water.

In a few weeks, the sprouts begin to grow. If you want, you can plant it outside in a sunny spot.

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*We hope you enjoy this month's newsletter!*

*Mari and Staff*

## Plan for Your Fall Garden in Spring

In May, we are excited about the colors of our perennial gardens, now just hinting at their summer glory.

But while you plan for summer, don't ignore fall.

Mums are the standard for fall color and while they are abundant in stores around late September and October, if you want them as a member of your perennial garden, plant in the summer.

According to Better Homes and Gardens, planting mums in the fall doesn't give them much of a chance to overwinter. Their roots don't have time to dig down deep enough to stay healthy. Instead, plant in spring to give them a chance to establish.

Basic tips for growing mums:

- Choose a location with at least six hours of sun.
- Choose well-drained soil. Clay soils won't do.
- Never let newly planted mums wilt. Water regularly at the roots, avoiding foliage. If bottom leaves look limp or turn brown, water more often.
- Your mums set out in spring need a 5-10-10 fertilizer once or twice a month until October. No need to fertilize fall annuals, but overwintering plants must be fertilized to stimulate roots.
- Prepare for overwintering by mulching at least 4 inches with straw or shredded hardwood.
- Pinch off spent blooms but leave the branches. Wait until next spring to prune old stems.
- When the weather warms the following year, pull away the mulch to allow new sprouts.



## Do You Know...

Someone that could use our services? Perhaps a friend, family member, co-worker, or someone from church?

When a new client signs up for regular cleaning services at your recommendation; you will receive \$50 after their 6th cleaning!

If you would think of 3 or 4 people that could use our services, then don't hesitate to call them and give them our name and phone number. Be sure to have them mention your name when they call so we can send your \$50 Bonus!

Thanks in advance for your help and we look forward to sending cash your way!

## Thanks a Bunch!

“Great cleaning job!!!! Trusted and Diligent.”

-Denise R

## Hungry Hummingbirds Begin Staking Out Territory

They've just flown 500 miles across the Gulf of Mexico and they are headed north to your house. And they are hungry.

Hummingbirds return in force in May through June, looking for nectar from flowers and a free handout from neighborhood feeders.

Of the over 320 species of hummingbirds, only 26 are found north of Mexico. After flying across the Gulf, they migrate 20 miles per day. Their wings flutter 80 times per second, but not in flaps; in a figure eight, which enables them to fly backwards and to hover.

Migrating birds cover thousands of miles in their annual travels and have amazing navigational skills, including by the stars, sensing changes in the earth's magnetic field, and even by smell.

Even though their brains are the size of a grain of rice, hummingbirds have enough gray matter to know where they nested the year before. Many return to the same nesting areas, and even the same feeders, on their trip across country.

People may start seeing traveling birds as early as March. These are usually the males on their way to stake out mating territory. During these early weeks, males will actually feed from a feeder at night if the area is well lit.

## Morel Mania: A Favorite Mushroom Dodges Spring Foragers

It's hard to overstate the mania for morel mushrooms.

From March to May, in Canada and the United States, morel hunting is a seasonal delirium in which novices and pros tramp the forests looking for fungus gold.

The wily morel is not easy prey.

Difficult to cultivate, morels remain mainly volunteers and they guard their secrets.

While they may grow in the same spot for years, they may also suddenly disappear. But when the spot is right, and the temperature is over 40 degrees, the tasty mushroom grows in wild abundance, peeking out from under trees for a couple of weeks before they are gone.



According to fieldandstream.com, morels are found in and on the edge of forested areas, especially among leaf litter. They grow in the shade of trees like ash, aspen and oak. They cloak themselves in colors similar to the forest's floor, making it difficult to find the early, smaller specimens. Often located on the southern slopes of fairly open areas in the early spring, as the season progresses, morels are found on north-facing slopes and tend to grow deeper in the forested areas.

They also love wooded areas which have been burned by a fire. These slippery ash-covered forest floors are often a challenge for hunters.

