

# **The Hourglass**

## **June 1, 2026**

**The Alliance on Aging and Vision Loss (AAVL)  
A Special-Interest Affiliate of the American Council of the  
Blind (ACB) since 1999**

Visit our Web Site: <https://www.aavl-blind-seniors.org>

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Editor's Suggestion: Travel easily between articles by using Headings or by searching for the three stars (\*\*\*) that mark the beginning of each new article.

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## From the President

### \*\*\*A Little Retrospective and a Forward Look into AAVL's Future Doug Powell

Our Annual Membership meeting, scheduled for July 11, is approaching, and it looks like there will be several changes in our roster of officers. I am terming out as President. Sharon Strzalkowski, who was recently elected President of Bay State Council of the Blind, is stepping down from the Secretarial position, which she has held for several years. And Kathy Gerhardt is also stepping down after many years of wonderful service as Treasurer and main membership records person -- Two major jobs looking for capable members to step up! I thank both of them for their dedicated and distinguished service.

Although our Nominating Committee has put together a slate of excellent candidates to replace those of us who are stepping down (see the slate in this issue), I want to remind you that a vibrant membership organization needs a corps of energetic, interested people to fulfill the promise of our mission. We always take nominations from the floor, should you be moved to run for one of the available offices. And, even if you are not willing to take on the responsibility of elected office at this time, we are also

always looking for new committee members and committee chairs to help implement our work plans. I know that the new officers will be happy to hear from you about your interest in working with them.

Touching on federal advocacy, ACB has been focused on issues that affect all of us, but the national organization has not focused specifically on some key issues that affect older people who are blind or have low vision that would benefit from focused advocacy. It is easy to get discouraged by our lack of progress with the federal legislation that we know is so important, and with depleted funding levels for existing programs, as well. But, as most of us advocacy veterans know, nothing comes easily or fast. In this mid-term election year, we don't have high hopes that our imperatives of website accessibility, medical device accessibility, and audio description on streaming services will pass in Congress. With the new Congress in January, we expect to bring up both the Older Americans Act and increasing funding for the Independent Living Program for Older People Who are Blind (OIB). If we cannot prevail on ACB to make these initiatives part of their Legislative Imperatives, we may consider staging our own Congressional Contact Campaign. Hopefully, we would not be on our own in this endeavor, but, if ACB cannot adopt our priorities among their 2027 legislative imperatives, we are hopeful that our partners, including the VisionServe Alliance (VSA), the Aging and Vision Loss National Coalition (AVLNC) and others will lend their support.

Speaking of creating helpful partnerships, because of the efforts of Anisio Correia, Larry Johnson, Jeff Thom, and others, we are pleased to realize that AAVL is well respected and has come to be recognized in the larger aging and health spaces as a credible representative for the older blind community.

Many of our members have taken advantage of their involvement in the AAA Project to practice their advocacy skills and improve services of the Area Agencies on Aging for older adults who are blind or have low vision in their communities. If you are interested in this project, please contact [vp@aavl-blind-seniors.org](mailto:vp@aavl-blind-seniors.org) to get more information and get involved.

An exciting advocacy success occurred in late April. A couple of years ago, after our session on the warning signs of Alzheimer's Disease, and following some pointed questions from member Betsy Grenevitch, we contacted Dr. Steven Correia to request that he document his nonvisual protocols for assessing dementia. At AAVL's recent Community ZOOM call, Dr. Correia presented his paper on the subject. We will make his presentation and supporting documents available on our website soon.

I want to take this opportunity, as I leave office, to thank you for whatever part you have played in these and the other successes we have achieved. The president can do very little on their own. It is because of members like you, who have supported the leadership team and engaged in the work, that AAVL has produced the results we have accomplished. Obviously, there is still lots of work to do. I'm confident that the new corps of officers

will help move us forward from here. , I hope you will give them as much support as you have given me. If you can contribute your time, talent, and treasure to AAVL, I know we can gain more influence and change minds about the capabilities, participation, and contributions of older adults who are blind or have low vision in every community, once they have been given the opportunity to obtain skills of independence and the level playing field of accessibility.

From the Editor

\*\*\*Welcome Summer!

Penny Reeder

Welcome to our second issue of The Hourglass for 2026! And, welcome summer!

I am so pleased to offer this collection of summer reading materials for your information and pleasure. Whether you're reading our newsletter while lounging on your deck or patio and catching a lovely summer breeze, or soaking up some sunshine at the edge of ocean or pool, or perhaps retrieving your copy of the newsletter from a backpack or carry-on or Iphone, during your travel to or from convention, I hope you find the variety of articles and topics we share here enjoyable, helpful, and informative.

I want to thank Larry and Anisio, and Doug and so many of you for your contributions in the form of written articles, and shared information, and—especially -- encouragement.

I hope many of you will be persuaded to write and share comments with the U. S. Department of Justice and the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, regarding their decision to delay implementation of rules which will – if they are ever enacted – make our online lives more accessible, and less frustrating. (Deadlines for comments are rapidly approaching. See “Trump Administration Delays Long-Awaited Website Accessibility Rules” in this issue.)

I hope the information we share here about AAVL’s business meeting (July 11 at 1:00 PM, ET), and the AAVL convention program, and ACB’s conference and convention will be useful and motivating to you as you think about voting for a new slate of AAVL officers, participating in convention activities, and interacting with AAVL friends and others who are blind or have low vision.

I hope the jokes will make you laugh (or at least emit a groan or two!), and all the advice about finding contentment in aging will be comforting to you.

Winter was dark and freezing cold, and most of the news was terrible, and those six months between January and June lasted much longer than they were supposed to! Summer has finally arrived! I hope you will join me in a plan to seek out sunshine and flowers and garden tomatoes and Silver Queen sweetcorn, and friends, old and new, online and in-person, to experience conventions, build community, exchange hugs and advice and reading recommendations and reassurances; and with whom to

advocate together for civil rights and democracy and change, when it makes sense to share that work with others. Welcome summer! It's time to turn the page.

### \*\*\*AAVL Is Proud to Congratulate Our Own Anisio Correia, Recipient of Prestigious Vision Serve Alliance Award

AAVL leader, Anisio Correia, was recently honored at the 2026 Vision Serve Alliance (VSA) and Envision Conference with the Cathy Holden Excellence in Managerial Leadership Award. This prestigious award recognizes an individual from a VSA member organization who has demonstrated outstanding leadership and a commitment to organizational excellence.

We in AAVL who continue to reap the benefits of Anisio's organizational and leadership skills, as well as his intuitive understanding of blindness and how the intersection of lost vision and the consequences of aging impact so many aspects of daily life, are not surprised that VSA has chosen to honor Anisio with this award. Anisio ,we congratulate you and celebrate your achievement.

Drawing attention to Anisio's work at Lighthouse Central Florida, where he has shepherded the development of a comprehensive low vision clinic from concept to actuality, Lee Nasehi, President and CEO of VisionServe Alliance, said, "Anisio exemplifies the essence of this award and embodies the legacy of Cathy Holden with his sustained, high-level managerial leadership paired with meaningful, field-shaping results. His leadership on this project at

Lighthouse Central Florida and throughout his long career reflects both extensive expertise in low vision services and the unique ability to translate vision into reality. We extend our deepest gratitude to Anisio Correia for his exemplary leadership and life-changing efforts on behalf of our industry and the people we are proud to serve.” [\[2026 Annual Award Recipient Anisio Correia - VisionServe Alliance\]](#)

\*\*\*Get ready for AAVL’s 2026 Summer Convention!  
Penny Reeder

Here are a few notices regarding our summer convention, which will be held, virtually and in-person, along with ACB’s national conference and convention, between July 13 and July 31, online via ZOOM, and in-person, at the St. Louis Hyatt Regency Arch Hotel in St. Louis, MO.

At the end of this Hourglass issue find complete information regarding the 2026 ACB Conference and Convention.

### [The Annual AAVL Membership Meeting](#)

Note that AAVL’s annual membership meeting is scheduled to take place at 1:00 PM, ET, on July 11, on the Saturday immediately preceding virtual convention week. AAVL will share ZOOM contact information via the AAVL-L email discussion list.

The report of the AAVL Nominating Committee follows this summary of information related to our affiliate convention immediately.

## ACB Elections:

This year, there are possibly eight positions which will be up for election during the 2026 ACB national convention. This means that there simply won't be enough time to accomplish all of ACB's democratic business during the in-person week of convention (between July 24-31). Therefore, expect elections for several positions, as well as voting on resolutions and proposed constitutional amendments, to occur, beginning on Wednesday, July 15, during the virtual week of convention.

## AAVL's Affiliate Vote

Delegates representing AAVL are:

Doug Powell, Delegate; Danette Dixon, Alternate Delegate; and Sandy Troyano, Nominating Committee Delegate.

Our delegates will share their contact information on the AAVL-L email discussion list, and list messages will also alert us to evening caucuses, which will be held on ZOOM.

## Support the AAVL Classic Rock 'n' Rollers team at the 2026 Brenda Dillon Memorial Walk

The Alliance on Aging and Vision Loss is sponsoring a 2026 walk team, with a new attitude and a new name. Are you ready to rock? Are you ready to roll? Are you ready to support the classics? Then join the AAVL Classic Rock 'n' Rollers team!

Show your support for the mission and programs of AAVL by making your donation today.

Thank you for your support!

Visit this link to join the team and to solicit or contribute donations to the fund-raiser:

[Walk Donation Form](#)

### The AAVL Convention Schedule

Below find the schedule of events for the 2026 AAVL Convention program.

#### Boomers VS NextGen!

Friday, July 17 (ZOOM only!)

TIME: 5:00-6:15PM,CT

It's the Generational Showdown of the year! Prepare for trivia questions that bridge the age gap. Prepare to be challenged and even learn a thing or two. This event is jointly sponsored by the Alliance on Aging and Vision Loss and ACB Next Generation special-interest affiliates. Non-members are welcomed to come and compete!

#### The AAVL Luncheon

Sunday, July 26 (In-person!)

Time: 12:00-12:50PM,CT

Join your AAVL friends, and enjoy a turkey or vegetarian wrap, accompanied by lots of good conversation!

#### Fall Prevention! Stand Tall! Stay Safe! (Hybrid)

Sunday, July 26

Time: 1:00-2:15 PM, CT

Larry Johnson, ACB member, San Antonio, TX (who has given workshops on Falls Prevention lasting from 1 hour to 8 weeks!), and Doug Powell, ACB member and AAVL's Immediate Past President, Falls Church, VA, (who has been teaching Tai Chi for more than 20 years) combine expertise, to share hints to help you improve your environment, and exercises to improve your balance, with special focus on helping people who are blind or have low vision.

