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NEWSLETTER FOR RESIDENTS AND FRIENDS OF THE LODGE AT OLD TRAIL

Geriatric Massage is Here

People who have never received a massage from a trained therapist might be skeptical of its benefits. On the other hand, an estimated 47.5 million adults in the U.S. believing in the efficacy of massage had a total of 214 million massages in 2018, according to the American Massage Therapy Association.

Most massages are performed in a therapist's office, but The Lodge has arranged for on-site sessions with massage therapist Lisa Eller. We asked Ms. Eller to explain her practice for those residents who are interested in trying this therapy.



Courtesy Lisa Eller

Q: Is there massage treatment especially designed for older persons?

A: Yes, geriatric massage is designed to support the elderly male or female body and provide important therapeutic touch and relaxation. After conversing with my clients about health and well being, we decide on either a 30- or 60-minute session. My clients lie on a massage table or sit in a chair, dressed or covered with a sheet, if undressed depending on their comfort level.

Q: Do persons need to have certain physical conditions or can massages help anybody?

A: Everyone benefits from massage. Muscles get sore and tired, joints get stiff, and circulation slows. Getting older is stressful. Geriatric massage is beneficial in so many ways. It improves circulation of blood and lymph and increases blood flow to stiff and sore muscles. Increased blood flow softens hardened muscles and connective tissue. Most importantly, massage is deeply therapeutic because relaxation promotes health and well being. Taking time for a massage helps reduce anxiety and relax your mind and sends a message to your body that you are listening and appreciating all the work it does.

Q: How often and how long are massage sessions needed to be beneficial?

A: For a 30-minute massage my clients lie on their back or sit in a chair. This is sufficient if a client is hesitant about massage or has trouble lying down or **Cont'd next pg.**

RESIDENT FOCUS

When you combine the teaching skills of a Virginia County Agent and those of a high school mathematics teacher, you end up with a powerhouse couple named Jim and Dot Grove. The Groves represent more than 50 years of imparting knowledge to Virginia citizens in a half dozen of the state's counties. They moved from county to county with each of Jim's reassignments as Virginia County Agent (now called Extension Agents). After Jim's retirement, they returned to Woodstock in Shenandoah County where they lived for 26 years. "It was like a homecoming," says Dot, because that is where they had met 30 years earlier. The Groves moved to The Lodge in 2019 when Jim was showing signs of dementia.

A summer job as a waitress set the stage for Dot's future. Jim was working as a new County Agent and lunched where Dot was waitressing. A romance blossomed and grew. "I graduated from college on Sunday and we were married on the next Saturday," says Dot.

Dot studied mathematics and minored in physical education at Madison College, now James Madison University, in Harrisonburg, Virginia. **Cont'd next page**



Resident Focus (cont'd)

Upon graduation, she was hired as a math teacher at one of the high schools in Shenandoah County.

She was born and raised in Shenandoah County near the town of Toms Brook in northwest Virginia. Her father was a part-time farmer and mechanic at a stone quarry. She is the younger of two sisters.

Jim is a native of nearby Fishersville. He attended schools in Augusta County, including Wilson Memorial High School, and enrolled at Virginia Tech where he graduated with a degree in Animal Science. Jim's father was a farmer and his mother was a public school teacher. In addition to a twin brother, he has another brother and two sisters.

Jim was employed for 30 years by the Virginia Cooperative Extension as a County Agent. County Agents provide educational outreach to state residents in the fields of agriculture and natural resources and family and consumer sciences. Agents are assigned to offices located in each of the Virginia counties. Jim's assignments included the Shenandoah, Prince William, Madison, and Goochland county offices.

Dot continued her teacher career at high schools in the counties where they moved. "I taught algebra, trigonometry, and geometry, but not calculus, and at one time reading and grammar to 7th graders," says Dot.

The Groves have two daughters who live in Charlottesville. Daughter Katherine is an architect who performs building inspections for UVA. Daughter Melissa is a physical therapist at UVA. Melissa and her husband have an 11 year-old daughter, Abby.

The Groves were energetic volunteers during their 25-year retirement in Woodstock. Dot worked as a tour guide and admissions staffer at Belle Grove Plantation in Middletown, Virginia, for five years. Belle Grove was built in the 1790s by President James Madison's sister and husband and is open to the public as a National Historic Landmark. For 10 years, Dot helped with book circulation at the Shenandoah

County Library in Edinburg. She volunteered for 15 years at the Shenandoah County Fair, helping with the display and judging of canned goods and wine entries. She is an avid reader of romance novels and is fond of counted cross-stitching.

Jim was active with the local Ruritan Club and assisted at the local food pantry with the distribution and sorting of food products. He loved to fish and was a dependable attendee of a weekly men's prayer breakfast where he "could catch up on local news and gossip." Jim is a reader of magazines and short stories.

