

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF SLIDELL

Slidell magazine

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KEEP IT POSITIVE

Vol. 161 March 2024



Anna ♡

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COVER: "THE SKY IS THE LIMIT!" CHALK ART

ARTIST: ANNA BRAUD



At just 11 years old, Anna Braud is the youngest *Slidell Magazine* cover artist ever! Anna has always loved creating, whether it was drawing with pencils or crayons, or making Play-Doh creatures with her younger brother, John.

Anna comes from a large and creative family. Being homeschooled amongst her six siblings, there is

always an art project, science project, cooking experiment, or creative exploration taking place in their active and happy home.

Anna's parents, Scott and Johanna, encourage her creativity and give her lots of time, space and freedom to get messy. She has her own craft desk and it's always covered with air dry clay, perler beads, paint and paint pens, and sewing supplies.

Anna's older sisters, Marie and Emily, have really inspired her too. They both are very talented and have taught her so much. Some of her favorite days are spent with them, drawing and crafting together.

This past Christmas season, Anna started handmaking and selling resin covered shrinky dink earrings. It was a lot of work, but it also was so much fun! She says that it showed her that people like what she creates.

Indeed we do Anna!

Anna hopes that a lot of other kids see this magazine and get excited about chalk art and all things creative. She looks forward to the Chalk-the-Walk event where she will be bringing more colorful creations to life!

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Slidell magazine

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Editor's Letter

Kendra Maness, Editor / Publisher

UPDATE: My microwave is still broken; the arm lever thingamajig still hasn't arrived. It has been 77 days since I've had the pleasure of reheating my coffee. Cold coffee sucks.

I recently watched an Amazon Prime special called *The Presidents*. Basically, it documented every president (through the first term of Bush #2 when the series aired) and spent about 30 minutes highlighting their personal lives, policies, accomplishments and failures. Of course, everything was seen through the crystal clear lens of time. Boy, time sure does make a difference in perception.

I learned a lot about each of them, of course; but my feelings towards Jimmy Carter were validated and made even stronger as they covered his time in office. Now, I admit bias because of my affiliation and love for Habitat for Humanity, a cause which Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter have supported and promoted for decades. Jimmy was, and is, an upstanding, morally sound, truly good guy. He was dealt a bad hand with an inflation problem that was not his doing, but became his albatross. Then, he was blindsided with a devastating blow when Iran captured the hostages. He worked tirelessly to secure their release, and accomplished it; but only after Reagan was sworn in. After his term in office, he devoted his life to peaceful international conflict resolution and worked to end the cycle of poverty in the U.S. and beyond. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2002.

The documentary noted that Carter had an uphill battle from the moment he entered the White House because he was "an outsider" and wouldn't play the political games of D.C. Because of this, Congress rebuked him and our country stagnated and suffered.

What really impacted me was that the "outsider" stigma of Carter (a truly good guy) was his curse; whereas the "outsider" tag on Trump - NOT A GOOD PERSON AND DON'T EVEN TRY TO CONVINCE YOURSELF HE IS - is heralded.

If you support Donald Trump, that's your business. I'm not trying to pick a fight. I'm just reminding you that morals MATTER. Words MATTER. Accountability, setting an example, honesty, integrity, loyalty, care, compassion - these all MATTER.

Times may change, but what really matters does not.

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Extraordinary Slidell Neighbors

by Charlotte Collins



Betty Donohue

This month, I invite you to learn about a fascinating Slidell Neighbor with an Indigenous heritage. I was elated when John Case introduced me to Betty, a member of the Cherokee Nation. You see, John had heard a story I started writing that was motivated by tales of the Biloxi and Acolapissa women in my area.

You will surely find Betty's own Cherokee ancestry interesting, but it is not the only focus of our conversation. As historically significant as her Cherokee ancestors were, we will also learn interesting history through Betty's immersive experience with the Navahos and surrounding tribes. Her collection of the tribal artifacts and the stories that accompany each tribe will lead us on quite the historical journey. I hope you will join me to hear some of the fascinating tales she weaves for us.

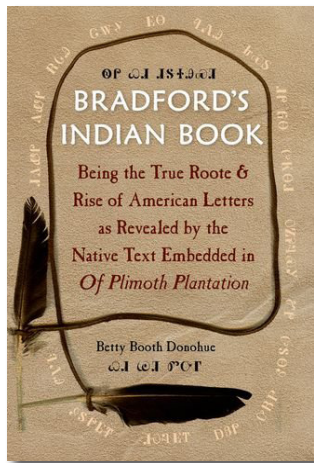
Because I arrived during one of our recent deluges, I was invited to slip in through the garage. I made sure to look at the Cherokee license plate on her electric car that John Case, my referral, mentioned to me. Betty and John go to the same church, First Presbyterian, and that is the only reason you and I are able to hear about all that I will reveal for you. Next, I looked over at her Mercury and saw a Cherokee plate. It was written with actual native letters that I could not decipher. Betty helped me out by translating the Syllabary in which the plate was written,

"Cherokee Nation". John had also shared with me the book Betty has authored, *Bradford's Indian Book*. It describes the influence of Indigenous American poetics on the newly developing American literature.

The first thing I encountered in the living room was a huge china cabinet full of large, hand carved Kachina dolls. It stopped me dead in my tracks. Never had I seen such a collection all together in one place outside of a museum. Betty pushed me on toward the kitchen, telling me we would come back after I put my things down and warmed up. She promised to tell me the artist and the spirit connected for each Kachina spirit. So, I in turn promise to come back to this part of Hopi and other cultures for my readers.

We sat at the kitchen table and my host placed a fresh batch of homemade shortbread with chocolate icing and pecans on top. The winter weather melted off, and I began to look around at the butter churn and various keepsakes in the kitchen. Betty began by explaining that she and her parents had lived two blocks from her mother's parents dairy farm in Wagner, Oklahoma. Her fondest memories were helping her grandmother and grandfather at the dairy.

"From the time I was about five, I helped my grandmother in the milk house and my chore was bottling the milk. We used a machine that filled two bottles at a time. There was a little gizmo on the machine, and you just pulled the



1.) Betty's publication, *Bradford's Indian Book*, is written partly in the Cherokee syllabary to express pan-Indian concepts that have been absorbed by European-American writers. Her analysis demonstrates how indigenous oral and thought traditions have influenced American literature from the very beginning down to the present day. 2.) Betty's ancestors, the Boothe family. Her great-grandfather, Francis, is pictured to the far right. Francis used his Cherokee allotment and moved the family from Alabama to Oklahoma. 3-4.) Relics from both sides of Betty's family. The butter churn was used by her paternal grandmother; the dairy cream bottle was part of the daily operations at the dairy farm owned by her maternal grandparents, pictured to the right.

handle to seal the bottles with paper caps that formed the lids. Then you put the bottles in a rack. I thoroughly enjoyed that process."

As we ate shortbread together, she continued, "When I was ten years old, my parents moved from this small town of Wagner to Tulsa. So, my dairy days were over and I became a city kid. We stayed in touch with my grandparents and the rest of my family. My parents never sold their part of the family property in Wagner. They just rented it. My Great-Aunt Minnie, who had raised my grandmother, Stella, also lived back in Wagner, so we all stayed pretty close."

I asked about her indigenous background, and learned that her heritage runs deep. "I'm Cherokee on both sides. Mother, Velda Hall Booth, was part Cherokee. My dad, Harmon Booth, is more than a quarter Cherokee, and he taught me to respect every living thing around me. For instance, trees are our grandparents. My mother mostly influenced me through her attitude towards life. She had an absolute contempt for modern material things. She had a total preoccupation with the Earth and the things that come from it. That made it hard for me to leave the family property and move here to Slidell. Of course, I brought part of it with me like these rocks and that bark off of the trees from our orchard after a lightning strike."

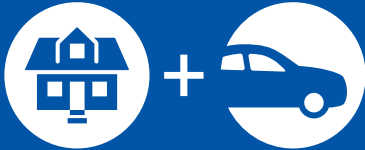
Mounted on the wall was a beautiful piece of sculpture that was the bark from that tree. She also brought plants in flower pots that were grown in soil from the family land. She carries these things wherever she moves. But the best

thing she carries with her are the stories handed down through the generations.

As we all have been told, things were much tougher with each preceding generation. These histories are important for us to gain a sense of perspective, especially when we seem to think our times are hard. I suppose that the rainy day was a perfect day to hear about the hardships Betty's ancestors had encountered. Her grandmother, Stella Charbonneau, has a fascinating history. I learned that Stella's father, Melvin Charbonneau, was the grandson of Toussaint Charbonneau. As a fur trader, Toussaint became the oldest member of Lewis and Clark expedition's permanent group. Even more amazing is the fact that Toussaint was married to Sacagawea. Most of us have heard tales of the Shoshone girl that helped the explorers communicate with various tribes as they traveled from the Dakotas to the Pacific Ocean. If you have ever read about the expedition, you know it was a treacherous one, full of adventures and misadventures. She is the one who saved the journals when a canoe tipped over.