### How to Get Involved in Senior Communities (Hybrid)

Tuesday July 28

Time: 5:00-6:15 PM, CT

A panel of ACB members discusses the benefits and pitfalls of joining national senior-oriented organizations like AARP and local entities like senior centers.

### \*\*\*Report of the Alliance on Aging and Vision Loss Nominating Committee

Christy Crespin

On April 12, 2026, Christy Crespin, Chair of the AAVL Nominating Committee, submitted the following report:

Christy Crespin, Sharon Strzalkowski and Sheila Young met together and recommend the following slate of officers:

President: Anisio Correia;

Vice President: Jeff Thom;

Secretary: Sandra Burgess;

Treasurer: Jane Carona.

Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to bring forth the AAVL slate of candidates.

With gratitude,

Christy Crespin;

Sharon Strzalkowski;

Sheila Young,

CAAVL Nominating Committee

\*\*\* [A Helpful Tip: Check out the Agency on Community Living](#)

The Administration for Community Living website, available here:

[Elder Care | Home](#) can connect you to services for older adults and their families. Plug in your zip code or street address to find your closest Area Agency on Aging.

Chat or Email online with trained staff.

Eat Well. Live Well. Age Well:

Find a [Guide to Healthy Home-Delivered and Community-Based Meals for Older Adults](#) or, call 800.677.1116.

[Breaking Humor! Old age is when you know all the answers but nobody asks you the questions.]

\*\*\*[Are You Losing Vision or Finding It Hard to Cope with Vision Loss in Changing Environments or Circumstances? VisionSupport.org Can Help!](#)

Get free support and practical tips designed to make everyday tasks easier. [www.VisionSupport.org](http://www.VisionSupport.org) is a new online resource designed to help individuals and families navigate vision loss with confidence. The website connects users to free services, educational resources, classes, support programs, low vision rehabilitation, assistive technology training, and a wide range of tools for maintaining independence and quality of life. Whether someone is newly diagnosed with vision loss or seeking additional support, VisionSupport.org offers practical guidance and personalized pathways to resources that can make a meaningful difference.

Visit <https://visionsupport.org/> to learn more.  
You can also call or text: 800.577.7743 to discover information and resources available in your own community.

**\*\*\*Trump Administration Delays Long-Awaited Website  
Accessibility Rules!  
Penny Reeder**

The Americans with disabilities Act became the law of the land in July of 1990, nearly 36 years ago. Although we can hardly name any aspect of our daily lives where some improvements in accessibility might not still be welcomed by those of us who are blind or have low vision or are affected by other disabling conditions, there have been many improvements in the accessibility of nearly every aspect of day-to-day living since the ADA was signed into law, and many of these improvements are directly attributable to the mandates of that act, as well as an

even older law, Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973, that grants civil rights protections to people with disabilities who benefit from federally funded programs.

If you think back to 1990, though, you will probably remember that the internet was in its infancy back then. Remember that spellbinding series of beeps and tones that emanated from the modem when we placed a land-line telephone receiver in the modem's acoustic coupler to connect our desk-top computers to the potentially life-changing worldwide web? It's not surprising that neither the advocates and lawyers and legislators who wrote and then adopted the ADA, nor the federal agencies who wrote the rules that have guided its implementation, had website accessibility at the top of their pre-digital minds when the ADA was enacted. In fact, it wasn't until the Biden Administration developed the courage to address our computer and internet accessibility need for vastly improved accessibility that two rules were finalized to require websites to be as digitally accessible for people with sensory and certain mobility disabilities as ramps are for wheelchair users who cannot climb stairs or open heavy front doors.

The blindness community celebrated in 2024, and looked forward to the April 2026 required implementation date for the ADA regulations, which apply to accessibility for state and local government entities including courts, public hospitals, parks, libraries, police, transit agencies, school districts and universities; and the May 2026 implementation date for the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services to activate Section 504

accessibility regulations that mandate web accessibility standards for most new web content, mobile apps and medical kiosks offered by hospitals, doctors, social services providers and others who receive funding from HHS.

Then, just weeks before the new rules were scheduled to take effect, the Trump Administration delayed their implementation for one more year! Both DOJ and HHS also announced that they might use the coming year to reopen the rules for reconsideration and possible changes. They justified the delay in implementing accessibility requirements, stating that many affected entities were unprepared to comply by the initial deadlines.

Thirty six years after the Americans with Disabilities Act was enacted, Hospitals and clinics and school systems and transit agencies, and state and county governments were unprepared?

Think about the last time you couldn't get into your healthcare portal, check out a library book, download a video, complete a government form, cast a private vote, figure out when your granddaughter's next middle-school soccer team was scheduled to play, or book a flight, or reserve space at a conference hotel room independently!

ACB urges all our members to comment on this unacceptable delay in implementing the promises of the Americans with Disabilities Act! Have 36 long years of "Link not found" and "Error 404," and calling friends and children and grandchildren for help, and stuttering screen-reader speech, and wasted time and

money, and wishing and hoping, and cursing, and tearful frustration not been too long?

On April 23, ACB posted the following release on the ACB website, here: <https://www.acb.org/acb-statement-regarding-ada-title-ii-interim-final-rule>

“The American Council of the Blind (ACB) is deeply troubled by the Interim Final Rule (IFR) published on April 20 by the U.S. Department of Justice regarding Title II website regulations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Accessing websites has become so ingrained in daily life that most Americans are likely unaware how often they rely on them. However, because many websites are coded improperly, people who are blind or have low vision are often partially or completely unable to use them due to incompatibility with assistive technology.

The disability community has long advocated for regulations that require covered entities to design websites that are fully accessible. This process followed all required administrative steps, with ample opportunity for public comment. When the regulations were finalized in 2024, entities were given two years to comply. Yet, after that 14-year process, the federal government has delayed implementation.

Accessible websites were within reach, and this IFR[which stands for “Interim Final Rule”] has unnecessarily delayed that progress.

ACB urges the federal government to rescind the IFR and implement the Title II website regulations as intended. We, along with many other disability advocacy organizations, will be submitting comments to the Department of Justice underscoring the need for these regulations and the harm caused by this delay.

We also encourage allies to submit their own comments in response to the recent publication. Click here to access the Federal Register notice and submit a comment:

[https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2026/04/20/2026-07663/extension-of-compliance-dates-for-nondiscrimination-on-the-basis-of-disability-accessibility-of-web.](https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2026/04/20/2026-07663/extension-of-compliance-dates-for-nondiscrimination-on-the-basis-of-disability-accessibility-of-web)”

Along with ACB, and many organizations and individuals in the disability community, including AAVL members and leaders, I encourage all of us to visit the link provided above (also on ACB’s website), and submit our comments. The deadline of June 22, is rapidly approaching, so we can’t put it off! Let’s flood them with our stories about missed opportunities and denied independence. Meanwhile, ACB’s Department of Advocacy and Legislative Affairs is compiling comments on behalf of ACB, due at the US Department of Justice by June 22, and the US Department of Health and Human Services by July 6.

Good luck to all of us, including the National Federation of the Blind, which filed suit against DOJ and HHS in the U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland alleging that the delays violate the Administrative Procedures Act because the Agencies did not provide the required notice and opportunity for the public to

comment before the interim final rules were issued and implemented, and further, that federal officials did not adequately consider the harm to people with disabilities that another year of delayed implementation will cause. It is past time for the Americans with Disabilities Act to make good on its promises of accessibility and inclusion.

### \*\*\*How Adults with Vision Loss Can Stay Fully Engaged with Life Lee Nasehi

[Editor's Note: Thanks to Larry Johnson for sharing the following encouraging item with Hourglass readers. Larry explains: "The below is excerpted from an article written by Lee Nasehi, President and CEO, VisionServe Alliance."

in an article directed toward blindness professionals who work with older adults experiencing vision loss. Following this introduction, the author shares a number of helpful resources and strategies for assisting blind and low vision older adults with the goal of becoming fully involved in life.

Find the full article here:

[Staying Connected and Engaged: How to Help](#)

Staying engaged with life and connected with peers and family is important for everyone's well-being, but vision loss can create barriers. Older adults who experience significant sight loss later in life may face the daunting challenge of adapting their daily lives to continue living safely, confidently, and independently. Loss of independence and mobility, fear of becoming a burden, and the

sudden inability to perform routine daily tasks can lead to feelings of helplessness, which often result in isolation, inactivity, and a lack of interest in the very pursuits that once brought joy.

Social engagement and participation in favorite pastimes are often replaced by uncertainty, anxiety, or fear of injury. Staying active and engaged is essential for maintaining health, happiness, safety, and independence.

A wide variety of activities remain accessible and enjoyable for adults with vision loss. These include large-print and braille playing cards, board games, and books available in audio or braille formats. Adaptive tools make it possible to continue hobbies such as knitting, sculpting, painting, gardening, and cooking. Many older adults also find joy in listening to music or playing a musical instrument.

Physical activities are also widely accessible, with options such as adapted workouts, weight training, yoga, swimming, and dancing. Specialized clubs offer unique experiences such as tandem cycling, guided running, and birdwatching by sound. For those who love to travel, guided tours specifically designed for individuals with visual impairments are available for US and international travel.

By reaching out to friends and to the community, people experiencing vision loss can have fulfilling, safe, and independent lives.

[Breaking Humor! Growing old is mandatory. Growing up is optional. Growing hilarious is the goal.]

### \*\*\*The Future of Aging Policy: Defending What Exists While Preparing for What Comes Next

Kevin Prindiville

[Editor's Note: Here's another encouraging item shared by Larry Johnson. From: [The Future of Aging Policy: Defending What Exists While Preparing for What Comes Next - Justice in Aging](#), April 2026]

The future of aging is not set. It will be shaped by the policy ideas we develop, the priorities we elevate, and the choices policymakers make in the years ahead. At a time when aging programs face real threats, it is more important than ever to define what progress should look like—and to be ready when opportunities for change emerge.

This work begins in a moment of real pressure. Aging programs and policies are currently under attack in Washington, DC. Much of our attention is necessarily focused on defending Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security, and other essential supports.

But simply holding the line is not enough. Moments like this demand that we do more—they call on us to define what comes next: a clear, values-driven vision for the future of aging that we, as a community, shape, not others.

