

Life Planning Retirement Group Bulletin

AUGUST 2023

NATIONAL FINANCIAL AWARENESS DAY
August 14

WOMEN'S EQUALITY DAY
August 26

Accelerating Equality and Empowerment

Celebrating and empowering women to reach their full potential and creating a world where gender doesn't limit opportunities. Women's Equality Day commemorates 26th August 1920 when votes to women officially became part of the US Constitution.

Get Empowered to sow the seeds to financial independence! Just like planting trees and building muscle, managing money is an essential part of creating a brighter future. It's never too late to take control of your financial journey and transform your life! Let's work together to cultivate financial empowerment, break barriers, and celebrate women's equality.



5 WAYS TO CELEBRATE NATIONAL FINANCIAL AWARENESS DAY

August 14 is Financial Awareness Day - a day dedicated to focusing on financial health. Because your finances will impact many important decisions you will make throughout your life, understanding your financial health and maximizing on ways to improve it can mean a better life for you and your family.

1. **Create or update your spending plan.** Seeing where your money is going each month will help you create and maintain your financial goals.
2. **Set a goal for your savings.** Ideally you should save three to six months' worth of your expenses in your savings. Think of this as your safety net if your life should have an unexpected change like a job loss or a major home repair. Establish the amount of time you can accomplish your goal and determine the course of action to get there. Paying into your savings the same way you would pay a bill is a good way to ensure you're putting money away every month.
3. **Manage subscription services.** Do you know how many subscriptions you're paying for? A \$10 monthly subscription may not seem like much, but that's \$120 per year you could be saving. Evaluate your current subscriptions and cancel ones no longer in use.
4. **Commit to small changes.** Finding alternatives to costly habits can help you reach your goals quicker. Identify changes you can make in your spending and commit to that change. Some of us might want to try making coffee at home or dining out three times a week instead of five.
5. **Know where your credit card stands.** Your credit score will determine whether you can be approved for credit cards, loans, mortgages and auto loans. It also influences the rate and terms lenders may assign upon approval. Keeping your debt low and paying your bills on time are the best ways to increase and maintain your credit score.

Regularly monitoring your progress increases your chances of achieving your financial goals. Stay on track and keep pushing forward.

Remember, financial awareness is the foundation for a bright financial future. Start taking small steps today to build a stronger tomorrow! Call our office at 860-343-1777 or 413-338-8020 to book your FREE session with us today so you can accomplish your life goals.

HEALTH IN THE NEWS

Food containing melatonin may help delay aging

If you're worried about aging, perhaps a little corn on the cob, followed by a bowl full of cherries, and topped off with a glass of red wine might be in order. Why? Because all of these foods contain melatonin, and recent studies indicate the substance may be the long sought after "fountain of youth." Melatonin, a substance that helps neutralize oxidative damage and delays neurodegenerative processes, might have a hand in putting off old age, according to a University of Granada study.

In the study, 5-month-old mice, which are the human age equivalent of 30-year-olds, were used. This is the age where mice start to show signs of aging, due to an increase in free radicals (oxygen and nitrogen), which cause inflammation. This "oxidative stress" can cause cell membranes to become more fragile, making them easier to break and damage. The mice then received melatonin in small amounts. The melatonin not only neutralized the damages, but also delayed the negative effects of aging in the mice.

Researchers believe that daily intake of melatonin by humans beginning at the age of 30 could prevent or at least delay some of the negative consequences of aging, such as neurodegenerative disorders (e.g., Parkinson's disease) and other illnesses such as diabetes.

In the meantime, melatonin can be found naturally in small amounts in certain fruits and vegetables like cherries, bananas and onions; in cereals such as corn, oats and rice; and in aromatic plants such as mint, lemon verbena, sage or thyme; and last but not least in red wine.

Second-hand smoke is dangerous—even outdoors

Stanford researchers have found that sitting a few feet downwind from a smoker when you are out of doors means that you are likely to be at least periodically exposed to substantial levels of contaminated air.

Neil Klepeis, assistant professor of civil and environmental engineering and the lead author of the study, says, "Some folks have expressed the opinion that exposure to outdoor tobacco smoke is insignificant, because it dissipates quickly into the air. But our findings show that a person sitting or standing next to a smoker outdoors can breathe in wisps of smoke that are many times more concentrated than normal background air pollution levels."

The researchers found that if people move about 6 feet away from an outdoor smoker, exposure levels drop significantly.

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RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Fresh and Healthy Cherry Lemonade



This fresh and healthy cherry lemonade is quick and easy to make. It is the perfect drink for a hot summer day!

Ingredients

3 cups of cherries (fresh or frozen)
6 cups of water, divided
2 lemons
4 Tablespoons cherry syrup
2 Tablespoons maple syrup
Fresh cherries, optional garnish

Instructions

Place cherries and water in a medium-sized saucepan. Set the saucepan over high heat and bring to a boil.

Reduce heat to medium and continue to simmer until liquid is reduced by half, about 10 minutes.

Strain out the cherries and save the cherry syrup. (The cherries can be used for a smoothie, pie, or discarded.)

Juice two lemons and divide the juice between two serving glasses, about 2 Tablespoons lemon juice per glass. Pour two Tablespoons of cherry syrup and one Tablespoon of maple syrup in each glass and stir well. Add two lemon halves to each glass, along with a handful of ice cubes.

Then top each drink with one cup of water and stir. Garnish with additional fresh cherries, if desired, and serve immediately.

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