Betty continued the saga two generations later with Toussaint's grandson, Melvin. She elaborated upon Melvin's trials and tribulations in the Wild West. Melvin married Elsie Copple, Betty's great-grandmother. They lived in a tiny village far from doctors and civilization. Elsie's labor with Stella did not go as planned, so Melvin had to swim the Grand River to find a doctor, which left him with pneumonia, which worsened the tuberculosis he already

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had. The cure was to move to the desert in Arizona via the Butterfield Trail. Later, baby Stella developed a high fever from ear infections when their covered wagon got stuck crossing a river. A Mexican family totally cured her by burying her up to her neck in the warm sand and gave her an herbal tea. Elsie continued to Deming, New Mexico where Melvin died. Elsie made her way back to Oklahoma with Stella, which is why Betty was born and raised in Wagner, Oklahoma. Once Betty's grandparents and parents were deceased, that left Betty with the family estate in Oklahoma.

As she says, "I inherited the whole kit and kaboodle. It took me three years of sorting, giving away, and sending a lot of family heirlooms to relatives. My cousins were so close, it was as if we were siblings. But I have no blood siblings living. My back and hip problems made it so I couldn't get around like I used to, so I needed to downsize. My favorite cousin, Carle, lived in Baton Rouge, and I ended up near him in Slidell."

She smiled and added, "I'm really glad, because I love Slidell! The people are the friendliest I have found anywhere. And I love your food here. Once you get to my age, access to good healthcare becomes an issue. I'm just amazed at the specialists, medical facilities, and services in this area. One of the few things that I have found is lacking here is better transportation for seniors."

"I think that wraps up my family history. But I do have some great stories from my job working among the Navajo tribe in Arizona." She elaborated, "The Bureau of Indian Affairs hired me straight out of college as a Guidance Counselor and teacher in 1964. It opened up a whole new world for me! The Navajos were among the last tribes conquered so their culture was still intact, and few of them spoke English. They lived in old style hogans, wore 1860's clothing, and used wagons and horses. Because the English school was a long way off, the young children needed a place to board during the week. I was in charge of 150 or so second and third grade girls. It was no problem. They were taught respect and did as they were requested. I felt so badly for these little ones because they were cut off from their culture. I allowed them to observe their traditional practices that the school had banned. I recorded winter stories from local Medicine Men and played them, and they loved the stories!"

One day, a little girl broke her arm, requiring Betty to leave to take the child to the hospital. There were no phones, so she couldn't call for help. Betty had no choice

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but to leave 157 little girls alone. She asked them to sit in groups and sing while she was gone.

Betty shook her head and said, "I'll always remember that kid for how tough she was. It was a bad break, extremely painful. They had to set the arm with no anesthetic, no pain meds, nothing. And that little girl didn't even cry. When we came back, the other girls were still sitting where I left them, singing their hearts out. Well, I'll tell you, that wouldn't happen today. The Navajo kids today are totally Anglicized."

Betty married two years later and her husband, Jack, was transferred from Thoreau, New Mexico to Corona, New Mexico on the outskirts of the Navajo Reservation. Now she found herself in ranching territory teaching the "cowboy" children. She laughed at the wording, but back then they were referred to as such. Laughing, she described, "It was a shock to my system because I had spent eight years with Navajo Indian kids and adults, and their behavior is totally different from whites." A true-life Cowboys and Indians experience!

Forty years later, and now holding a Ph. D. in literature from U.C.L.A., Betty left higher education and returned to the Navajo Reservation for "a breath of fresh air."

"This time, I found myself reteaching Navajo tradition to Anglicized Navajo kids. I was now teaching English to the grandkids of the kids I had in the 60s. They could be rude and rowdy, but deep down, they were still sweet kids I remember. One day, I had just had it with two boys who were always spouting off. I just left school thinking I was too old for all this. That night, I resolved to go back in Friday and turn in my resignation. So I came to my classroom the next day, and those two little jokers came in and started their horsing around. I ignored them completely, never looked up, and kept packing my desk. They were writing away on the side chalkboard, and I was just too furious with them to make any kind of eye contact. Eventually, they notice I'm not reacting. So they started doing things to get my attention like stumble over chairs. On the chalkboard, they've written two words over and over in big letters, Shimú and Shimasani all over the board. They had written "mother and grandmother." They were making the basic connection between us as they understood it. Of course, I didn't quit."

Betty explained that, during the late 1960's, there arose what is now called the American Indian Renaissance. Native writers and visual artists blossomed. Their

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1.) Betty's father, Harmon, was a citizen "plane spotter" and ham radio operator for his section of town during World War II. Volunteers such as Harmon would watch the skies and be on vigilant alert for an invasion. Yes, even in Oklahoma. Betty still has the microphone and loudspeaker that her father used to alert the community in an attack. 2.) Betty with her parents, Harmon and Velda. 3.) A 6-year-old Betty at her first piano recital in Oklahoma. 4.) Betty's school picture - this time, as an English teacher in 1988.

creativity became not only recognized, but also collectible.

As we explored her house, I viewed her painting collection, each with a very unique style. It included art from Shawnee, Muskogee Creek, Cherokee, Navajo, and Choctaw tribes; many of them very famous Indian painters.

She explained, "My first goal when I moved to the reservation was to get artwork from as many tribes as I could. But my most cherished works were from my students. They were created

specifically for me at important times in my life."

I also learned about Cherokee masks. She has a Long Hair mask, her father's clan. Next my art guide pointed at the glass cabinet holding Kachina dolls. Opening the cabinet and pulling one out, she added, "He's my favorite. He is known as the child eater. The story is that he lives in the fire and he watches for bad children. And once a year, he comes and he whips the bad kids. These kinds of ritual stories

are part of the reason you didn't see many Hopi kids misbehaving," she laughed.

I saw a pair of Zuni carvings that represented a fertility couple, an Apache spirit dancer, a warrior mouse, and a white buffalo. She also has a rare pair of snake dancers. On the coffee table, sitting prominently in the middle of the living room, was a huge basket that was an amazing example. I soon learned that the Eastern Cherokee were known for their baskets and their



1.-3.) Betty's collection of art and artifacts from numerous tribes is as plentiful as it beautiful. The colorful, handmade pieces are throughout her home. Left: a "talking stick" that is used in Indian Council meetings. Whoever is holding the stick is the speaker until it is passed. Middle: Betty's vast collection of Kachina dolls, along with other meticulously detailed figurines and objects. Right: Some of the many examples of tribal basket weaving and carvings found in Betty's home.



1.-3.) Betty fondly remembers her years as a teacher at a Navajo boarding school. She shared a fascinating story of the significance of the first picture: "The children had never seen running water before. Water was a precious commodity to them because they came from Indian reservations in Arizona, and everyone had to carry their water. If the children didn't know how to wash their hands, we had to teach them." 2.) A student, Anna Herder, carding wool to be spun into rugs. 3.) Betty with two of her many students in 1965.

wood carvings. I got to hold a Hopi coil basket like the ones I studied, as well as those made by Cherokee, Navajo, Plains, and even Chickasaw tribes, (which were originally near us in Mississippi). I learned about prayer fans, which were carried to help send your message to Heaven. Of course, I also saw pottery and silver work with turquoise. But the artifact that really fascinated me was a stick that was elaborately adorned with ribbons and a big turkey feather dangling

from woven fibers. Betty referred to it as a "talking stick" and explained that, if you were in an Indian Council meeting, the one holding the stick had the right to speak. Once you have spoken, you were to turn it over to someone else, and so on down the line. Why couldn't we have adopted this tradition, right?

I am so in awe of all I have read about tribal beliefs and the respect they had, not just for their fellow man but also for the land and all natural and

living things that belong there. I have visited the "shell middens" left by our earliest inhabitants and indigenous tribes along our bayous, and tried to imagine how things would have looked before Europeans arrived to tame the land. But my visit with Betty left me with a renewed desire to research even further. I would love to think that this visit we had with Betty may spark interest in you as well.



One of the Trail of Tears series paintings by Troy Anderson, a Master Artist of the Five Civilized Tribes Museum. The Trail of Tears was an ethnic cleansing and forced displacement of approximately 60,000 people of the "Five Civilized Tribes" between 1830-1850 by the US government. Members of the Cherokee, Muscogee (Creek), Seminole, Chickasaw, and Choctaw nations were forcibly removed from their ancestral homelands in the Southeastern US to newly designated Indian Territory west of the Mississippi River after the passage of the Indian Removal Act in 1830. The Cherokee removal in 1838 (the last forced removal east of the Mississippi) was brought on by the discovery of gold near Dahlonega, Georgia, in 1828, resulting in the Georgia Gold Rush. The Native American people suffered from exposure, disease, and starvation while en route to their newly designated Indian reserve. Thousands died from disease before reaching their destinations or shortly after. (Source: Wikipedia)

I know the Twilight Zone
and the Handicap Zone,
but I do not know the
Erogenous Zone, OK?

I'm saying this is the South. And we're proud of our crazy people. We
don't hide them up in the attic. We bring 'em right down to the living
room and show 'em off. See, Phyllis, no one in the South ever asks if you
have crazy people in your family. They just ask what side they're on.

Suzanne, if
sex were fast
food, there'd
be an arch over
your bed.

Have you all
just completely
LOST YOUR
MINDS?

I think you
should tell them
to take their
invitation, fold
it in five corners,
and stick it
where the
SUN DON'T
SHINE!