At Justice in Aging, we believe the future of aging in America is still being written—and that it can be far better than the status quo. We envision a future where people are not pushed into poverty or institutional care simply because they grow older; where families can care for loved ones without sacrificing their own economic security; and where everyone—no matter their race, income, geography, disability, or immigration status—is able to age with dignity in the communities they call home.

To get from our current reality to that future, we need transformative policy change. And that starts with developing an affirmative policy agenda—one that future administrations and Congresses cannot ignore. That agenda will need to focus on rebuilding what has been broken and reimagining systems that were never designed to work for everyone in the first place.

That is why we are excited to launch the Future of Aging Policy Project, a new project Justice in Aging is undertaking in partnership with Day One Strategies. This project is about reclaiming the initiative and setting out a clear, proactive agenda for policymakers to strengthen older adults' access to economic security, long-term care, caregiving, and social supports like housing, health care, civil rights, and more. That agenda will be grounded in the lived experience of older adults and informed by advocates and policy experts across the aging and disability communities.

This is a difficult moment, but it is also a call to action. We do not have to accept a future defined by the scarcity, fear, or

retrenchment that dominate the policy debates of today. By working together now—by organizing, convening, and reimagining—we can lay the groundwork for policies that truly improve people’s lives. We are excited to begin this work and to share more as the Future of Aging Policy Project takes shape in the months ahead.

Justice in Aging is a national organization that uses the power of law to fight senior poverty, by securing access to affordable health care, economic security, and the courts, for older adults with limited resources.

Since 1972, we’ve focused our efforts primarily on those who have been marginalized and excluded from justice such as women, people of color, LGBTQ individuals, and people with limited English proficiency.

Justice in Aging is the opportunity to live with dignity, regardless of financial circumstances—free from the worry, harm, and injustice caused by lack of health care, food, or a safe place to sleep. By using the law to strengthen the social safety net, and remove the barriers low-income seniors face in trying to access the services they need, we work to ensure the future we all envision for our loved ones and ourselves.

Our model of change is based on an innovative combination of administrative advocacy, litigation, and training direct service advocates. Learn about our annual priorities.

## Trainings, Publications, & Webinars

Each year, our attorneys train tens of thousands of attorneys, advocates, and service providers who work directly with older people and people with disabilities.

## Administrative Advocacy

We use the information we receive from this network of professionals to identify current systemic problems and then we advocate at the local, state, and federal level to fix those issues.

## Litigation

When we cannot bring about justice through other efforts, we file class action lawsuits on behalf of named plaintiffs to force needed changes in government policies or ways of administering benefits.

Justice in Aging is not a direct services agency. We do not provide direct legal assistance to individuals.

We welcome advocates' input, comments, and questions about the issues we work on. We provide brief and substantive case consultations to legal advocates serving older adult clients. We do not provide representation to individual clients. If you need to contact a staff attorney regarding a substantive matter, email us at [info@justiceinaging.org](mailto:info@justiceinaging.org).

If you are a low-income individual seeking help, our Find Help page lists resources. Justice in Aging has staff members across the country working remotely. Please send all mail correspondence to the Washington, DC office.

company/justice-in-aging  
profile/justiceinaging  
@justiceinaging.

### \*\*\*15 Warning Signs of Dementia You Shouldn't Ignore

Symptoms can vary widely from person to person. Here are some telltale indicators.

Rachel Nania, [For AARP, Updated April 21, 2026,  
[15 Early Warning Signs of Dementia and Alzheimer's](#)]

You're running late because you can't find your keys. Of course, they're buried in your bag.

You walk into the living room to retrieve something important. What was it again?

An acquaintance greets you in the grocery store. Her name escapes you.

Moments of forgetfulness can happen at any age and, according to the National Institute on Aging (NIA), may happen even more as you age. Still, memory lapses can provoke anxiety for older adults who are often left wondering whether it's all normal or a sign of something more serious.

"It's important for people not to be too upset at every little cognitive change," says Dr. John Dickson, a neurologist at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston. However, research suggests many are. Results from a 2019 National Poll on Healthy Aging found that nearly half of respondents ages 50 to 64 are

worried about developing dementia. Similarly, a 2021 survey from AARP found that nearly half of adults 40 and older think it's likely they will get dementia. In reality, about 1 in 9 Americans 65 and older has dementia, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. While dementia is not inevitable, it is important to know the warning signs so that you or a loved one can get evaluated if there are concerns, Dickson says.

Here's what to look out for.

What is dementia?

“Dementia” is an umbrella term for a decline in mental ability that interferes with daily life. It can diminish focus, attention, language skills, problem-solving and visual perception. Dementia can also make it difficult for a person to control emotions and can even lead to personality changes. More than 55 million people worldwide have dementia, according to the World Health Organization.

15 warning signs of dementia

1. Short-term memory loss. It's one thing to forget the name of the actor who starred in the movie you went to see with friends yesterday. It's another to forget you went to see a movie with friends yesterday. “Those more significant lapses” — especially when it comes to recent events — are concerning, says Dr. Judith Heidebrink, a neurologist and clinical professor at the University of Michigan Health. Short-term memory loss can be a common symptom of Alzheimer's disease, the most common type of dementia, Dickson says. “That's because the short-term memory-

forming center of the brain, called the hippocampus, is affected early in the disease process.”

2. **Word loss.** We’ve all experienced a time or two when our brains can’t find the right word, even though it’s on the tip of the tongue. That can be normal, says Dr. Heather Whitson, a professor of medicine at Duke University School of Medicine and director of the Duke Center for the Study of Aging and Human Development. But if it’s happening a lot and you find that a person is substituting in words that don’t fit the conversation, that’s worrying. An illustration of a creative mind brain concept AARP Brain Health Resource Center Find explainers on dementia, stroke, Parkinson’s disease, head injuries and mental-health topics. Learn about healthy habits that support memory and mental skills. Learn, take action, build healthy habits. For example, Whitson says, a person might want to ask, “Have you seen my jacket?” But when they can’t find the word for jacket, they ask, “Have you seen my shirt?” Another warning sign is difficulty joining, following or completing conversations. “Those types of communication skills can be an early symptom,” Heidebrink says.
3. **Difficulty multitasking.** If you’re someone who has always put out a Thanksgiving dinner without a hitch, and suddenly you find that staple side dishes are missing from the spread, the rolls are burned and dinner is delayed by two hours, that could signal something more serious is at play. “If it just doesn’t seem like it’s happening well, or it’s happening with a

lot more effort, that would be a sign that there are executive-function issues,” Whitson says.

4. Repetition. “If a person is being told by family or friends that they are repeating questions or repeating stories and statements in a short time frame, without seeming to realize that they just told the person that or just asked that same question and it was answered, that’s a red flag,” Whitson says.
5. Personality changes. A sudden and routine loss of interest in family, friends, work and social events can be a warning sign of dementia. “People may feel less comfortable in social situations — holding a conversation, remembering the conversation — so they may start to withdraw from social situations,” Heidebrink says. A 2023 study published in the *Journal of Alzheimer’s Disease* found that apathy may be a sign that someone is progressing from mild cognitive impairment (MCI) — symptoms of memory loss or thinking problems that are not as severe as dementia — to Alzheimer’s disease. Acting increasingly anxious, confused, fearful or suspicious may also be a sign of dementia, according to the Alzheimer’s Association.
6. New sleep behaviors. While Whitson says sleep issues can be “very common” among older adults, some sleep behaviors, such as sleepwalking, are not a normal part of aging. “It’s important to know that there are some types of dementia that are associated with altered sleep behavior —

acting out dreams or talking in your sleep, when that wasn't something that the person used to do," Whitson says.

7. Worsening sense of direction. Changes in sense of direction can also occur with dementia, Dickson says, and this can manifest as difficulty driving and getting lost in familiar environments. "Sometimes it's just a loss of confidence," Heidebrink adds. "People will start to restrict their driving to very familiar, close destinations, sort of low-speed, low-traffic situations, or good weather only."
8. Depression. A new and sudden onset of depression later in life can be a warning sign of dementia, Dickson says. According to the Alzheimer's Association, up to 40 percent of people with Alzheimer's disease suffer from significant depression. Depression may be not just a symptom of dementia but also a potential precursor. A 2023 study published in JAMA Neurology found that dementia risk more than doubled for adults previously diagnosed with depression.
9. Confusion about time and place. If someone forgets where they are, or can't remember how they got there, that's a red flag. Another worrisome sign is disorientation about time — for example, routinely forgetting what day of the week it is, says Dr. Jason Karlawish, a neurologist and professor of medicine at the University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine and codirector of the Penn Memory Center.

10. Difficulty with visual or perceptual tasks. Tripping over something because you don't recognize that it's in the way, or not being able to make sense of the time on a clock, could be warning signs of dementia, Heidebrink says. Difficulty with balance, trouble reading and problems judging distance or distinguishing color and contrast can also be early indicators, the Alzheimer's Association says.

11. Financial missteps. Money problems may be one of the first noticeable signs of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, according to the NIA. "There's a lot of reasoning and memory that go into financial tasks, and so [money management errors] can certainly be an early way that people experience changes," Heidebrink says. According to the NIA, signs of money problems can include difficulties with the following:

list of 5 items

- Counting change
- Paying for a purchase
- Calculating a tip
- Balancing a checkbook
- Understanding a bank statement

list end

12. Changes in judgment. People with dementia may experience changes in judgment and decision-making that can affect everything from their appearance to their financial well-being, the Alzheimer's Association says. A recent study led by researchers at the University of Southern California

looked at brain images from 97 adults over the age of 50 and found that people who had brain changes associated with early stages of Alzheimer's were more vulnerable to financial scams. While not a single, definitive indicator, "assessing financial vulnerability in older adults could help identify those who are in the early stages of mild cognitive impairment or dementia, including Alzheimer's disease," researcher Duke Han said in a news release.

13. Misplacing things. We all lose our keys, reading glasses, that important piece of mail you meant to hold on to. But putting things in unusual places, or misplacing something and not being able to retrace your steps, can be an early warning sign of dementia, according to the Alzheimer's Association. It's easy to lose track of things, especially when adjusting to a new routine, like retirement, Whitson says. What's more concerning is if you find what you're looking for but have no recollection of putting it there in the first place. "If you're frequently finding that you just have no memory of being in that room with that [missing object], to me, that is more alarming, because that suggests that something with short-term memory is not registering," Whitson says.
14. Misusing items. Another subtle symptom "is not using things for their correct and intended purpose," Whitson says. For example, eating with a spoon when you would usually select a fork, or pouring wine into a beer glass.