We thank you, Jim and Dot, for your devotion to so many years of public service. You have helped to make a better world.



Clockwise from upper left, toddlers Dot in the mid 1940s and Jim in the early 1940s, Dot at the county fair in 2006, Jim at his office in 1990, and the Groves at their wedding in 1964.

Massage Therapy (cont'd)

turning over. The focus is on specific areas of the body that need attention. Very often, just getting hands, feet, or shoulders massaged is deeply relaxing. For a 60 minute session, clients lie on their stomach and then turn over. The entire body is addressed and the experience is deeply therapeutic and healing. The need for repeat sessions varies.

Q: What training have you received and are you licensed or certified?

A: To practice massage in Virginia one must be licensed as an LMT (Licensed Massage Therapist) by the Virginia Board of Nursing and either maintain national certification or be enrolled in continuing

education. I have been licensed in Virginia since 1997 and was nationally certified for 22 years. I received a certificate to practice geriatric massage from The Daybreak Geriatric Massage Institute in 2019. After working at The Boar's Head Spa, I opened my massage business, Lisa Eller Bodies In Balance, in Charlottesville 19 years ago. I have been providing massage for Lodge residents for the last year.

Q: How do residents contact you for further information?

A: Call me at 434-996-9161. By the way, I will wear an N95 mask during sessions and disinfect all relevant items.

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An American Icon In Peril

It is more American than apple pie. Our founders made it part of the U.S. Constitution, and the revered inventor and statesman Benjamin Franklin became the first person in charge of it when he was made Postmaster General in 1775. Nearly a quarter-millennial old, the Post Office Department, renamed the U.S. Postal Service (USPS), delivers 40 percent of the world's mail and more items in nine days than UPS does in one year.

Providing universal mail service to every house and business in America, the Postal Service and its wizards created mail sorting methods and machines that were the wonder of the world. Mail volume peaked in 2006 when the great migration to electronic bill payments was just beginning. First class mail volume dwindled even as the number of addresses it serves has multiplied. By 2014, even though the Postal Service had shrunk from a workforce of 906,000 to 618,000, it was still the second largest employer after Walmart and top rated among government agencies.

Sometimes a money maker and most other times not, the Postal Service is now facing financial distress like never before. The President calls USPS a joke and wants the agency to quadruple the prices it charges for parcel delivery. More money is being begged from Congress by USPS for its survival. A congressionally approved \$10 billion line of credit is being held up by the executive branch in the hopes of winning concessions from the Postal Service.

In the latest twist, the newly appointed Postmaster General is the first in decades to be appointed from



USPS Long Life Vehicles are the most commonly seen mail trucks. Built between 1987 and 1994, they were meant to only serve through 2017. Replacing the 100,000 vehicle fleet with next generation vehicles will cost \$6 billion, but when a purchase will be made is undetermined.

outside the agency, replacing the first female agency head who retired after a 34-year postal career. Postmaster General Louis DeJoy, a wealthy North Carolina businessman and Republican fundraiser, is invested in a mail-processing contractor, leading critics to wonder where his loyalties might lie.

In the beginning, postage only covered costs for delivery from post office to post office. After free delivery was established in 1863, letter carriers in cities like Philadelphia and Baltimore made up to seven deliveries a day, while people in rural areas continued going to post offices for their mail. It was Postmaster General John Wanamaker's idea in 1891 to test Rural Free Delivery (RFD). Wanamaker created the Wanamaker store chain, Philadelphia's first department store. His RFD was a hit, generating profit for the Postal Service and incentivizing letter writing. But as often happened when the Postal Service tried new ideas, objections flared. The idea was killed by small town merchants who feared everything would be bought through mail order.

After a second testing, President Theodore Roosevelt made RFD permanent in 1902. Rural residents never complained when letter carriers trespassed on their land. Farmers learned weather forecasts and commodity prices on a daily basis. Makeshift mailboxes were made from stove pipes and feed boxes. The increase in rural home delivery led to a decrease in post offices. By 1910, 17,000 unneeded post offices were closed and a history of mail delivery by dog sled, mule train, horse and buggy, railroad, airplane, and motorized vehicles followed.

With the taste of rural home delivery, rural people argued for package delivery, too. Private carriers and country merchants rebelled against it. But President William Howard Taft's signature in 1912 authorized parcel post, raising package weights from four to 11 pounds, generating three million packages on the first day of service, and immediately increasing orders with Sears and Roebuck by five times. **Cont'd next page**



By 1933, only two percent of postal vehicles were horse drawn, a 1926 Model T was fitted with front skis for use on a snow bound New England route, dog sleds were used to transport mail in Alaska until the 1920s, and the eight hour round trip five days a week to the Havasupai Indian Reservation at the base of the Grand Canyon is the last of mule train deliveries.