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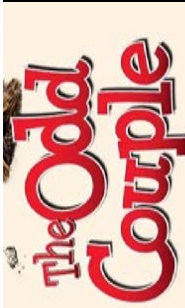
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PATRICK'S DAY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<div>25</div> <div>FEBRUARY</div> <div>HARBOR CENTER SOUTHEASTERN SHOWDOWN VOLLEYBALL • 7 AM</div> <div>SADIE JANE BRIDAL SHOW The Sadie Jane • Slidell • 1 PM</div> <div>NEXT TO NORMAL Slidell Little Theatre > 2 PM</div> <div>BUTTERFLY RELEASE Fritchie Park • 1 PM</div> <div>BRIDAL EXPO HARBOR CENTER 1 PM</div> <div>NEXT TO NORMAL Slidell Little Theatre > 2 PM</div> <div>DAYLIGHT SAVINGS SPRING FORWARD + 1 HOUR</div> <div>ST PATTY PARADE Olde Towne Slidell 1 PM</div> <div>NEXT TO NORMAL Slidell Little Theatre > 2 PM</div> <div>St Patrick's Day!</div> <div>PAL M SUNDAY HARBOR CENTER AQUA FEST Aquarium Convention • 11 AM</div> <div>GODSPELL Slidell Little Theatre > 2 PM</div> <div>HAPPY Easter</div>	<div>26</div> <div>KREWE OF DIONYSUS WEEKLY BINGO! Mondays - 7:30 PM - KC Hall on West Hall</div> <div>"Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time." Thomas Edison</div> <div>Smile</div> <div>Salat Days Juried Exhibition of Student Art > 3 / 48 - 4 / 25 Slidell City Hall Gallery > Mon - Thurs / 10 AM - 4 PM</div> <div>Slidell Council Meeting > 6:30 - 7:30 PM</div> <div>BINGO! Every Tues & Thurs • 3 PM Slidell Lions Club • 355 Cleveland Ave.</div>	<div>27</div> <div>Slidell Council Meeting > 6:30 - 7:30 PM</div> <div>Playing With Fire Exhibit > January 2nd - March 7th Slidell City Hall Gallery > Mon - Thurs / 10 AM - 4 PM</div> <div>KREWE OF DIONYSUS Membership Meeting • Nathan's • 6:30 PM</div> <div>RIBBON CUTTING Fremaux Self Storage Slidell > 11:30 AM</div> <div>Slidell Council Meeting > 6:30 - 7:30 PM</div> <div>Slidell Council Meeting > 6:30 - 7:30 PM</div> <div>BINGO! BINGO! BINGO!</div>	<div>28</div> <div>LOBBY LOUNGE HARBOR CENTER Jacob Westfall • 7 PM</div> <div>PLEASE LIKE OUR FACEBOOK PAGE</div> <div>Food for Seniors Distribution Day St Luke's • 1 - 3 PM</div> <div>World Storytelling Day</div> <div>OPEN SOURCE INTEL COURSE STP Coroner's Office • 8 AM</div> <div>BE SO GOOD THEY CAN'T IGNORE YOU ~STEVE MARTIN</div>	<div>29</div> <div>IT'S A LEAP YEAR!</div> <div>NOON NETWORKERS Business Networking Every Thurs. Fatty's Seafood in Slidell • 11:30 - 1 PM NOONNETWORKERS.COM</div> <div>LOBBY LOUNGE HARBOR CENTER Sofia Talvik • 7 PM</div> <div>National Pi Day Business After Hours STARC Art Night Mandeville > 4:30 PM COMEDY SHOW HARBOR CENTER Angelo Tsarouchas • 7 PM</div> <div>GOLF TOURNAMENT Swingin' For Scholarships Abita Springs > 10:30 AM</div> <div>Member Orientation Slidell Chamber 8:30 AM</div> <div>RIBBON CUTTING Local Pediatrics on Demand Mandeville > 11:30 AM</div>	<div>1</div> <div>MARCH WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH</div> <div>FISH FRY! (Fridays in Lent) St Luke's • Drive-Thru • 5-8PM</div> <div>NEXT TO NORMAL > Slidell Little Theatre > 8 PM TRIBUTE TO WHITNEY HOUSTON > Cutting Edge Theater > 8 PM</div> <div>FISH FRY! (Fridays in Lent) Our Lady of Lourdes • Drive-Thru Generations Legacy Once a Month Business Networking 40261 US Hwy 90 East • 11:45 AM</div> <div>FISH FRY! (Fridays in Lent) St. Margaret Mary • Drive-Thru</div> <div>TEEN TIME CUPCAKE WARS The Collab • Slidell • 6 PM</div> <div>FISH FRY! (Fridays in Lent) St. Genevieve • Drive-Thru</div> <div>Salat Days Art Reception Slidell City Hall Gallery • 5 PM</div> <div>Bayou Jam Concert • 6 PM Fat City Swing Band - Heritage Park</div> <div>GODSPELL > Slidell Little Theatre > 8 PM</div> <div>GOOD FRIDAY</div> <div>POETRY & OPEN MIC Roots Plants + Coffee • 6 PM</div>	<div>2</div> <div>BUBBL'N ON THE BAYOU Salmen Fritchie House • 11 AM</div> <div>LA FOOD TRUCK FESTIVAL Harbor Center • 11 AM</div> <div>ARTS EVENING Oldse Towne Slidell • 5 PM</div> <div>NIGHT OF HOPE: ONE WAY LOVE Slidell Municipal Auditorium • 7 PM</div> <div>LACOMBE MARKET Lacombe Family Pharmacy • 10 AM</div> <div>OLDE TOWNE SLIDELL ART MARKET Green Oaks Apothecary • NOON</div> <div>CHALK-THE-WALK Our Lady of Lourdes • 10 AM</div> <div>CARS & COFFEE Slidell Auditorium • 9 AM</div> <div>Camellia City Farmer's Market Every Saturday 8 AM - Noon</div> <div>2024 Special Needs Expo STP Coroner's Office • 10 AM</div> <div>SLIDELL SPRING STREET FAIR Oldse Towne Slidell • 10 AM</div> <div>Easter Egg-Stravaganza Aldersgate UMC • 11 AM</div> <div>AQUA FEST HARBOR CENTER Aquarium Convention • 11 AM</div> <div>\$7 PANCAKE BREAKFAST SLIDELL LION'S CLUB • 8 AM</div> <div>Camellia City Farmer's Market Every Saturday 8 AM - Noon</div>



The Storyteller

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KIDNAPPED?

A true story...

I have been aware of this story for at least eight years. My intention was to use it as inspiration and write a fictional version of it. I would have changed the names and maybe even the outcome. I could then interject the gossip that most likely emanated from the event but is not recorded in the newspapers.

Ultimately, I decided that truth, in this case, is better than fiction; and since I would attempt to write it as a true story, and out of respect to the families of the parties involved, I based the story on the newspapers of the time. Everything written was taken from those articles, the U.S. Census, or Find-A-Grave.

I also learned a great deal about turn-of-the-century journalism. Frankly, it wasn't very good. I didn't add to any of the articles, but I redacted some parts for

brevity and the fact that they added little to the event. The name of the Alabama town Coatopa is spelled three different ways, and the last name of the main character is spelled both Edmunds and Edmonds. Slidell is listed as being eight miles from New Orleans. There are several mistakes such as these in the stories. You may find some of the story does not read smoothly; but, except for the redactions, that is the way the articles were printed in the years between 1909 and 1910.



It was cold that night in February 1909 when John Edmunds, sometimes spelled Edmonds, left work and started home. He was the ticket agent and telegraph operator for the railroad. Thankful that his long day

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Irma Cry was the first woman inducted into the Rotary Club of Slidell North Shore. She embodied the Rotary International creed of "Service Above Self" in both her professional and civic life.

was over at 10 p.m., he looked forward to going home to his wife Kate and five children. It had rained that day, and the moisture in the night air chilled him, so he quickened his pace to reach the comforts of home as soon as possible.

He had arrived in Slidell, Louisiana only a few weeks earlier. Prior to coming to Slidell, he had held a similar position in Central Alabama. The new assignment was a promotion.

He and Kate, who he married when she was seventeen, had been married for sixteen years and had five children. According to census records, one child may have died earlier, and this may have had some small bearing on this event.

The home was a two-story frame house, adequate for his family, but not of the quality that he and Kate had dreamed of having at this point in their marriage. Both had come from families of adequate means, but not wealthy enough to contribute to their desires; just wealthy enough to introduce them to the better, but maybe not finer, things in life.

This house was located on Bayou Vincent, a navigable bayou that leads to Lake Pontchartrain. From there, one can navigate anywhere in the world that their skills and boat size will allow. On the bayou, located just downstream from his house, was a shipyard, brick plant and hospital. Just north there was a wood preserving plant locally called the Creosote Plant. All these businesses were dark by that time of night, and it was eerily quiet as if the moisture in the earth was absorbing all sounds.

When John arrived, he knocked on the front door because Kate, not familiar with her new surroundings, always locked the door. There was no answer. With no concern, John went to the back door and found it open. Thinking this unusual because of the frigid temperature, he called for Kate as he entered the house.