15. Hallucinations. Delusions or hallucinations can be a symptom of dementia — “particularly visual hallucinations, like seeing people or animals that aren’t there,” Dickson says.

Most common types of dementia

These conditions are the leading causes of dementia.

People can also have mixed dementia, a combination of two or more types, such as Alzheimer’s and vascular dementia.

Alzheimer’s disease. Alzheimer’s is characterized by amyloid plaques and tangled fibers in the brain and by a loss of connections between nerve cells. Damage initially appears in the hippocampus, an area of the brain involved in memory formation, and gradually spreads. An estimated 7.4 million Americans are living with Alzheimer’s disease, according to a 2026 report from the Alzheimer’s Association.

Vascular dementia. The second-most-common type of dementia results from damage to the vessels that supply blood to the brain. It tends to affect focus, organization, problem-solving and speed of thinking more noticeably than memory. It’s estimated that 5 to 10 percent of people with dementia have vascular dementia.

Lewy body dementia. Abnormal protein deposits in the brain, called Lewy bodies, interfere with brain chemistry and lead to problems with behavior, mood, movement and thinking. More than 1 million people in the U.S. have been diagnosed with Lewy body dementia, according to federal statistics.

Frontotemporal disorders. Degenerative damage to the brain's frontal and temporal lobes is the most common cause of dementia in people age 65 and younger. Symptoms might include apathy; difficulty communicating, walking or working; emotional changes; and impulsive or inappropriate behaviors. According to UCSF Health, frontotemporal dementia affects an estimated 1 in 5,000 to 10,000 people.

Additional sources: National Institute on Aging, Mayo Clinic  
What to do if you notice symptoms

If you've noticed changes or have any concerns related to your thinking and memory, or that of a loved one, it's important to call a doctor sooner than later, health experts say.

A big reason: "There are many possible causes of these changes," Heidebrink says. "Not every case where someone is experiencing these changes is automatically Alzheimer's disease, for example. There could be other causes — a medication side effect, a metabolic hormone imbalance, something else that could be treatable." If the changes are due to dementia, an early diagnosis has benefits. For example, there are newly approved medications that may slow the progression of Alzheimer's disease, and research suggests the drugs work better in the beginning stages of the disease. Plus, an early diagnosis makes individuals eligible for a wider variety of clinical trials. You can start with your primary care provider, who may refer you to a specialist, such as a neurologist or a geriatric psychiatrist, for a more thorough evaluation and definitive diagnosis.

How is dementia diagnosed?

Some methods doctors use to help diagnose dementia:

list of 5 items

- Cognitive and neurological tests assess language, math, memory, problem-solving and other types of mental functions.
- Blood tests, though relatively new and not yet widely available, can measure biomarkers for Alzheimer's disease.
- Brain scans such as MRI or PET imaging can spot changes in brain structure and function. These tests can also identify strokes, tumors and other problems that can cause dementia.
- Mental health evaluations can determine whether a mental health condition is causing or affecting the symptoms.
- Genetic tests may be helpful if symptoms appear before age 60. Early-onset Alzheimer's is strongly linked to genetics, according to the Mayo Clinic. Talk with a genetic counselor before and after getting tested.

list end

8 ailments that can mimic dementia

Any number of treatable conditions can cause dementia-like symptoms. Some of the most common:

list of 8 items

- Alcohol abuse
- Anxiety, depression or stress

- Blood clots, brain infections or tumors
- Delirium
- Head injuries
- Kidney, liver or thyroid problems
- Side effects of medication
- Vitamin deficiencies

list end

Hearing loss can also be mistaken for dementia, Whitson says. "Sometimes, if somebody is repeating a question, it might be because they didn't hear the answer before," she explains.

Source: National Institute on Aging

### \*\*\*4 Things Ophthalmologists Wish You Knew About Your Eyes,

For starters: They can get sunburned

Jancee Dunn

March 20, 2026

[From: [4 Things Ophthalmologists Wish You Knew About Your Eyes - The New York Times](#)]

When I wrote a column on tips from E.R. doctors last year, I heard one piece of advice over and over: Wear safety glasses whenever you're doing yardwork — even for jobs that take only a minute. The doctors shared graphic descriptions of objects removed from the eyes of patients. Those stories didn't make it into the column, but they will stay in my head forever. (I now wear goggles whenever I do any yardwork.) To make sure I'm doing everything I can to take care of my eyes, I decided to talk to ophthalmologists. Here is what they want you to know about your eyes.

## Your eyes can get sunburned

When you expose your eyes to prolonged or intense UV light, you can develop a condition called photokeratitis, which is basically sunburn. It can feel like redness, pain and sensitivity, “as if you had a scratched cornea,” said Dr. Vincent K. Young, chief of ophthalmology at Jefferson Einstein Philadelphia Hospital. It happens in sunny locations, such as at the beach or on the slopes, Dr. Young added. “We get a lot of people who have been skiing over the weekend, and they come to us on Monday morning, and their eyes are in tremendous pain because of all of that UV damage,” he said. The condition usually heals within a day or two, said Dr. Zubair Ansari, an ophthalmologist at the University of Miami’s Bascom Palmer Eye Institute. But you may need lubrication drops, cool compresses, rest and possibly antibiotics. While your corneas are regenerative, he added, longtime exposure to the sun without protection can increase the risk of certain kinds of cataracts. So protect your eyes by wearing sunglasses or ski goggles that offer UVA and UVB protection, Dr. Ansari said. “I tell my patients that if you’re in a situation where you’re using sunblock, you also want to be wearing protective eyewear,” he said.

## Contacts should not be worn while swimming or sleeping

If you wear contacts, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that you remove lenses before swimming. That includes any body of water: oceans, lakes, and even pools, said Dr. Fariyah Anwar, an assistant professor of ophthalmology at the Donald and Barbara Zucker School of Medicine at Hofstra/Northwell.

These bodies of water, she said, can harbor various bacteria, organisms and chemicals — some of which can be hard to treat if they get in your eye. Contact lenses provide the perfect atmosphere for a germ to thrive, she added, “because it’s literally sitting in a suction cup between the eyeball and the contact lens.” Not everyone who wears contacts while swimming gets an infection, “but it does increase your risk exponentially,” said Dr. Melissa Daluvoy, an associate professor of ophthalmology at Duke University. The “best-case scenario” is to wear prescription goggles, Dr. Daluvoy said; the next best option is to use “daily-wear contacts that you wear under goggles and then throw them immediately away.” Similarly, Dr. Daluvoy said, “sleeping overnight in your contacts does increase your risk of infection.” During sleep, your body slows tear production, delivers less oxygen to your cornea, and soft contact lenses can also dehydrate and tighten slightly, Dr. Ansari said. As a result, the contact lens can stick to the cornea. “And once the contact lens is pulled off, it can actually rip the superficial layers of the cornea,” leaving it more open to infection, he explained. So take out your contacts at the end of the night, he added, no matter how late it is, or how many cocktails you’ve had.

### Staring at your screen can cause dry eyes

We normally blink, which helps moisten the eye, around 15 times a minute — but when we are staring at screens, our blink rate can be cut in half. So if you experience dry eyes when you stare at your devices, use the 20-20-20 rule, Dr. Daluvoy said: Every 20 minutes, look at something 20 feet away or farther for 20

seconds, the combination of which encourages blinking and reduces eye strain. “That’s something we preach all the time for dry eyes,” she said. And use artificial tears to lubricate them, Dr. Daluvoy added, but make sure the drops are free of preservatives, which can actually irritate eyes.

An eye exam can reveal a wide range of diseases  
During a comprehensive eye exam, a doctor often dilates your eyes by using eyedrops that expand your pupils so that the back of your eyes can be more easily examined. While the primary purpose is to screen for eye diseases, your doctor can detect a number of other conditions through the exam, Dr. Daluvoy said, among them diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and heart disease.

According to the American Academy of Ophthalmology, eye doctors can even detect sexually transmitted infections such as chlamydia, herpes and gonorrhea.

“You can pick up on some cancers or brain diseases, too,” Dr. Daluvoy said. “I’ve actually found a brain tumor in a patient who had complaints about difficulty reading.”

The A.A.O. recommends that adults with no signs or risk factors for eye disease get a comprehensive exam at 40 to establish a reference point. Then, you should get a checkup every 1 to 4 years, depending on your age.

Once you hit 65, you should be evaluated every 1 to 2 years, even if you don't have symptoms. Such an exam includes getting checked for glaucoma, a group of eye diseases that can damage your optic nerve, causing your vision to deteriorate. Many people who have glaucoma aren't aware, Dr. Young said, but it can eventually cause blindness if untreated.

If Dr. Young had his way, he would prefer annual visits. The more regular the checkups, the sooner he can catch something in the early stages, he said. "Do you see your dentist every two years?" he said. "I mean, come on! I would think you should be seeing your eye doctor once a year." Seems reasonable to me. I'm making my appointment now.

[Breaking Humor! My grandmother is 80 years old and still doesn't need glasses. She drinks straight from the bottle.]

\*\*\*Eat This Before Every Meal: Starting your meal this way helps slow digestion and reduce post-meal blood sugar spikes

Nicole Pajer,

[For AARP, Published September 26, 2025, [What Is the Best Order to Eat Food for Digestion?](#)]

You made yourself dinner and are about to sit down to a nice meal of grilled chicken, a baked potato and some roasted broccoli. You pick up your fork to dig into that big buttery potato.

But wait! You'd be doing yourself a much bigger favor if you swapped that first bite for some broccoli instead.

Yes, eating healthy is about what's on your plate. But you can take things even further in the good-for-you department if you pay attention to the order in which you eat your food.

Eat your non-starchy vegetables first — such as Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, greens, peppers, eggplant, broccoli and cucumbers. Move on to protein — or eat it alongside the vegetables. Then, save the carbs and more starchy veggies, like potatoes, corn, green peas and winter squashes, for last.

Here's a deeper look at why this veggies-first approach is beneficial and some tips on how to implement it in your daily meals.