There is some money in the fungus; maybe not enough to make a hunter rich, but enough to encourage enthusiasm. The market for morels veers wildly from season to season and place to place. Sometimes fetching as little as 50 cents per pound and sometimes up to \$6 or more, according to the New York Times. Serious morel traders carry backpacks suitable for 120 pounds of morels. At \$6 a pound, that would justify a wet, itchy, thorny 12-hour day tromping through the forest. At 50 cents, maybe not so much.



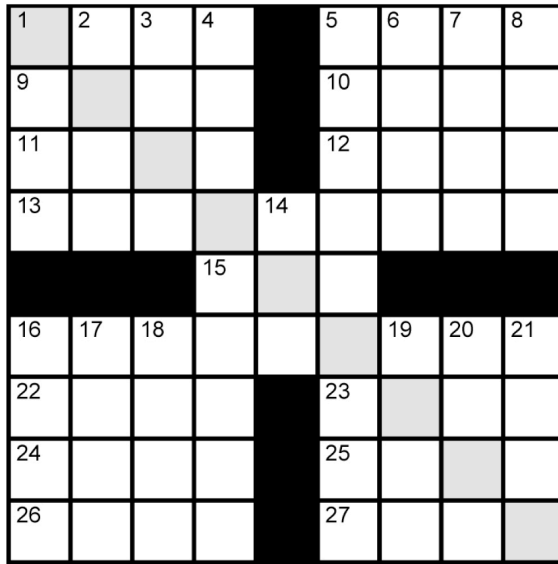
## Customary Way

### Across

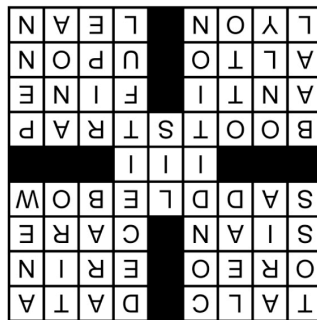
1. Locker room supply
5. Facts and figures
9. Hydrox alternative
10. Land of leprechauns
11. City in central China
12. Give a darn
13. Pommel
15. Sundial number
16. Self puller-upper
22. Not pro
23. Dandy
24. Chorus member
25. \_\_\_ reflection
26. Capital of Rhone
27. Incline

### Down

1. Fling
2. "Tosca" tune
3. Its symbol is Pb
4. Out of \_\_\_ (in poor shape)
5. Misleading
6. Kuwaiti, e.g.
7. Novice



8. Again
14. Sue Grafton's "\_\_\_ for Lawless"
16. Canaanite deity
17. Nothing but
18. "Beetle Bailey" dog
19. Ready for picking
20. Wild ox
21. Ivy League team



The headline is a clue to the answer in the diagonal.

## Trivia Teaser – Hello Neighbor

1. Which U.S. President instituted a "Good Neighbor" policy with other Western Hemisphere countries? a-Lyndon Johnson, b-James Madison, c-Franklin Roosevelt, d-George Washington.

2. The Tenderloin is a downtown neighborhood area, situated on the southern slope of Nob Hill, in which California city? a-San Diego, b-San Francisco, c-Stockton, d-Santa Cruz.

3. What did next-door neighbor Jerry Helper do for a living on "The Dick Van Dyke Show"? a-TV repairman, b-Airline pilot, c-Dentist, d-Zookeeper.

4. What is the name of the young neighbor of the Bumsteads in the "Blondie" comic strip? a-Charles, b-Roberto, c-Telly, d-Elmo.

5. Which poet noted that "good fences make good neighbors" in his poem "Mending Wall"? a-Robert Frost, b-Carl Sandburg, c-A.E. Housman, d-Walt Whitman.

6. The animated series "Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood" is a spinoff of which children's TV show? a-"Mister Rogers' Neighborhood," b-"Captain Kangaroo," c-"The New Zoo Revue," d-"Pee-wee's Playhouse."