There was no answer. All her belongings were there, but no Kate. Then, from upstairs, he heard his two-year-old daughter, Kathleen, crying for her mother. More concerned with the missing Kate, he searched outside. Finding nothing, he went upstairs to comfort his daughter and to wake his oldest son, John Stuart Jr., known as Stuart. Stuart said his mother was fine when he went to bed.

After getting the two-year-old back to bed, he left Stuart in charge of the house while he hurried to the town marshal's house. By 1 a.m., the area was swarming with local citizens and an armada of small boats were assembled to make a systematic dragging of the bayou.

Outside of the Slidell community, the word spread with an article in the February 09, 1909 edition of the *Birmingham Age-Herald*:

Mrs. J.A. McKinnon left Selma this afternoon for Slidell, Louisiana, where she was called by the mysterious disappearance of her niece, Mrs. John Edmunds who was formerly Miss Kate Boggs of Selma.

Sunday afternoon Mrs. McKinnon received a letter from Mr. Edmunds, he himself well known in this area..... He wrote telling of the disappearance and the fear that his wife had been murdered and body disposed of in a lake nearby.

About 11 pm Mr. Edmunds returned from his job at the railroad station....finding his wife missing.....There was no sign of a struggle and in a hopeless attempt telegrams were sent to her previous home in Coatopo, Alabama, thinking it possible her mind may have given way and returned to that place. It was the anniversary of the death of her son who died by burning to death.

Meanwhile, assistance from the sheriff came and an investigation began. According to newspaper articles at the time, there were tracks in the wet dirt of a horse and wagon having been at the rear of the house. On further investigation, a note was reportedly found.

It was in Kate's handwriting, but it would be believed that she was forced to write it. It indicated she had been taken by the "Black Hand" and was being held for ransom.

The "Black Hand" was the most violent branch of the Sicilian underworld. They often kidnapped, and usually killed their victims even if the ransom was paid. Less than two years prior, they had kidnapped 8-year-old Walter Lamano, a New Orleans youth. His father was the owner of a prominent funeral home and the father was perceived to have money. Despite paying the ransom, the child's dismembered body was found near Hahnville, Louisiana.

Their ransom request usually had some dramatic drawing on them such as a black hand, or blood dripping knife. None of this was found at the home of Kate and John.



On February 19, 1909 a similar article appeared in the *Charleston News and Courier*. Some additional information was revealed. It was reported that there were tracks in the back of the house where a horse and buggy had been. It also revealed that the Governor of Louisiana had put up a large reward and that the bayou had been dynamited in an attempt to get the body to come to the surface.

In light of the kidnapping of three other prominent New Orleans women about that time, the story of Kate Boggs Edmunds seems to have disappeared from the newspapers. The public was stunned when, on March 02, 1910, the *Montgomery Advertiser* headlined:

Mrs. Edmunds Returns

Mrs. John Edmunds who disappeared mysteriously from her new home in Slidell, Louisiana about a year ago has returned to her old home in Coatopa but without explaining her absence.

..... Several days ago a woman answering the description of Mrs. Edmunds appeared at her old home in Coatopa and her identity was established by persons in the community. The woman, it is said, would give no information as to her leaving home.

Shortly after her disappearance, it was said she was recognized in Chicago, but that person denied her identity, claiming to be the sister of the missing woman. No cause of yet had been assigned for her conduct.

On March 10, 1910, *The St. Tammany Farmer* wrote:

Mrs. Edmund's Return

A special dispatch from York, Alabama to the Birmingham Age-Herald tells the following weird story:

A case of almost the dead coming to life happened here last night when Mrs. John Edmunds walked into the residence of her father-in-law, William Edmunds.

Mrs. Edmunds was kidnapped at her home in Slidell, Louisiana a year ago and with the exception of a little inscription under the lap of an envelope written by her at the command of and signed, "Black Hand" demanding money for her release, nothing had been heard of her.

A year ago, after seeing her children asleep, Mrs. Edmunds went out into the backyard to see that the chicken house was locked. After attending to that, she turned to go to the house but was seized by two men. She screamed, but a hood was thrown over her head. She claims she was taken to the bayou where another man was waiting with a launch. She was strapped to the bottom of the launch and carried some distance where she was released of the straps, put in a wagon

and driven some distance to an ante-bellum house. Here she was carried to a room on the second floor and there she stayed until December 31, when she was told by her captor to prepare to leave, they were mistaken thinking the family was very wealthy. She was carried in the same launch and with a lady and two men were put off after a short run only a few blocks from the Louisville, Nashville Railroad in New Orleans.

A ticket was bought for her and the lady confederate to Birmingham via Mobile. They intended to take Mrs. Edmunds to Birmingham and leave her. At Mobile she dodged the lady and caught a train back to New Orleans and then came to Birmingham. After a short stay she came here.

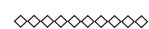
Her husband has left Slidell and she was unable to find him. She says that she was treated with the utmost respect, was given everything she wanted and was very kindly treated while confined.

From Abbeville, South Carolina, the *Abbeville Press and Banner* prints a little different account. Highlighting and paraphrasing just the differences in her story, it reads:

After being seized, she was told if she wanted to live to not scream. Then she was taken a short distance through the woods to a wagon. When she came to herself, she was placed in the launch and strapped down. They traveled two nights and one day. The launch has curtains that are drawn. The second night, they landed, and she was placed in an automobile with three other people. They rode a good ways, to an old house surrounded by moss covered trees. It was the most desolate place on earth as far as she could see.

At some point she says she wrote a letter to John and then a Negro woman helped her escape along with a woman who belonged to the "gang." That woman bought the tickets to Birmingham where she escaped from that woman in Mobile. She says she went to New Orleans to be near her family in Slidell but did not get an answer so after three weeks she wrote her sister to send her money which was sent to her by train. This is when she learned her children were living with her mother.

She had two bad spells of sickness while in captivity but was treated by a doctor who had trained in Paris. She said she was treated well and provided anything she wanted to eat prepared the way she asked it to be.



Again, the story of the kidnapping of Kate Edmunds tends to drop from the headlines, except for one final article from *The St. Tammany Farmer* dated March 12, 1910.

It references an article in the *New Orleans Daily States* which may shed light on the story, but copies cannot be found. *The St. Tammany Farmer* reads:

We note in last weeks Farmer an article taken from the Daily States, concerning the kidnapping of Mrs. Edmunds of Alabama. Out of defense of our own and officers I would like to state that several errors were made in Mrs. Edmunds' statements, no "Black Hand" note was ever found by the officers. In fact, the officers do not credit the story with being true. In the first place, if the lady was released on December 31st, why did she not return to Slidell? Where has she been since that date? Our officers and a large number of citizens spent night after night in the swamps, marshes, dragged the bayou, and made every possible search for the missing lady, but to no avail. Out of consideration to the people who searched for days for her, it would have been her duty, I think to have returned here and taken up a search for the guilty parties and the house she was supposed to be confined in for nearly nine months. I trust I do not show any disrespect to Mrs. Edmunds, but surely the story is queer.

◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇

Conclusion

It would not be a stretch of the imagination to state that this story created some gossip. She would not have been the first woman to get dissatisfied with tending children and struggling to acquire things she thought she would have had by that time.

It would not be unusual for her to have suffered depression, especially if she left home on the anniversary of her child's death. Nevertheless, where did she go? Who supported her? Finally, why did she return at all?

This we know: she and John reunited, at least for a while. In 1912, two years after she returned, she and John gave birth to a daughter. The census record is not legible to obtain a name. In 1917, another child, Aubry, was born.

In 1920, Kate was living in Alabama and John in St. John Parish, Louisiana. The census reports them as married but not in the same household. In 1930, Kate is still in Alabama, married, but not in the household with John. He is in North Louisiana.

In 1940, the census lists her as widowed. There is no confirmation of John's death.

Kate died in 1941 and is buried in Brewersville, Alabama. Several of her children are also buried there. John is not.



John S. Case March 2024



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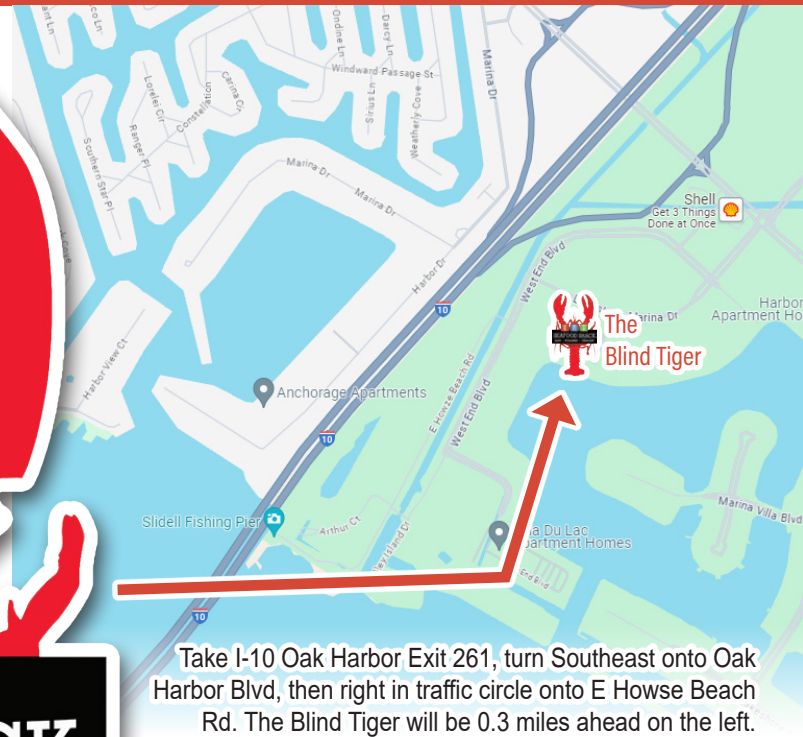
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When you enter the newly renovated, iconic, two-story brick building at 1808 Front Street, the smell of fresh brewed coffee and feelings of historic significance envelop you. The warm ambiance carries you around the corner to the downstairs office of Krissie Brunell, where a cross from Notre Dame Cathedral hangs on the wall representing her company's motto: *Faith, Family, and Business*.