#### 1. It reduces your post-meal blood sugar

When you eat, your body breaks down carbohydrates into glucose, causing your blood sugar to rise. Eating foods high in carbs on an empty stomach can cause your blood sugar to spike even more. Frequent blood sugar spikes can increase your risk of heart disease and type 2 diabetes — and for those who already have diabetes, they can lead to severe complications like ketoacidosis (diabetic coma), a serious condition in which the body produces dangerous levels of acids called ketones. Non-starchy vegetables are rich in fiber, which slows down your digestion, so when eaten first, they help keep your blood sugar more stable.

Dr. Alpana Shukla, director of clinical research at the Comprehensive Weight Control Center at Weill Cornell Medicine, has conducted several studies on the benefits of the vegetables-first approach to eating. And even she was shocked when, in one of her studies, her team found that eating vegetables and protein before carbohydrates reduced post-meal blood sugar by roughly half in people with type 2 diabetes or prediabetes.

“This is the kind of effect you might expect from taking a medication for diabetes treatment,” Shukla says.

2. It helps you prioritize more nutrient-dense food

“Vegetables are good sources of fiber, vitamins and minerals, as well as countless naturally occurring phytonutrients — think antioxidants,” says Sandra Zhang, a registered dietitian nutritionist at the Frances Stern Nutrition Center at Tufts Medical Center. So, if you’re comparing a cup of white rice with a cup of sautéed spinach, the spinach is going to give you much more of a nutritional bang for your buck. Spinach is loaded with things like vitamin K, folate, vitamin A, iron, vitamin C, manganese, magnesium, vitamin B2, calcium, potassium, fiber, phosphorus and zinc, while white rice is mostly starch and contains significantly less micronutrients.

3. It’s an easy hack for hitting your daily vegetable goals

Filling up on bread? You’re less likely to make it to that side of broccoli. But taking the opposite approach can work wonders for your dietary needs. Adults should aim for two to 3½ cups of

vegetables per day. But some research shows that only 1 in 10 Americans are actually meeting these guidelines.

Starting your meals with vegetables is a great way to ensure you're hitting your daily goals, says Shukla. The goal is to eat some first before getting too full of the other things on your plate. Have you ever eaten a muffin for breakfast and found yourself still hungry afterward? That's because carbohydrates, when eaten, are quickly broken down into glucose, which can spike blood sugar. But if you were to eat an egg and avocado first, you'd likely not have as much of an appetite for the muffin.

That's because protein and fiber slow down digestion and trigger satiety hormones. This, says Shukla, signals to your brain that you're full and can help keep you from reaching for extra calories beyond what your body needs during a meal.

#### 5. It can help you to eat more mindfully

Many of us shovel in food in front of the TV or eat while multitasking. But slowing down and focusing on the taste, texture and smell of your food has many benefits. Eating with more intention can help you tune in to when you feel full, helping you to refrain from overeating and pay more attention to chewing your food, which can also help your body to better process food.

An easy way to do this? "Put your fork down between bites," says Dr. Leonard Pianko, a cardiologist with Aventura Cardiovascular Center in Aventura, Florida.

And start with the veggies!

You'll have to put in a lot more effort to properly eat a piece of chewy kale versus scarfing down a granola bar, which many can attest to inhaling on the go. "It takes a while to eat those veggies, which should be the largest portion on your plate," says Leah Amar, a registered dietitian in Hollywood, Florida. "You get involved with it. It requires concentration, whether it's a salad that's crunchy or a vegetable like asparagus that needs to be cut into smaller pieces."

### How to do it

Ready to give this starting your meals with vegetables thing a try? Here are some ways to sneak in those veggies first:

### Think carbs last

In some studies that touted the benefits of a veggies-first approach, experts focused on eating vegetables with protein together, while others took a vegetables, then protein, then carbohydrates approach. Both can work, says Shukla.

The big takeaway is to save the rice, pasta, bread, potatoes and butternut squash for last. And remember to treat those starchy vegetables as carbs. A real-world example? If you have a frittata, which has veggies in it, then have a piece of toast afterward, says Shukla.

### Start with a salad

An oldie but goodie. But eating a salad, which is filled with fibrous leafy greens and healthy fats like olive oil, is an easy way to get

the job done. You can even eat it before the main meal comes out.

One nice thing that Shukla and her husband do to sneak in their vegetables at the beginning of their dinner: They sit down after work to watch the news together with a salad. Then they move to the table, where they eat the rest of their meal.

Munch on some vegetables while cooking

Snack on some raw veggies and dip, or sautéed vegetables, while you're making dinner. You could even have a bowl of vegetable soup. Then you can sit down and dive into the pasta without guilt.

Order vegetables as appetizers

Many restaurants offer fancy roasted Brussels sprouts, steamed artichokes or tahini cauliflower on the menu as an appetizer. Say yes to this and no to the nachos and you've already snuck in some vegetables before the main meal has even arrived.

Plate your food in your favor

If the dish is mixed — say, a beef and vegetable stir-fry on top of rice — you're more likely to eat everything together instead of performing the tedious task of picking out the vegetables first. But you can set up your plate for better success. "Try to portion-control for the starchy component when making or serving the dish," says Zhang. For example, she suggests adding just a tiny amount of rice on your plate and topping it with a more heaping amount of veggies and protein. That way, if you're going to eat it

all together, you'll be getting more veggies and protein and less carbs per bite.

Find a good recipe

Remember how much you hated the Brussels sprouts your grandmother served when you were growing up? That's because they were plain and boiled. Find a variation on veggies, like Parmesan Brussels sprouts or Kung Pao Brussels sprouts, to get yourself excited to eat your vegetables.

Start with a smoothie

Want to eat a muffin for breakfast? "Put your protein and your veggies in a smoothie and drink that first," says Julia Zumpano, a registered dietitian with the Cleveland Clinic. She'll toss everything — from leafy greens to cucumbers, carrots, beets and cauliflower — into hers. You can even sneak in lettuce, she says.

Don't take an all-or-nothing approach

You ate some green beans, then some fish, but you cannot resist those Parmesan roasted potatoes sitting on your plate. You haven't failed your mission, and you don't need to throw it out the window. Gradually build the habit without overthinking order for every bite, Shukla recommends.

If you take a few bites of vegetables and protein and then head straight to the carbs, that's OK. Bring yourself back to the veggies when you think about it, she says, and you'll still reap some of the benefits.

\*\*\*People 65 and older can get better with age, study shows. This is the key.

Researchers found that nearly half of adults over 65 did better on tests of cognitive and physical function as they aged.

Maggie Penman

March 25, 2026

[From: [Despite stereotypes, people can get better with age. Positivity is key. - The Washington Post](#)]

When Diana Nyad was 64 years old, she swam 110 miles from Cuba to Florida, becoming the first person to do so without a shark cage. It was her fifth attempt over the course of 3½ decades.

“I said when I did that swim, which was 12 years ago, that that was the prime of my life,” Nyad said during a phone interview this month. She felt in better shape physically and mentally than she ever had before. “And honestly, at 76, I’m even better now than I was then.”

Nyad is one of many examples of older people accomplishing things their younger selves could only dream of — but are these people anomalies? Or could many of us get faster, stronger and sharper with age? This question motivated a study published this month in the journal *Geriatrics*.

“I started thinking about these examples of people thriving in later life,” said Becca Levy, a professor of epidemiology and psychology at the Yale School of Public Health and lead author of

the new research. “How does that fit into this dominant belief that aging is a time of universal and inevitable decline? Are they exceptions, or are they actually kind of showing the potential of later life?”

Levy and a colleague, Martin Slade, looked at data from the Health and Retirement Study, which included several thousand participants who had been asked about their thoughts — positive or negative — about getting older. The researchers examined the participants’ cognitive health and walking speed, which is generally considered a good indicator of physical fitness, and followed participants for up to 12 years to see whether their scores improved — and if there was a link to their views on aging.

Levy and her co-author found that nearly half of the participants over 65 improved — physically, cognitively or both. And people with positive beliefs about aging were more likely to be in that group.

“Will you continue to age? Yes. Will you die? Without a doubt. But you can make it much better,” said Louise Aronson, a leading geriatrician and professor emeritus of medicine at University of California at San Francisco. She said that while aging is inevitable, it’s not a one-way street toward decline. “Maybe you don’t lift as much weight as you did 40 years ago. But maybe you’re lifting twice as much as you did one year ago because you understood that you can influence your aging, and you had enough positivity to get yourself to do the strength training that is so transformative as we age.”

Nyad swam from Cuba to Florida at 64 years old after several previous attempts when she was younger. (Dawn Blomgren)

Aging doesn't mean decline

Negative stereotypes about aging are pervasive. A global survey in 2024 found that 65 percent of health care workers and 80 percent of the general population falsely believed that developing dementia is a normal part of aging. "The stereotype of an older person is that they're dependent, that they have cognitive impairment," said Mark Lachs, co-chief of the division of geriatrics and palliative medicine at Weill Cornell Medicine and New York-Presbyterian Hospital and professor of medicine at Cornell's medical school. While Lachs said that may sometimes be true, "the vast majority of older people don't have any cognitive impairment. The vast majority of older people do not have a need for assistance." In the last couple of decades, there has been more research focused on the positive aspects of getting older. Lachs noted that judgment and wisdom improve with age, as does emotional intelligence and even happiness.

In Levy's new study, she and her co-author looked at data from thousands of people over 65 and saw that improving with age wasn't the exception. It was almost as common as decline. Part of the reason for the disconnect between the stereotypes and the reality, experts said, is that a lot of research on older people looks at average outcomes rather than individual outcomes, or looks only for decline or lack thereof, rather than the possibility of improvement.

## Why attitude toward aging matters

Lachs said his patients are around 89 years old on average, and the people who are thriving usually have one thing in common: something in their life that gives them meaning and a sense of purpose. “It could be politics, it could be a grandchild, it could be volunteering at the art museum, it could be animals, it could be traveling,” Lachs said.

He believes that the reason attitudes toward aging matter so much is that they can set off either a positive or negative cycle. If you feel good about yourself as you age and believe you can improve and be useful to the world, it feels worth it to invest the time and energy in working out, socializing and volunteering. That might give you confidence and a mood lift, meaning you’re more likely to do more positive things for yourself and others. There’s evidence for that in Levy’s research. “If you have a positive aspect about aging, you might be more inclined to take care of yourself. Then you go out, you’re more likely to have friends,”

Lachs said. “You have to walk to that dinner, so your mobility increases. You become engaged in that conversation, so all of these things are linked. And we know that one of the most powerful aspects of disease prevention and health and longevity is social connectedness.” In the new research paper, Levy and her co-author describe this as a “snowball” effect. Lachs said you can easily see how the opposite cycle could take hold: If you don’t think that it’s possible to improve your health as an older person,

you're unlikely to bother with working out, making new friends, trying new things.