7. The Danube River separates Bulgaria from which neighboring country? a-Slovenia, b-Slovakia, c-Moldova, d-Romania.

8. Released in 1991, "Waking Up the Neighbours" was the sixth studio album for which Canadian singer-songwriter? a-Bryan Adams, b-Aldo Nova, c-Corey Hart, d-Michael Buble.

9. Which African country is sandwiched between neighboring countries Nigeria and Togo? a-Niger, b-Burkina Faso, c-Benin, d-Cote d'Ivoire.

10. In Jonathan Swift's "Gulliver's Travels," which island neighbor was separated from Lilliput by a channel only 800 yards wide? a-Sod, b-Taunuu, c-Blefuscu, d-Gourami.

## Fighting for the Right to Repair Your Own Electronics

California is becoming the 18th state to propose 'right to repair' legislation that will allow owners of broken technology better access to parts and information used to fix the devices, according to Engadget. Currently, third parties are forced to use grey market replacement parts and guides made available online by other people in the community.

Most popular tech companies, such as Apple, do not have an authorized system of repair for their devices and are currently fighting these bills every step of the way through the court system. Proponents of the bill say that owners have a right to understand and fix their own property while detractors say that it will open the door to hackers and other criminal activity.

- 1-c, Franklin Roosevelt  
 2-b, San Francisco  
 3-c, Dentist  
 4-d, Elmo  
 5-a, Robert Frost  
 6-a, "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood"  
 7-d, Romania  
 8-a, Bryan Adams  
 9-c, Benin  
 10-c, Blefuscu

Answers to 'Hello Neighbor'

## New drugs promise to melt away high cholesterol

Patients who suffer from abnormally high cholesterol can benefit from a new class of drugs, but the cost may cause problems for some.

Affordable cholesterol-lowering drugs like statins work for the majority of people, but there are about 10 million people in the United States who can't take those drugs or who suffer from a genetic disease. Familial hypercholesterolemia is a genetic disease that causes uncontrollable high cholesterol even with the highest doses of traditional medicines.

PCSK9 inhibitors such as Praluent, from Sanofi and Regeneron Pharmaceuticals, and Repatha, from Amgen, represent a new way of tackling cholesterol. They have been shown to reduce cholesterol in eligible patients by 50 to 60 percent after a year's worth of treatment.

The drawback to the drug is the price tag. A year's worth of Praluent is around \$14,600 and Repatha demands a similar price. It is likely, however, that patients could obtain discounts from 30 to 65 percent off the retail price, according to The Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America.

Health insurance companies may be hesitant to approve the use of these drugs as long-term use could end up costing them billions of dollars in benefits. Prescribing this treatment might end up saving them money in the long run as the estimated lifetime cost of heart failure is \$110,000 - many years' worth of a life-saving medicine.

## Fruits stall decline in lung function

A diet rich in fresh fruits may slow down the lung's natural aging process, according to researchers at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

Researchers found that adults who ate more than two tomatoes or more than three portions of fresh fruit a day had a slower decline in natural lung function than others.

Among former smokers, the results were striking, showing that over a 10-year period, diets appear to help repair smoking damage. Eating processed fruits, such as tomato sauce, did not show results.

## Quick Whoopie Pies

### Ingredients

- 1/2 of an 8-ounce package reduced-fat cream cheese (Neufchatel), softened
- 1/4 cup butter, softened
- 1/2 of a 7-ounce jar marshmallow creme
- 12 soft chocolate cookies or your favorite soft cookies

### Directions

1. For filling, in a medium mixing bowl beat cream cheese and butter with an electric mixer on medium to high speed until smooth and fluffy. Fold in marshmallow creme.
2. Spread filling on bottoms of half of the cookies. Top with the remaining cookies, bottom sides down. For firmer filling, wrap and chill about 2 hours before serving.



## Take the Trivia Challenge

How fast do hummingbirds' wings flutter per second?

- a. 80
- b. 100
- c. 320
- d. 500

HINT: The answer is hidden somewhere in this newsletter.

***Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win.***

***- 1 Corinthians 9:24***