Thomas and Krissie Brunell are the husband and wife team behind **How Money Works Learning Center**. Krissie explains, "We are a part of How Money Works because we want to promote the financial education that you didn't learn in school."

There are about 2,000 How Money Works agents in the U.S. and the Brunells are proud to bring the financial education concept to their neighbors in the Slidell area. Tommy and Krissie have called Slidell home for more than 23 years. "We love Slidell. It's a great place to live and to have a business," Krissie says.

Financial Literacy is understanding how to earn, spend, save, manage, and invest money. Simply put, it's knowing how money works. Tommy explains, "Basically, we give families a financial roadmap. We leverage a proven system to enable people to build a better future, save money, get out of debt, and how to plan for retirement and long-term savings."

Only 23 states require high school students to take a personal finance course to graduate. So when it comes to finances, the general public, for the most part, is left in the dark. "We teach the 7 Money Milestones: Financial Education, Proper Protection, Emergency Fund, Debt Management, Cash Flow, Building Wealth, and Protecting Wealth."

Tommy explains what makes How Money Works unique. "It's the way we go about it, through financial education, that makes us different. When we sit down with you, we're going to educate you about the financial world, so you're able to make educated decisions; and we never charge our clients a fee."

Tommy emphasizes his point further, "You're an active participant in the decisions. We educate you every step of the way. A lot of people who have gone to other financial firms have products but don't even know what they are. They were just told, 'You are in a particular fund and a lot of times, they don't even know what that means.'"

Krissie nods in agreement. "A lot of people don't know how to

read their own financial statements. In jobs that offer a 401k, people have no idea what they're even signing off on, and they don't know what's in their portfolio. That's dangerous because, if you're 60 years old and all your retirement is in that 401k, and you're watching the bottom fall out, how do you protect your money? You don't have another 15-20 years to rebound from that."

Tommy adds, "We get to know you, get to know what you're looking to do. What objectives do you want to meet, what are your goals, your income, your savings, your protection? Because of the education provided, you'll be able to tell us which way you want to go *with confidence*. Then, we help you fill in the gaps you're missing to help you get where you're going."

Working with a husband and wife team also has its advantages. "We each have different strengths so we balance each other out. We have the same goals, but we approach it from two different perspectives. I think we compliment each other," Krissie notes, smiling at Tommy.

Tommy adds, "We are proud to say that none of our clients have ever lost a dime working with us."

Krissie sums up, "Another motto we have here is *'No Family Left Behind.'* We truly believe that. It's our family helping yours."

How Money Works Learning Center

Thomas & Krissie Brunell



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PICKLEBALL FOR A CAUSE

Now is your chance to join the 4.8 million Pickleball players in the U.S.

One group of local community leaders is trying to bring awareness and help to the mental illness crisis affecting St. Tammany Parish in a unique and fun way.

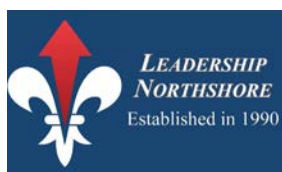
Pickleball For A Cause is a project team of Leadership Northshore committed to supporting the ongoing missions of two community organizations: **NAMI- St. Tammany**, whose main focus is to help individuals gain assistance for mental illness; and **Black Women Do Heal**, whose focus is to erase the stigma of mental illness with minorities.

Leadership Northshore (LNS) was established in 1990 (originally called Leadership Slidell) to identify and select highly motivated, emerging or existing leaders in business, government, and the community to participate in the program. Through monthly classes and team projects, LNS strives to groom future community leaders by helping them to develop

a renewed sense of enthusiasm and “can do” attitude in the community. They do this by educating and challenging the participants as to the needs and opportunities of the community and the dynamics of social and economic change.

LNS develops an esprit de corps among the participants to provide a common ground for working together on present and future community projects and creates a dialogue and rapport between the participants and existing community leadership. All of this leads to an increased level of commitment and participation in the community by their students and graduates.

Pickleball For A Cause team leader, Courtney Elzey, describes the LNS experience, “We learned about the St. Tammany Parish community and what it takes to be true leaders within the parish as a whole; things like Economic



Pickleball For A Cause Team Members (left-right): Adam Pearson, Courtney Elzey, Synthia Tate, Pamela Breaux, Diana Troyer, Greg Crum, Damianna Folse (not pictured: Robert Estopinol)

1/3 of Americans ages 15-54 will develop a mental illness in their lives.

(Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA))

1 in 5 people experience a diagnosable mental disorder in any given year. For Louisiana, this is an estimated 650,000 adults and 245,000 children.

(Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals)

Development, Government, Education...and we're still learning, there's more to come. We are getting the tools and tips to be better stewards in this community. Leadership Northshore is providing us with access to this training and giving us the tools we need."

Courtney explains why they chose their project, "Mental health issues have been a huge factor in the growth and overall health of St. Tammany Parish. There are resources out there to help you and your family deal with mental health issues; the community just needs to be aware of them. We looked for an opportunity to raise awareness and support while offering the community a chance to come together, get some exercise, and have fun." Exercise is known to be a useful combatant in the prevention and treatment of depression. Laughing, Courtney says, "Look, if I can learn how to play Pickleball, *anybody* can play it!"

For the years 2021- 2023, Pickleball was named the fastest-growing sport in the U.S. by the Sports and Fitness Industry Association. The game was created in 1965 in Washington

state by Joel Pritchard, who later served in the U.S. Congress and as Washington's lieutenant governor. The game was a spur of the moment idea to keep his family occupied by using pieces and parts from other games that were stored around the house. Because of this, it was named Pickleball by his wife, who said it reminded her of the pickle boat in rowing, when oarsmen are chosen from leftovers.

The Pickleball For A Cause Tournament will take place Sunday, April 28, 2024 at Fritchie Park Gym in Slidell. The tournament will include men's, women's, and mixed doubles. Play is open to anyone 18+ and of any skill level. The cost to play ranges from \$49-\$59, with spectator admission being only \$5. Sponsorships are still being sought for the Tournament, with great recognition for all sponsorship levels.

Registration, sponsorship, and tournament information can be found on their website: Pickleball4acause.com or their Facebook Page: [Pickleball For A Cause LNS 2024](#). You can also use the QR code below.

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"Your Estate Matters" Legal-ease

By Ronda M. Gabb, NP, JD, RFC



CARE FOR THE CAREGIVER

Today is "National Caregiver's Day" and a very opportune time for me to write this article straight from my heart. Let's be honest, most of us live blissfully in our world of "everything is OK"...until it isn't. Now it's my turn. My precious 88-year old, formerly independent mother was hospitalized on January 10th and admitted to Notre Dame Hospice on January 15th. She now requires 24-hour care, and I am the only child. My brother (and only sibling) passed away almost four years ago, but even if he was still here, I would continue to say "I am an only child...with a brother!" As many of you know, having children is no guarantee that you will have someone to help care for you! I see this all too often in my elder law practice.

However, even with this huge curveball, I am grateful for many things. Most importantly--my mom has money. We all teased her for being "cheap" (which I now realize was "frugal") but she always said: "I need to have money for my care when I'm sick, so you won't have to." Did she have a premonition? Thank you, Mom, from the bottom of my heart for doing this...for both of us. Yes, we tried to get

her long-term care insurance some 20+ years ago, but she has Hepatitis C, and was uninsurable. Life lesson: if you are healthy, get some kind of long-term care coverage in place NOW. (Call me, I can help you.) So, our game plan is that the last check from mom's checkbook is to the funeral home...and it bounces--LOL! This plan requires perfect timing, however, so what if your timing is off? Do yourself (and your kids) a favor and let the insurance company pay for your care, which should not run out like your bank account will. I would need to win the lottery to continue the quality and level of one-on-one care my mother now enjoys (including living at St. Anthony's Gardens), to the tune of \$20,000 a month!

I am blessed that I am now in "semi-retirement" (working only 40 hours a week! LOL!), and that God had a hand in finding me the right law partner, Chip Morrison. Chip has been a tremendous asset to our firm and our clients, standing ready to handle all the things that I have been doing for the past 25 years, including seeing all new clients since January 2023. This has freed up much of my precious time that I can now spend with my mother.