“What’s amazing about that is positivity about aging — it’s not a drug, it’s not a surgery. It’s not like you have to get some toxic treatment. It’s an attitudinal adjustment,” Lachs said. “The mind-body connection, which, you know, when I was a medical student was kind of woo-woo ... it turns out that it’s as powerful as many drugs we give and without any of the side effects.” The message, according to Slade, is “Don’t give up,” because, he added, “life can get better.”

How to change your mind about aging

Part of what is so encouraging about this new study and their previous research, the researchers said, is that your mindset about aging isn’t set in stone.

If you find that your own view of aging is more negative than you would like it to be, here’s how to work on it:

Spend more time in intergenerational settings. One way to combat ageism is to expose younger people to older people — and vice versa. If young people have more older people in their life, they see more older people who are thriving. There is a growing body of research about the benefits of intergenerational living and evidence that intergenerational teams perform better than same-age teams of any age. There is an “opportunity to capitalize on the experience, wisdom and judgment of older people, and the creativity, risk-taking characteristics and new

ideas of young people,” said Paul Irving, senior adviser at the Milken Institute and distinguished scholar in residence at the University of Southern California’s Davis School of Gerontology. “What an exciting new way to think about talent.”

Try the ABC method. Levy developed an evidenced-based technique to fight negative stereotypes about aging called the ABC method. The first step is increasing awareness of all the negative messaging we receive about aging — such as ads for antiaging serums or the representation (or lack thereof) of older people in television and film. “B” stands for shifting blame for challenges in later life to ageism as opposed to aging. And “C” is for challenging negative age beliefs — in yourself and in society at large. Remember that there are pros and cons to every phase of life — and that aging is a privilege. “Ageism is the ultimate paradox because we all get older,” Irving said. In American life now, there is a lot that divides us. “The one thing that we do share, if we’re fortunate, is the opportunity for longer lives.”

[Breaking Humor! The guy at the furniture store told me the sofa would seat 5 people without any problems. Then it occurred to me: I don't think I know 5 people without any problems.]

### \*\*\*How to complain so you get results

If you do it right, telling a company that things didn't go well can often yield a good outcome

Kevin Brasler

March 25, 2026

[Editor's Note: Many of us have come to think of older people as – Let's face it! – often so grouchy and quick-to-complain as to be labeled "curmudgeons." We all remember Mr. Wilson and how mean and nasty he was to Dennis!

I refuse to buy into the curmudgeon stereotype, but I have to admit, as the years pile on, sometimes it seems like the reasons to complain can multiply, as well. Did you overpay a repairperson to replace a component, only to find the appliance misbehaving again, the very next day? Did the delivery person mishandle your package so badly that, when you opened it, you found only shards and bits and pieces of the product you ordered? Did you spend 90 minutes in the paratransit van to get where you were going, only to find yourself dropped off at the wrong address? Sometimes, it is actually time to complain!

Here's how!

There's much to complain about in modern life, whether it's flights that depart hours late, deliveries that don't show up, or repair services that fail to repair. Even if consumers do their homework before making a purchase or contracting for a service, things can go wrong. Although most of us sound off about these lousy experiences to family and friends, few of us — studies indicate it's

about one in four — complain to the companies that did us wrong. Many consumers remain silent because complaining seems like a hassle, or they want to avoid confrontation. Others don't complain because they think it won't help. But if you do it right, telling a company — especially a reputable one — that things didn't go well can often yield good results. Here's how to complain effectively.

### Go to the top

Try to let the company's owner or a manager know you are dissatisfied. With a large business, start with the customer service team. If that doesn't work, get the email address or phone number for the company's CEO or president. Although the top brass probably won't handle your complaint personally, their staff probably will give it to someone who can help — and who is likely to respond to a request from the top. If your gripe involves a product that you bought or had installed, contact the manufacturer. You might get satisfaction via a free warranty repair. Even if your problem wasn't due to a manufacturing defect, the company may want to settle your claim rather than risk your ill will.

### Succinctly explain your problem

Complain in writing, stating the facts as you view them, why you feel entitled to recourse, and how the company can make amends. Keep your request short and reasonable. For example, don't ask for a full refund on a home improvement project if four out of five tasks were performed correctly.

### Be firm but polite

Use firm language but avoid threats. Even if you believe you were cheated intentionally, don't use words like "crook," "criminal" or "incompetent." Even when consumers clearly are in the right, if they speak rudely or unreasonably, business owners often respond in kind — and what could have been a calm (and quick) resolution escalates into a feud. Charly Rok, a New York marketing executive, recently stayed in a hotel where the hot water stopped working. Though she told the front desk, the problem wasn't fixed quickly enough for her to shower before a big meeting. Later, she asked to speak to a manager. "I was complimentary of the hotel and the staff and then shared that there was no hot water on the last day of my visit," Rok said. "The manager apologized, sympathized, and added points to my loyalty program equivalent to a single night stay. I thought the solution was completely fair."

### Document it

When complaining in writing, provide copies of relevant documents such as contracts, invoices, receipts and previous correspondence. Photos — a snapshot of the headboard that arrived damaged or a close-up of a poorly done paint job — can help explain why you're unhappy.

### Take to social media

Another option is to post your complaint — and your desired resolution — on social media sites and tag the business. This forces the company to decide whether it wants to attract good or bad publicity from your dispute. Many companies have staff who

monitor social media to resolve complaints quickly and show how responsive they are to customers. “When my internet was mysteriously out for two days, I couldn’t get through to the provider’s customer service,” said Lawrence Luk, a photographer in the San Francisco Bay Area. “So I made an Instagram story and tagged them and heard back in a few minutes. Not only did the company give me a discount that month, they explained what was happening. It gave me peace of mind.”

### Keep trying

Still no favorable resolution? Complain again. With large companies, ask for your case to be “escalated” to the next manager on the corporate customer service food chain.

Unfortunately, you might have to fight (politely!) through several layers of staff to reach a resolution. It once took me six months of complaining to get a car rental company to refund a \$250 cleaning fee for a vehicle I returned. (The manager there decided my kids left behind too many crumbs.) Did I have better things to do than call the company a dozen times? I sure did. But I eventually got my money back.

### Dispute the charge with your credit card company

Checkbook recommends paying with credit cards. That’s because the federal Fair Credit Billing Act and the policies of credit card issuers provide enormous leverage by allowing you to withhold payment for goods and services you believe are defective or not delivered as promised. After you’ve tried unsuccessfully to resolve the matter with the service provider, contact your credit card company to dispute the charge (you usually can do this even after

you've paid the bill). Once you've requested this "chargeback," your credit card company will place a hold on the charge and investigate. The service provider can protest the chargeback, but sellers rarely successfully reverse chargebacks if the customer has returned (or tried to return) the goods or can document the service defect.

Ask a local government agency for help ...

Consumer protection offices have legal authority over many types of businesses. The matter might be resolved via phone or email, but these offices may also perform inspections, gather evidence from third parties, do legal or technical research, or mediate the dispute. Staff might go beyond resolving your complaint; they might get the merchant to agree to change business practices and/or provide relief to additional aggrieved consumers; or they might force the business to pay penalties.

Ask a private agency to step in

In addition to government consumer agencies, you can seek help from a private agency, such as the Better Business Bureau or

Call for Action.

But government agencies can conduct formal investigations and use law enforcement tools such as subpoena power to obtain the facts that will help them negotiate a settlement on your behalf. And government consumer offices can pursue legal action if evidence shows the merchant has violated the law.

Take the business or contractor to small claims court

Most courts have advisers to help you prepare your case. Unfortunately, the fine print of many contracts and the terms and conditions of most online businesses now include a prohibition on lawsuits; instead, you'll have to seek restitution via the company's arbitration program, which is often an onerous process. Kevin Brasler is executive editor of Washington Consumers' Checkbook and Checkbook.org, a nonprofit organization with a mission to help consumers get the best service and lowest prices. It is supported by consumers and takes no money from the service providers it evaluates. You can access Checkbook's ratings and advice free of charge until April 25 at [Checkbook.org/WashingtonPost/results](http://Checkbook.org/WashingtonPost/results).

### \*\*\*QUIET ACTS OF KINDNESS

Larry Johnson

I have three very short stories to share.

An old man was trying to cross the street, he watched nervously as cars were passing by. He stood there waiting, hesitant . Then a small girl, perhaps six or seven years old, ran up to him, took hold of his hand, looked at the traffic and then walked him safely across the street. When they reached the other side, she didn't wait for any praise, just went back to her mom, smiling. explaining perhaps to her mother why she did it. Kindness doesn't always come with speeches or photos. Sometimes it's just a small hand reaching out, doing the right thing, and moving on.

Here's the second story. It was a cold and frosty day. A woman comes out of her house carrying a towel. She walks the short distance to the neighborhood bus stop, pops inside the shelter, dries off the bench from all the melting frost and leaves several small packages of snacks. She does it quietly and almost unobserved. It's a small thing and something she does without expecting anyone to notice or acknowledge. Leo Buscaglia wrote: "Even the most insignificant act we perform will have some effect upon this world."

And the last story. An elderly man was out shopping for groceries. He took his time calculating everything in his head, putting items back, choosing generic brands, doing the math. At checkout, his card was declined. He quietly asked the cashier to remove items until the total worked. Then the woman in line behind him said here ring it all up on mine. He objected. She insisted. He objected again. She looked him dead in the eye and said sir, someone did this for my family when I was 7 years old. I remember how embarrassed it made my dad feel. But I also remember how we were able to eat that week. This is my way to pass it forward. I only ask that you do the same for someone else when you're able.

There's still a lot of good happening quietly around us. Tuesday, April 28 will be celebrated "Pay It Forward Day" by some 86 countries around the world. Inspired by the book of the same name by Catherine Ryan Hyde, and founded by Blake Beattie in Australia in 2007, the Pay It Forward movement asks participants to perform one or two good deeds for strangers without asking for

anything in return. It is hoped that the recipient will “pay it forward” to someone else in need and that a ripple effect will continue throughout the entire year. Small acts, when multiplied by millions of people can literally change the world for the better. Supporters of the international Pay It Forward Day hope to inspire over 10 million acts of kindness this year around the world.