Postal Service (cont'd)



After Parcel Post began, a couple mailed their 5-year old daughter to her grandmother for 53 cents. She traveled 75 miles by railway baggage car and was delivered by a mail clerk. Child mail was later outlawed. This letter carrier simulated the episode.

Wanamaker's department store heralded the now highly valued "free shipping" on orders of one dollar or more.

All kinds of oddities were sent to test the system, including child mailing, a practice the post office had to make illegal. Package delivery was expanded to seven days a week for the first time in 2013 when the delivery of Amazon packages was begun. Package weight limit is now set at 70 pounds.

Defying the banking industry, President Taft in 1911 established the Postal Savings System, another profitable venture that permitted interest-bearing deposits at local post offices. By 1950, the Postal Service was the largest bank with four million customers and \$3.4 billion in deposits. In 1967 when banks granted the

same government deposit insurance through the FDIC, the postal savings system was ended because it was considered redundant.

With telephones becoming ubiquitous, multiple home deliveries were no longer needed. Railroads were cutting back on service, forcing the Postal System to transport more mail by air and highway. Mail volume, nevertheless, kept growing, making hand sorting no longer fast enough. Resourceful postal workers developed optical scanners and computerized machines that could instantly read and sort letters based on ZIP codes (an acronym for Zone Improvement Plan). Operations were taken over by robots and customers began using the internet to track mail and purchase pre-paid mailing labels and mailing supplies.

Agency reform in 1970 abolished the Post Office Department and established USPS as an independent corporation-like agency free from patronage hiring. Mail volume continued to increase, productivity improved, and a profitable period began in 1983 when federal subsidies were discontinued.

A VIRGINIA CITY MOURNS THE LOSS OF ANOTHER ERA. A 139-year-old industry that employed 6,000 workers in Roanoke is no more. Norfolk and Southern Railway shuttered its famed locomotive shop in May. Dating back to 1881, the shop produced as many as 20 steam locomotives per day and provided jobs to one of every 11 Roanoke residents. The loss is an example of "corporate greed," cried a union boss. No says The Roanoke Times. Companies do not need to be near natural resources like they were, says the newspaper. Ask Amazon what attracted them to northern Virginia and they will say workers with technological skills. "The magnet for jobs in the new economy isn't ore or a rail junction, it's a skilled workforce."



The first locomotive built in Roanoke, circa 1884.

Convinced USPS would continue to be a money maker, Congress mandated payments of more than \$5 billion a year to build a 75-year health care fund for future employees, a practice unheard of in private industry.

In a sudden turn of events, the migration to electronic bill payment and the recession of 2007 ravaged mail volume down to what it had been a quarter century ago, while the number of addresses was growing at one million a year. One third of the postal workforce was let go. Payments to the health care fund went unpaid. Losses mounted every year for the last 13, most of which were related to the health care prepayment requirement. Plans to cut costs by closing more post offices and ending Saturday deliveries were thwarted by Congress. Survival is with borrowed money.

A hopeful sign emerged in February 2020. The USPS Fairness Act was passed in the House of Representatives with a super majority of 309 votes to 106. The bill scraps the prefunded health care requirement and awaits action in the Senate. The legislation would be a giant step to making the USPS viable, but other reforms are needed as well. One proposal is for a return to postal banking services.

Much is at stake, especially the legal obligation to serve the public with trusted universal mail service, exclusive access to mailboxes, the ability for states to conduct votes by mail, self-policing for mail fraud, and the future of 26,000 post offices and 600,000 employees.

Reform action must come soon if the Postal Service is to avoid the draconian impacts of bankruptcy.



The fully functioning 64 sq. ft. Ochopee, FL post office is the smallest in the U.S. It serves a three-county area and is a popular tourist attraction.

The Crozet Post Office dates back to 1878 when it was established in a former railroad depot, served about 50 families, and received daily deliveries by train from Richmond and Staunton. Now nearly 12,000 packages a year are pumped through the post office on Crozet Avenue that serves over 2,500 households.



CORRECTION: JCPENNEY IN STAUNTON IS CLOSING. We reported in the last Lodger that the bankrupt company planned to continue operating in Staunton and Charlottesville. The bankruptcy plan calls for closure of the Staunton store and continued operation in Charlottesville.

ATLANTIC COAST GAS PIPELINE IS KILLED. Dominion Energy and Duke Energy said cost and litigation uncertainties made the project untenable. The cancellation was made in spite of a recent U.S. Supreme Court decision approving the crossing of the Appalachian Trail near Wintergreen. The developers had petitioned the high court to reverse a lower court, disallowing the hiking trail crossing. The cost of pipeline construction has mushroomed to \$8 billion from the original estimate of \$5 billion and a slew of additional legal challenges remain unresolved. The abandonment was denounced by the Virginia Chamber of Commerce for loss of economic benefits, while environmentalists praised the decision.