As of now, Mom still has her mental faculties, but her physical self has been getting so much worse. I am blessed that we can still talk, laugh and reminisce about a life well-lived and well-loved.

Presently, I provide about one-third of the 24/7 care for my mom, and it is mentally and physically exhausting. I cannot fathom how I could provide 100% of her care, yet I have seen many clients do this for parents/spouses while still caring for other family members. I know God has a special cloud in heaven for these caregivers.

With that said, here are six valuable tips for caregivers that I can now fully appreciate, and will try to Care for this Caregiver. 1) Schedule Breaks: plan regular breaks to recharge and relax; 2) Seek Support: connect with friends, family, or support groups; 3) Prioritize Your Health: make time for exercise, proper nutrition, and sufficient sleep; 4) Enjoy Hobbies: engage in activities that bring you joy and fulfillment; 5) Practice Mindfulness: incorporate relaxation techniques; and 6) Ask for Help: don't be afraid to ask for help when necessary.

Listen to my Companion Podcast here ►



See other articles and issues of interest!



Ronald "Chip" Morrison Jr. and Ronda M. Gabb are Board Certified Estate Planning and Administration Specialists, certified by the Louisiana Board of Legal Specialization. Combined, they have devoted 45 years of law practice solely to estate planning, and are Members of the American Academy of Estate Planning Attorneys, National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys, and the Governor's Elder Law Task Force. Ronda is also a Registered Financial Consultant.



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Pretty in Pink



Story and photos by Donna Bush



My heart was racing with anticipation as we slowly motored up to a small island covered with wading birds, some perched and preening; some flying to and fro. Would we see them? Would they be nest building? Would they be sitting on eggs? Would there be babies? This would be my first time in many years to see their babies. My excitement was palpable.

Our vetted guides offered good likelihood that we would. However, having been a wildlife photographer for many years, I'm fully aware that sometimes wildlife cooperates and sometimes it does not. Nesting birds have their own biological clock and we are just observers.

On our first trip, we slowly pulled to a stop at the nearby island. There were numerous birds building nests but no babies. We were too early for eggs and certainly too early for hatchlings.

What was our photography goal? Have you noticed a bright pink wading bird while walking, boating, or fishing near our local wetlands? Although often mistaken for flamingos, most of the time they are actually roseate spoonbills.

Resembling something prehistoric with bright colors you might expect to see in a children's Pixar movie, these gorgeous wading birds are in the ibis/spoonbill family. With their interesting spoon-shaped bill, they could easily be an animated movie character!

Of the six different spoonbill species in the world, these are the only one pink in color and the only one found in the Americas. The other spoonbills are Eurasian, royal, African, black-faced, and yellow-billed; occurring in Asia, Africa, Europe, and Australia.

Often called the "Cajun Flamingo", they sport bright rose-colored feathers with strikingly flamboyant red highlights, and intense red eyes. Their colors are brighter and more vibrant when wearing their breeding plumage. Their 4-foot wingspan is almost double their height. Roseates and flamingos are the only pink wading birds native to North America.

I must digress a bit...I'd be remiss if I did not mention the lone American flamingo who visited New Orleans East near Bayou Sauvage National Wildlife Refuge in September and October of 2023. It is thought that

he/she may have been blown in by strong winds from Hurricane Idalia. You may remember my story about Boudreaux the Flamingo. [*Slidell Magazine*, November 2023]

The gregarious and unique roseates are more frequently found in south Florida, southeast coastal Texas, and extreme southwest Louisiana. Considered uncommon breeders in our area of the state, they are a sight to behold when one is spotted.

In the 19th century, they were hunted to near-extinction for their beautiful plumes, which were used to adorn ladies' hats. In the 1940's, they became protected and today have a conservation status of low concern.

If you remember my story last year about the amazing photography opportunities at the fabulous Cat Island [*Slidell Magazine*, September 2023], my first trip to these rookery islands occurred at the same time. We were too early to see the roseate babies. But we observed many adults building their nests for soon-to-be laid eggs or sitting on active nests.

Fast forward about a month, when I once again visited the rookeries, which



are found in the Louisiana waters of the Biloxi Marsh. We definitely saw roseate chicks this time! Judging by the shape of their bill, I would guess them to be between 2-3 weeks old. When born, the chicks do not have the spoon-shaped bill. At 9 days old, it begins to flatten. By 16 days, it takes on the spoon-like shape. By day 39, it is almost full size. Even though we saw a few chicks, there was still lots of active nest building and egg incubating.

These wildly-colored birds are often spotted wading in shallow waters looking for food by swishing their partially opened bill from side to side, snapping it shut when they feel prey touch the sensitive nerves inside their bill.

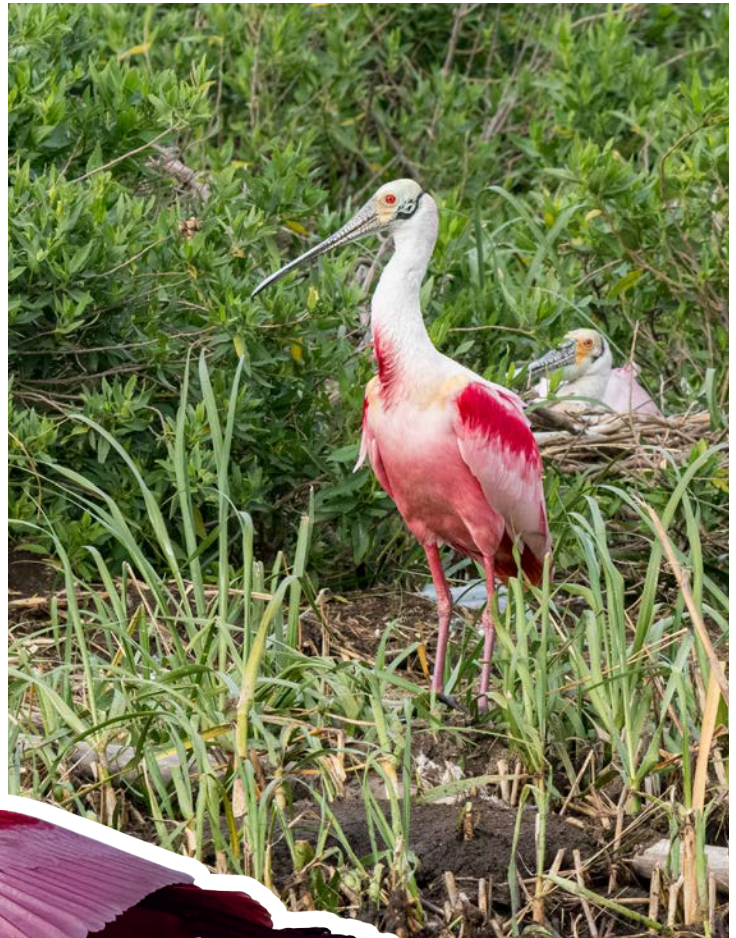
The oldest known wild roseate spoonbill was at least 15 years, 10 months old when it was recaptured and re-released during a 2006 Florida scientific study. Formerly, they were thought to only reach age 7. Like aging humans, they lose their head feathers as they grow older.

If a roseate took on human tendencies, they would be considered extroverts with their extremely social behaviors. I've rarely seen one alone. They are either with others of their species or with various other wading birds, such as ibis, egrets, herons, or cormorants. In fact, they are often observed feeding together, nesting together in large colonies, and flying together in flocks. A group of spoonbills is known as a "bowl."

Several years ago, I photographed nesting roseate spoonbills at Cypress Island Nature Conservancy Preserve in Breaux Bridge. Many species of wading birds nested together in the huge rookery colony of tall live oak, bald cypress, and tupelo trees. Large alligators lazed beneath the nests in the murky duckweed-topped water, waiting expectantly for a young chick to take one wrong step and become their next meal. Even though the gators were opportunistic if a bird slipped, they also protected the nesters by intimidating raccoons, possums, bobcats, etc. who might predate the nests.

Imagine my surprise when we discovered the Biloxi Marsh nests were in small mangrove shrubs. Certainly not tall enough to be considered a tree. At best, they were 2-4 feet in height. It appeared to me that a high tide or tidal surge from a storm would easily overtop the nests. Thankfully, they will all be fledged by the time hurricane season rolls around. The bodacious birds were still just as extroverted as they nested next to great egrets, tricolored herons, reddish egrets, and other wading birds.

I was able to take one more trip to the rookery islands a





month later. Again, timing is everything. Now, I was too late to see any very young juveniles; just gawky-looking teenagers, trying to convince Mom or Dad to feed them. The eggs are incubated for about 3 weeks, with them leaving the nest around 5-6 weeks and capable of strong flight at 7-8 weeks of age. This explains how I missed seeing the young, primitive-looking babies. Juveniles aren't as prettily pink as their parents. For the most part, they have white feathers with a slight pink tinge on their wings.

Even though they don't nest for life, the parents will stay together for each specific breeding season. Incubation and feeding are performed by both adults. Food is regurgitated into the hungry youngsters' open bills. As they grow older, their feathers pinken up, reaching full maturity at 3 years old.