What can you do? Say good morning to the person next to you on the bus or elevator. Hold open the door for someone entering or leaving a building. Return a shopping cart for a stranger at the grocery store. Let someone go in front of you in line who only has a few items. Pay for a stranger’s coffee at Starbucks or Duncan Doughnuts.

Barbara De Angelis wrote: “Acts of kindness are never wasted. They always make a difference. They bless the one who receives them, and they bless you, the giver.” Ralph Waldo Emerson said: “You cannot do a kindness too soon, for you never know how soon it will be too late.” And in the words of the Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu, “Kindness in words creates confidence. Kindness in thinking creates profoundness. Kindness in giving creates love.” And from the Dalai Lama: “My religion is very simple. My religion is kindness.”

\*\*\*How to Be Old

Roger Rosenblatt

May 25, 2026

[From: [Opinion | How to Be Old - The New York Times](#)]

Mr. Rosenblatt is the author of “More Rules for Aging,” from which this essay was adapted. This is a list of rules for the elderly, the aim of which is to keep us elderly elderly, and not to see us go one step further. Staying alive in one’s later years is an art generally requiring the avoidance of wrong moves. The key word to a lot of one’s behavior is “don’t.” If more old people simply did not do certain things, especially on impulse, the world would be a safer place. Duller but safer. I should add that if you fail to follow these rules, I’m not saying that you are doing anything morally wrong. Only that you will suffer.

1. Run when you hear “We must do this again.”

This is often said at the end of some pointless social event in which you participated reluctantly. Inevitably someone will say cheerily, “We must do this again.” Nonsense. They don’t mean it. You don’t mean it. Nobody means it.

2. Marry above your station.

Usually you can’t help it. But you’ve probably found that out already.

3. Don’t forget to bestow confidence.

It’s the best thing you can give someone you love. Saying “You can do it” to a loved one in a situation in which that person has self-doubt — taking an exam, making a speech, writing a poem — means more than any sweet profession of affection. It means that you love that person so wholeheartedly that you wish him or her the inner satisfaction of self-realization. The pride of achieving themselves. What more can you say that so expresses your love?

#### 4. Observe the moth.

In her essay “The Death of the Moth,” Virginia Woolf notices a moth in its death throes, batting about a small windowpane. The author watches the animal’s plight with pity and admiration — awe, really. Its struggles are beautiful. She imagines the moth saying death was too strong, even for it. Observe the moth in its monumental fight for life, and do likewise. We gain life’s powers by knowing that eventually they will be taken away. There is beauty in this struggle. Murmurations of starlings occur only in the evening.

#### 5. Don’t share despair.

Not even with your friends. Not that they won’t sympathize. It’s just too much to ask of someone dear to you to bear your burdens.

#### 6. Don’t compromise, especially a little.

Unless you’re a professional negotiator, don’t compromise. Give in a little, you might as well give up the ship. During the McCarthy era, students were required to submit loyalty oaths to maintain their scholarships. At a meeting of the Harvard faculty, a professor who had escaped Mussolini’s Italy challenged the dean on this matter. The dean responded that signing and sending in the oaths was merely pro forma and had no more meaning than licking the stamps on the letters. The Italian professor stood and said something like, “Mr. Dean, I’m from fascist Italy, and in fascist Italy you learn one thing. First you lick the stamps. Then you lick something else.”

## 7. Screw it up royally.

You've spent a long life telling yourself that mistakes are to be avoided, but that isn't necessarily so. Playing jazz piano, whenever you make a mistake, which is inevitable, you make another mistake deliberately to make something right out of something wrong. Then you do it again. Theoretically, you could play an entire tune of mistakes, and it would sound just fine. You may think it would be better not to make the mistake in the first place. But a creative mistake may be truer to life, as you've no doubt discovered.

You took a job you didn't want, soon to discover it's the ideal job for you. You were born to do that job. When you think of it, life is an assembly of creative mistakes. Even when you don't think of it.

## 8. Don't question everything you don't understand.

The older you get, the more wonderful the world appears. Wonderful meaning full of wonders. The sudden appearance of something beautiful in the midst of heartbreak, for instance. You are at a low point, and you think you're going to stay there, there's no relief, when out of the blue, something by Mahler or Beethoven comes into your air, and all at once the sorrow dissipates. You don't question or analyze the moment. You're simply grateful for it. Where heartbreak is, beauty intrudes. Wondrously.

## 9. Grab the chicken leg.

So there we were, in our 20s, Ginny and I and a bunch of friends, having a picnic by the Charles River in Cambridge, when I picked

up a chicken leg with the intention of eating it and held it aloft. A little boy walked by and took it from my hand and kept walking. My friends and I laughed — the boy was so casual. Ginny said, “He must think that life is a chicken leg, waiting to be snatched.” In fact it is, even when you’re no longer a spring chicken.

10. Look only at the rim.

When I was playing intramural basketball in college, I was 5-foot-11, a mite in the land of giants, and my all-around game was so-so at best. Yet most of the time I managed to score in the double digits by paying no attention to the defense. I simply pretended it wasn’t there. I looked only at the rim of the basket. And sure enough, most of the time the defense didn’t touch me. Other games in life offer similar opportunities, at any age. Disregard the impediments to your well-being — a noisy neighbor, a treacherous colleague — and concentrate instead on where you are headed. You’ll be pleasantly surprised how easily you get there. Nothing but net.

11. Do not seek immortality.

It won’t come to you anyway, certainly not through your works and achievements. But the good feeling you have for others, and they for you, that goes on forever. I’m fond of quoting the poet Philip Larkin: “What will survive of us is love.” That should do it.

\*\*\*Want to be closer to your grandkids? Try texting more.

When regular in-person connection isn't an option, grandparents can use technology to strengthen their relationships.

Heather Kelly

December 23, 2025

[From: [How grandparents can use text messages to be closer to their grandkids - The Washington Post](#)]

[Editor's Note: Just a few years ago, the very idea of exchanging text messages or playing interactive videogames with grandchildren would have seemed absolutely impossible to many of us who cope with blindness or low vision. Many of us can celebrate our good fortune today, knowing that there are accessible mobile phones and tablets (including the Iphone, the Ipad, and the Blind Shell), and more and more accessible games that are just as intriguing for people who can see perfectly well as they are for those of us who cannot rely on good vision.]

Have you texted your grandchild lately? If not, this is your sign to start a new habit and meet your grandkids where they likely already live: In text messages. The holidays are a time when many grandparents who live far from their grandchildren get some much needed one-on-one time. It's a great opportunity to get to know the latest version of them, but for many families, maintaining those bonds the rest of the year can be difficult, especially when distance is an issue or as kids grow into young adults and form more relationships outside the family.

Texting can be an easy way to fill in the gaps and keep a connection going when they're old enough, say family and child experts. Here's our advice after speaking to teens and tweens about what they like, and the texting quirk that makes them think you don't care.

Start with in-person, or video, connections

Spend real time getting to know your grandkids before switching up the technology, especially when they're young. If you can't be there in person, use video chats where they can see your face and expression. Learn what they like, their personality quirks and their obsessions, even if you know they'll change quickly.

"The grounding is in knowing who your grandchild is and in being absolutely madly in love with them and being willing to listen to who they are," says pediatrician Ken Ginsburg, founder of the Center for Parent and Teen Communication at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. "Once you have that foundation, you don't actually have to be face-to-face. For the younger generation, they talk through their fingertips. And when we are able to speak that language, a lot more comes across than we think."

Follow ground rules and respect boundaries

If a child doesn't have access to texting, stick to scheduled phone and video calls and in-person access until they do. Their parent is in charge of determining when various technology is allowed, so don't try to circumvent them by giving them iPads or other devices without explicit permission.

Once the grandkids have access to their own device, like a tablet, ask their parents if it would be okay to text and what apps they use. For example, Meta's Messenger Kids is a popular option for young kids and allows easy monitoring. Ask their parents if they have any rules they'd like you to follow, like topics to avoid or times of day they don't want them getting messages.

Understand your important role as grandparent

Knowing what grandkids need from you and how your presence can shape them will influence how you communicate. In addition to love and safety, their parents are in charge of discipline or making sure they're doing well in school. A grandparent can have a different connection with fewer of those pressures.

"You want kids to have some barrier-free relationships. Judgment, anger, and disappointment are all barriers to engagement," says Ginsburg, author of "Lighthouse Parenting: Raising Your Child With Loving Guidance for a Lifelong Bond." "A beautiful role that grandparents can have is to just go with the flow, reach out, but remain present because young people reach out when they need you the most."

Make sure you don't lose contact as grandchildren age. While teens may be busier, your presence in their life is just as key. Teenagers are programmed to pull away from their parents, says Ginsburg, but not their grandparents. They need layers of adults

around them who are involved in their lives and can provide security.

Do more than ask about their day

The usual small talk can peter out quickly in chat, especially if you only ask about things like how school is going. Instead, try letting your grandkids lead the way and ask about things you know they like. If you're starting from zero, let them tell you or ask their parents. One trick is to avoid yes or no questions, says Liz Morrison, a clinical social worker whose practice focuses largely on kids, teens and young adults. Instead, try more open-ended inquiries about things they enjoy, which will leave room for deeper answers. Try to have some information in your back pocket you can bring up, like a performance or their friend group. You can also seek out shared interests you can chat about over time, like a current TV show. Some grandparents even pick up a few online games to bond over, whether it's Wordle, Minecraft or silly games built into the messaging apps themselves.

[Breaking Humor! A woman was trying hard to get the ketchup out of the bottle. During her struggle, the phone rang, so she asked her 4-year-old daughter to answer it. Her daughter said, "Mommy can't come to the phone to talk to you right now. She's hitting the bottle."]

### \*\*\*ACB Convention Information

Janet Dickelman

Registration for the 2026 American Council of the Blind conference and convention is now open! Read on to learn all about registration, plus ordering dog food, how to be certified for paratransit, renting a wheelchair or scooter, assistance at the airport, and some very important information to consider when taking a tour.

In-person/hybrid dates are July 24 through July 31, with Zoom-only sessions being held July 16 through 18.

Don't miss the virtual-only ACB Summer Auction on July 11 (preceded by two days of appetizer auctions), and the official call to order via Zoom on July 13 with the reading of the convention standing rules and the first credentials report.

#### •Registration Details

Registration opened for ACB members on Thursday, May 28, at 7 am, CT. Registration cost is \$55.

On June 4, registration opened for non-ACB members. That cost is \$70.

Registration will close on Monday, July 6 at 11:59 pm, CT. You may also register during the convention; however, the cost will be higher, \$75 for ACB members and \$90 for non-members.