Of course, it is their vibrant pink color and grey, spoon-shaped bill that give them their name. Known as filter feeders, they use their 6-inch bill to catch their food, with the nostrils at the base used to prevent water from entering as they sway their bill in the water searching for food. Their crustacean diet, consisting of aquatic insects, shrimp, and fish is responsible for their unique rosy

coloration. These crustaceans feed on algae that have carotenoid pigments, giving the Roseate spoonbills their rich, vibrant coloring.

An average adult will stand 28-33 inches tall on their long red legs with semi-webbed, dark feet. It is hard to believe these rosy fliers with a 4-foot wingspan only weigh 3 pounds. The male is slightly larger than the female and his flat bill is a little longer.

In flight, they are a sight to behold, as they fly as a flock in long diagonal lines with their necks and legs stretched out in opposite directions. On the other hand, on take-off and landing, they are not so graceful. Take-off looks like they weigh fifty pounds rather than three, as they struggle to get airborne. Landing is more like an uncontrolled crash, as they come to land on what seems to be the skinniest limb imaginable and sway back and forth trying desperately not to face-plant into the vegetation.

You don't have to take a boat trip to the Biloxi Marsh to see these beautiful creatures. Occasionally, they are found in Bayou Sauvage National Wildlife Refuge in New Orleans East. Sadly, they don't nest here but at least you can observe and enjoy their pretty-in-pink beauty.

Roseate spoonbills, movie stars!

Roseate spoonbills have been portrayed in Disney's "The Princess and the Frog," a 2009 movie set in New Orleans during Mardi Gras about a prince who is turned into a frog by voodoo. The wanna-be princess kisses the frog, thinking he will turn into a prince. However, she turns into a frog instead. They end up in a swamp escorted by a horn-blowing alligator named Louis on their quest to become human again. They are in search of Mama Odie, who can reverse the voodoo spell. The roseates sing the chorus for Mama Odie as she performs "Dig a Little Deeper."



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Give Your Dog More Days of Play

Dr. Jeff Perret, Veterinary Medical Center

A note from Kendra Maness, Editor:

Dr. Jeff Perret began writing for *Slidell Magazine* in our very FIRST EDITION, in June 2010. He has been a trusted veterinarian and friend to over 300 of my foster dogs and personal pets. His stories, which dispense medical knowledge and advice with a healthy dose of humor and good sense, have appeared in 120 editions of *Slidell Magazine*. He is back (finally!!) from a two-year hiatus. Welcome back Dr. Jeff, we missed you! ~ KM

One of the most common reasons for pet owners to visit their veterinarian is lameness. Our patients, especially those in their golden years - let's say 8 years and older, on average - frequently exhibit signs of pain; sometimes subtle, and sometime not so subtle. Fortunately, there's a new arrow in the quiver that veterinarians can use in the fight against osteoarthritis (OA) pain. Zoetis has announced the launch of LIBRELA® (bedinvetmab) and SOLENSIA® (frunevetmab). These are the first products in a new class of medications for the management of osteoarthritis (OA) pain in dogs and cats. The new osteoarthritis products are currently available to vets in the US, after a recent trial launch.

Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) are currently the most commonly used treatment option for OA pain. Although effective, NSAIDs come with limitations. Some dogs and cats may have concurrent conditions that aren't compatible with NSAIDs, and some may take other medications that aren't compatible with NSAIDs. There are also issues with owner compliance and difficulty with administration for some patients.

These issues can often lead to under-treatment of OA pain. With Solensia for cats and Librela for dogs, veterinarians can administer once-monthly injections for the management of

pain associated with osteoarthritis, offering a new alternative to improve the quality of life for pets and their owners.

Librela and Solensia work by targeting Nerve Growth Factors (NGF), substances that play a key role in the biochemical cascade that produces pain. As monoclonal antibodies, they are eliminated by the body in the same way as naturally occurring proteins, with minimal involvement of the liver or the kidneys.

OA pain can affect pets in various ways, often impairing their ability to perform daily activities such as jumping and playing, which negatively impacts their quality of life. Solensia and Librela aim to alleviate that pain and improve physical activity and overall quality of life. The new products aim to provide effective pain relief through monthly injectable treatment, which eliminates any issues with owner compliance of medicating at home.

In a clinical study over three months, a total of 76% of cat owners reported sustained improvement in signs of pain when their cats were treated with Solensia. Librela for dogs was found to demonstrate a reduction in OA pain when compared to placebo-controlled dogs, with pet owners noticing a reduction in pain and increase in physical activity levels. Our anecdotal experience in my practice has been consistent with what we were told to expect, with remarkable results. Clients have been spontaneously sending in before-and-after videos demonstrating some fantastic results. (Kendra and her dog, Hannah, included!)

OA is a progressive disease in dogs and cats. The best approach to therapy includes analgesics, weight management and exercise. It's important that veterinarians work with pet owners on a multi-modal approach to support the quality of life of the pet.

For more information about recognizing the signs of pain in dogs and cats, visit www.zoetispetcare.com for helpful articles.

The image displays the Zoetis Librela product packaging for dogs. On the left is a box for the 15 mg formulation, labeled 'Librela 15 mg' and 'Bedinvetmab / bedinvetmab'. In the center is a box for the 10 mg formulation, labeled 'Librela 10 mg' and 'Bedinvetmab / bedinvetmab'. To the right of the 10 mg box is a small glass vial of the medication. On the far right is a box for the 5 mg formulation, labeled 'Librela 5 mg' and 'Bedinvetmab / bedinvetmab'. A QR code is positioned in the center, with a green circular callout containing the text 'LEARN MORE AT' pointing to it. Below the QR code and callout is the Zoetis logo in orange. At the bottom of the image is the website address www.ZOETIS.com in blue capital letters.



MAKING CENTS OF YOUR MONEY

Read Mike's
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by: Mike Rich, CFP® | Pontchartrain Investment Management

WHEN LIFE GIVES YOU LEMONS...

This past October, Mary and I traveled to Spain for a wonderful two-week tour. We spent three days in Barcelona, then went on to Madrid, Segovia, Toledo, and Granada. The weather was nice, we had no rain, the food was great, and the Spaniards were welcoming. Our merry band of travelers enjoyed seeing, among other wonders of Spain, the magnificent architecture of Antoni Gaudí, the art treasures of the Prado museum, and the storied and mysterious land of Don Quixote.

My favorite city was Barcelona, and I especially enjoyed its cava, Spain's version of champagne. The Catalonians drink it at any time of day,



even breakfast. Here is a picture of me raising a glass. At breakfast. I was on vacation.

On day 9, our trip was going great. Until it wasn't. As we were packing to leave Granada for the southwestern part of Spain, Mary tested positive for Covid (along with six other folks in our group). Under the rules of our travel company, we had to leave the tour. So, there we were, 4,800 miles from home, in a foreign country, speaking nothing more than 50-year old college Spanish, on our own, and with a hotel owner who was eager to see us leave. After about 45 minutes of panic and bewilderment, we gathered our



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SCAN ME

thoughts and decided to go to Sevilla (the scheduled final stop of our tour) and spend our remaining five days there. Thanks to the wonders of the Internet, I found the perfect hotel in Sevilla and the last two tickets for the bus to get us there. Four hours later (and after a not-to-be-forgotten taxi ride from the Sevilla bus station), we were enjoying tapas (and cava!) under the water misters at our hotel's outdoor bar. Fortunately, Mary recovered after a day or so, and we had a fabulous time. On day 14, we left Sevilla via the amazing high-speed AVE train to Madrid for one more day to tour the fabulous Reina Sofia art museum.

Despite the Covid setback, we had a great time, mainly because Mary and I worked together to make lemonade from the lemons that life had given us at that moment in Granada. Looking back, we didn't waste time thinking about details. Instead, we concentrated on the big picture: where to go, a place to stay, how to get there, etc., trusting that the details would take care of themselves. They did, and our trip was a success.

Personal finances are similar to our Covid-in-Spain experience. The big decisions are the ones that count: saving as much

as you can, starting early on an investment plan, spending wisely on big purchases such as houses and vehicles, things like that. The details – the \$5.00 latte, an nice dinner out, a broken refrigerator – only matter if you are not being mindful of the big stuff.

It is my core belief as a financial planner that we all need a big picture view of how our money works, both good and bad. If that sounds like something valuable to you, call me today and we'll get started.

And, I'll have some lemonade ready.

► Mike Rich, CFP®

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Treatment for Anxiety and Depression? Success!

STANFORD A. OWEN, M.D.

Not a week goes by without another remarkable patient story about resolution of anxiety, “depression”, and insomnia by simply succeeding in life. It is a “DUH” moment but imagine enduring 12 years of school (or less in many cases) where you were told you were “lazy”, “not trying hard enough”, or “don’t care” when you were giving it your all. You just couldn’t stay on task, follow instructions, get organized, or be on time.

Then there is all job firings and job switching, trying to find a fit for your “style and temperament”.

You show up at home, are asked to do a myriad of household tasks, care for the kids, pay the bills, or any number of chores of life. Your spouse is beating you up about losing another job, stressing you both out about how to pay the bills, then screaming at you for being a failure?

I see these patients all day, every day. It is heartbreaking.