### How to prepare for registration:

Make sure you can log into your member account at <https://members.acb.org/>. If you do not remember your login and password, you may select “password reset” or call the Minneapolis office at (612) 332-3242.

If you have not created a member account at <https://members.acb.org/>, select the link labeled “Create an Account” and provide the information requested. After creating an account, you can log in, but it may take up to 24 hours before you will be able to complete a convention registration, as the Minneapolis office needs to link your member account to our database. Now is also a good time to create your account!

### When registration opens:

\*If you are registering online, log into your member account. Once you have selected the “ACB Convention” link on the members main page, it will open on an introduction page; after reading this information proceed to preferences to begin your registration.

\*Please verify that your contact information is correct. On this page you will also select whether you will be attending the convention virtually or in person. If you choose to be a virtual attendee, you will not be shown sessions that are only available to in-person attendees such as tours, social events, etc.

\*If you choose to be an in-person attendee, you will be shown all virtual and in-person sessions.

\*If you need assistance, telephone registration will be available by calling Janet Dickelman at 651.428.5059; or the Minneapolis office at 612.332.3242.

#### •Braille or Large Print Program Requests

If you are attending virtually and wish to receive the convention program in either braille or large print, it will be sent to your home address. If you are a virtual attendee requesting a print or braille program, you must register prior to June 15 in order to receive the program in print or braille.

If you will be joining us in St. Louis, you will receive the program when you pick up your registration materials. All registrants will receive ZOOM links for the ZOOM-only events. If you are attending the convention in person, you can pick up your registration materials starting Thursday evening, July 23.

#### •Planning to Take a Tour?

Please read the tour description very carefully. Many of our tours require a lot of walking and/or standing. If this is difficult for you to do, please consider not taking the tour. Your health and comfort are very important to us. If you can't keep up with the group, there aren't options to stop or rest.

If you require the use of a wheelchair to attend a tour, you must bring someone with you who will push your chair. That person must also register for the tour. Our volunteers are not able to assist as wheelchair pushers. If you use a wheelchair or walker, please make sure to indicate that on the registration form. Also, if you are more comfortable having your own guide, you might consider attending the tour with a friend or family member. We generally have one volunteer to assist 10 to 15 attendees, so cannot offer personal assistance.

#### •Using Paratransit Service During the Convention

In order to receive visitors/temporary eligibility while in St. Louis, individuals need to be registered with their paratransit service in their home city. If they are registered to receive paratransit in their home city, they need to have that agency fax to (314) 335-3419 a copy of their eligibility (start date, end date, if they require a mobility device/service animal). Also, include the dates they will be in town and the address of the hotel where they will be staying. I suggest that they start a day before they actually need it and extend it a day or two after their planned departure date, in case there are any emergencies and they stay longer than expected.

1. Once they know their information has been sent over, then they can call 314.982.1510 and confirm that BiState has received everything and doesn't need further information.

2. I strongly urge you to have your documentation submitted a minimum of two weeks prior to coming, but you can do it as far out as they want. The sooner, the better.
3. Once you have submitted and confirmed your eligibility with BiState, you can book trips out a maximum of three days and a minimum of one day prior to 5 pm Reservations phone number is 314.982.1505; press option 3 to schedule rides, and option 2 to check on already scheduled rides.

#### •Wheelchair Rentals

[Important! Unfortunately, the source that was initially sent out for wheelchair and scooter rentals has had to close due to illness of the owner.)

If you'd like to rent a wheelchair or scooter in St. Louis, please contact Med Exchange at 636.949.5660. Wheelchair rentals are \$85 per week, and scooters \$300 per week.

There is a delivery fee of \$50 per item. However, depending on the number of wheelchairs or scooters ACB reserves, that may become a lower fee.

Please reserve your scooter or wheelchair by Friday, June 12th. There are several large conventions in the city in July, so he wants to make sure we have the equipment we need.

Once you have reserved your mobility device, please email or call Janet Dickelman, (651) 428-5059, [janet.dickelman@gmail.com](mailto:janet.dickelman@gmail.com)

### •Religious Services During Convention

Below is a list of the religious services that will take place during convention week.

#### \*Catholic Mass-

Saturday, July 24, 5:30 pm

Basilica of Saint Louis, King of France, The Old Cathedral  
Father Smith will be holding Mass at the cathedral. It is a very short walk to the grounds of the arch where the cathedral is located. Volunteers from the church will meet you at the hotel to show you the way. The Church is looking for a potential count. If you'd like to attend, send Janet an email message, [janet.dickelman@gmail.com](mailto:janet.dickelman@gmail.com).

#### \*Services at the Hotel

Saturday, July 25

10 am: Rabbi Becky Zoole, Central Reform Congregation, will conduct a service.

4 pm: Rev. Peter Heide will conduct an interdenominational service.

Monday, July 27

7 pm: Gospel Sing

## •Blood Drive in St. Louis

### ACB Blood Drives-

\*July 20 – 26: Virtual drive via QR Code at a Red Cross location near you. (The QR code will be sent via email as the time gets closer.)

\*July 27, 2026, 10 am – 3 pm: In person, in the Gateway West room on the 18th floor of the Hyatt Regency Arch.

To sign up for an in-person appointment, go to

<https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/drive-results?zipSponsor=ABC>

## •Ordering Dog Food

Don't want to weigh down your luggage with food for your dog? Keep it simple — order food from Scoop Masters!

Scoop Masters will provide and maintain our dog relief areas in St. Louis. Locations of the dog relief areas will be shared via email lists and posted in the convention newspaper as soon as they are set up.

If you would like to pre-order dog food to be delivered to your hotel room, call Tim Stone at 661.714.0749, or order online at <http://scoopmasters.com/acb>. Tim says, "It's a simple form that asks for your name, phone number, brand and type of food. Tim will call to get the details within 24 hours, and he will accept payments at the hotel."

Food must be ordered by July 18 to ensure delivery.

#### •Assistance at the Airport

To assist airline personnel and Margarine Beaman and her cadre of airport volunteers, if you would like assistance when you arrive at the airport, please submit the following information. If you have a connecting flight, Margarine will need the information for all flights.

\*Your name

\*The name of the airline you will be arriving on

\*The city you will be traveling from

\*Your arrival flight number

\*Your cell phone number

\*Departure date

\*Departure time

\*Departure airline

You can send Margarine Beaman an e-mail with "airline information" in the subject line at [oleo501625@outlook.com](mailto:oleo501625@outlook.com) or call her at (512) 921-1625.

#### •Extra, Extra, Read All About It!

This year's convention newspaper will be called "The Gateway Gazette." It will run from Friday through Wednesday in braille and large print.

Announcements and other items intended for publication must be in the center's hands by 2 pm each day.

Announcements should be 75 words or less. By a directive from the board of publications, ads will be allowed to run for three days maximum – no exceptions.

If you wish to advertise in the newspaper, please contact Sharon Lovering at- [slovering@acb.org](mailto:slovering@acb.org)

Newspaper announcements are black and white text only; no color, and no photos.

Announcements run a maximum of 3 days; 75-word limit per announcement.

Special discounts and advance announcement rates for individuals and affiliates.

Sorry, no ads will be accepted for food sales on hotel property.

#### Newspaper Announcement Pricing

3 days announcement (reserved prior to conference): individuals, ACB affiliates and blind representatives of multi-level marketing companies, \$50

Exhibitors - \$100

All others - \$125

3 days announcement (purchased on-site)-

Individuals, ACB affiliates and blind representatives of multi-level marketing companies, \$60

Exhibitors - \$110

All others - \$140

Submit announcements electronically, by June 13, 2026, in PDF, Word, text, or .jpeg to [sloving@acb.org](mailto:sloving@acb.org).

The convention newspaper and other convention-related publications will not include campaign statements for candidates running for ACB national office, nor may the resources of the communication center be used to reproduce campaign statements intended to promote any candidate for office. The convention newspaper and other convention-related publications will not accept paid advertisements from candidates regarding their candidacy.

- Bring the kids to St Louis

Kids Explorers Club (KEC) is for children ages 5 to 13.

Breakfast and lunch will be provided Monday through Thursday.

In addition to field trips the day will include games and crafts.

Daily costs will be shown on the convention registration form!

For planning purposes please email [janet.dickelman@gmail.com](mailto:janet.dickelman@gmail.com).

If you are planning to enroll a child in KEC.

You will need to register each child on the convention registration form;

you will be contacted to complete a waiver and medical information for each child.

## •Hotel Details

Room rates at the Hyatt Regency Arch, 315 Chestnut St., are \$104 single or double, \$129 triple, or \$154 quad, plus state and local taxes (currently 17.92%).

To make reservations online, go to

<https://www.hyatt.com/events/en-US/group-booking/STLRS/G-ACBL>.

If you prefer to make your reservations by telephone, call central reservations at 888.591.1234. Make sure to let them know you are reserving a room at the Hyatt St. Louis Arch at 315 Chestnut St., and use group code G-ACBL.

The cut-off date for reservations is July 5, 2026. Don't delay — make your reservations today!

## Room Amenities

All sleeping rooms have safes, ironing boards, refrigerators and K-cup coffee makers.

The hotel has a 24-hour fitness center. It does not have a pool. There are no guest washers and dryers, but there is a dry-cleaning service.

The hotel is cashless; any purchases must be made with a credit or debit card.

### •Looking to Share a Room at Convention?

Are you looking to share a room at the Hyatt in St. Louis? If so, please reach out to Janet Dickelman via email at [janet.dickelman@gmail.com](mailto:janet.dickelman@gmail.com)

She'll need the following-

\*Your name

\*Whether you have a room reserved

\*If you have a guide dog

\*If you mind sharing a room with someone with a guide dog

\*Any other pertinent information such as age range for a roommate or if you are a night owl, an early riser, etc.

She'll connect potential roommates via email, and if for any reason either roommate feels that sharing a room wouldn't be a good fit, no problem; we'll find another roommate for you.

### •Staying in Touch

The conference and convention announce list will be filled with information. To subscribe to the list, send a blank e-mail to [Acbconvention+subscribe@acblists.org](mailto:Acbconvention+subscribe@acblists.org).

If you received updates for the 2025 convention, you do not need to re-subscribe to the list.

For any convention-related questions, contact Janet Dickelman, convention chair, at 651.428.5059, or via email, [janet.dickelman@gmail.com](mailto:janet.dickelman@gmail.com)