After a complete history and exam, we figure out where the shortcomings exist in focus, tasking, and organizing, measure them on a 0—10 scale. We then quantify the anxiety, depression, and insomnia and start medications. Immediately your brain’s frontal

lobe activates and is engaged. You can focus, plan, and organize. Your job tasks are completed, your boss compliments you, or even better, gives you a raise and/or a promotion, customers are thanking you, the household chores are completed, the bills are paid, and the kids get to functions on time with your help.

How does that make you feel?

You knew you were a good, caring person. You loved your spouse and kids. You wanted to succeed at a job and get paid well. It just never happened.

These symptoms weren’t cured by counseling (although dealing with a lifelong legacy of negativity is always helpful). They weren’t cured by more education. They weren’t cured by antidepressants or anti-anxiety meds (which could make ADD worse). Most importantly, they weren’t cured by beratement or chastisement. They improved by succeeding! The failures were replaced by confidence, admiration, and promotion.

It’s not always that simple but it certainly is gratifying for everyone involved: doctor, patient, spouse, kids, employers, and work colleagues. Success and failure are watershed phenomena.



Stanford A. Owen, M.D. is Certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine, the American Board of Physician Nutrition Specialists, and the Neuroscience Education Institute as a Master Psychopharmacologist. He is certified in Hyperbaric Oxygen and a Fellow in the Obesity Society.



COOL, FUNNY, BIZARRE, OR INTERESTING THINGS I LEARNED THIS MONTH

Story by Suzie Hunt



IN THE WORLD...

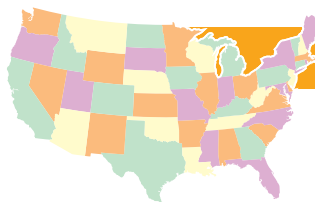
Water Bears - Cute, Crafty and a Little Creepy

You may have noticed a photo popping up on social media that appears to be an inchworm who overdid the all-you-can-eat buffet at the local casino. Although it looks like a cartoon caricature, the picture is real and depicts a phenomenal micro-animal known as a tardigrade or "water bear".

Tardigrades are super tiny creatures that measure about 0.5 mm, or 0.02 inch, when full grown. A German zoologist by the name of Johann August Ephraim Goeze first described the organism in scientific literature in 1773. The translation of his German description of the little guys was "water bear". An Italian biologist Lazzaro Spallanzani gave them the name Tardigrada, or tardigrades, in 1777, meaning "slow steppers".

When humans have disappeared from the earth, there is a good chance tardigrades will still be around. They have been found on top of mountains, in the deep sea, and in the Antarctic. Scientists have discovered they can withstand exposure to extreme temperatures, air deprivation, extremely high- and low-pressure atmospheres, as well as radiation and dehydration. They have even survived exposure to outer space. And they've been around a while. Tardigrades have been found suspended in amber more than 66 million years old.

When they are threatened by environmental conditions, tardigrades turn to cryptobiosis to survive. They expel more than 95% of the water in their bodies, and curl up into a ball, much like an armadillo. Extreme low temperatures, lack of oxygen and excessive salt in their surrounds can trigger this response. When they are in this state, their metabolism drops to as little as 0.01% of normal levels. The cryptobiosis process can be reversed when conditions improve and the tardigrade encounters water.



IN THE U.S...

The Different Flavors of St. Patrick's Day

St. Patrick's Day has been part of the cultural calendar in America since before the USA was a thing. Billed as a way for Irish immigrants to celebrate customs from back home, observances have gone on for more than 600 years on this side of the pond.

The first celebration of the patron saint of Ireland was held in St. Augustine, Florida in 1600. The following year saw a parade added to the celebration.

By the time the 13 colonies were gearing up, the Charitable Irish Society of Boston held its first celebration with a special worship service and dinner in 1737.

With the help of groups such as the Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick and the Hibernian Society, the first St. Patrick's Day Parade was held in New York City in 1848. It is said to be the oldest civilian parade as well as the largest parade in the world.

Parades come in all sizes. Where NYC has the largest, Enterprise, Alabama boasts the world's smallest parade. It has a single marcher of Irish descent, dressed in traditional garb and carrying a large Irish flag. This person walks the one block from the courthouse to the Boll Weevil monument and back. Parade done and barely enough time to drink a pint of green beer.

Speaking of green beer, the students at Miami University of Ohio celebrate Green Beer Day, or GBD, a few days before March 17 and the start of Spring break. While some begin the "holiday" at midnight, bars in Oxford cannot open until 5:30 a.m. Class attendance is probably affected, but that is not noted in online reporting.

Butte, Montana once had the highest percentage of Irish immigrants in the United States, beating out Boston for the title. Many were involved in the mining operations in the area and Irishmen were so important to the industry that Gaelic was the common language spoken in the mines. The local population of approximately 35,000 people doubles with visitors to the city's St. Patrick's Day celebrations.





IN LOUISIANA...

A Salty Piece of Land

Salt. It brings flavor to life and Louisiana has a long history where salt is concerned.

Located in the marshes north of Vermillion Bay on the Gulf of Mexico lies a line of salt domes. Formed millions of years ago, these subterranean mounds of sodium chloride arose when pressure pushed a layer of salt upward through other types of sediment. Some domes rise above the surrounding marshland to form islands. The five major salt dome islands are Avery, Cote Blanche, Belle Isle, Jefferson and Weeks Islands.

Archeological evidence has shown that prehistoric Native Americans have produced salt from brine in Southwest Louisiana since around 1000 AD. Ancient pottery and basketry found on Avery Island, home to Tabasco sauce production, proves this point. European explorers in the 1500s noted the Atakapa Ishak people living in the area worked to harvest salt and brine.

Overall, there are 68 known salt domes in Louisiana. They ranged in size from one to three miles wide and can range in depth from zero feet (the top of the dome lies on the surface) to as much as 10,000 feet below ground. Mines constructed in these domes produce approximately ten percent of America's highway salt.

Just as important, the salt extracted from these minds produces a main ingredient for the production of pepper sauce, that wonderful elixir that sits next to the salt and pepper on local dinner tables.



IN SLIDELL...

Bigger Storms - Bigger Scale?



Is there a Cat 6 hurricane in our future? That's not a typo. Scientists with the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory and the First Street Foundation are making the case for an addition to the Saffir-Simpson Wind Scale for hurricane predictions.

At present, the scale has five divisions for hurricane strength. A storm is designated a Category 1 hurricane when its sustained winds reach 74 miles per hour. The Cat 5 category is for storms with winds greater than 157 MPH. (Otherwise known as the category where you should be visiting your cousins in Missouri when the storm makes landfall.)

The proponents for a Category 6 description say it would offer emergency preparedness officials a better idea of storm strength and the potential for more severe damage. A Cat 6 storm would have winds exceeding 192 MPH. Although it seems that a hurricane of that size is unfathomable, they are a new reality. Looking at storm data from 1980 to 2021, researchers found five storms would have qualified for a Category 6 designation and all of these were within the last decade. The rise in ocean temperatures is seen as the main culprit in increased storm strength.

Is this necessary? A Cat 5 storm is described as a hurricane that levels buildings, cripples power infrastructure and makes the area uninhabitable for months. Catastrophic damage is bad enough. Can something be more catastrophic? Why not stick with 1-5. It's familiar and easy to remember. Luckily, we were spared a visit by Jim Cantore last year. Let's hope we don't see any Cats this fall.

Living with Osteoarthritis

Have you noticed you feel stiff in your joints after waking up or sitting down for a long time? Occasional stiffness is standard, but if this is normal for you, especially as you age, you may be experiencing osteoarthritis.

Osteoarthritis (OA) is a degenerative condition that occurs when your bones rub against each other and wear down the cartilage lining your joints over time. OA is the most common form of arthritis and can affect any joint. **The most common places that OA will develop are the following:**

- Neck
- Back
- Hands
- Knees
- Hips

Arthritis is a slow-developing disease that progresses as you age. As you age, the everyday wear and tear on your joints leads to the breakdown of your cartilage. While older adults are more likely to develop OA, anyone can have it. **You may be more at risk for developing OA if you have a health condition such as:**

- Autoimmune diseases of the joints (lupus, Rheumatoid arthritis, Psoriatic arthritis)
- Diabetes
- High cholesterol
- Obesity

Since OA is a degenerative condition, symptoms can appear mild and then intensify as it advances. If you have osteoarthritis, you must recognize your symptoms and notify your doctor, who will work with you to manage your condition. **The most common symptoms associated with OA are:**

- Red, swollen and painful joints
- Stiffness in your joints
- Pain, especially when you are moving and active
- Decreased range of motion



No cure for osteoarthritis exists, but you can manage your symptoms and live a whole and active life. If you are diagnosed with OA, your healthcare provider will design a treatment plan that best fits your lifestyle and manages your symptoms. **Some standard treatment options a healthcare provider will utilize are:**

1. **Exercise-** Your provider may recommend physical therapy to strengthen muscles and relieve joint pain."
2. **Medication-** Your provider may prescribe pain relievers to reduce joint inflammation and pain.
3. **Hot or cold compresses-** Your provider may suggest applying hot or cold compresses to affected joints to relieve pain, inflammation and stiffness.

If you have osteoarthritis, staying active and talking to your doctor if any of your symptoms drastically change or worsen is important. Remember, you can live a fulfilled life with osteoarthritis and should continue to live your life as normally as possible.

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