



INSIDE HILLCREST

CONNECTING NEIGHBORS TO NEIGHBORS

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DECEMBER INSIDE HILLCREST

NOTE TO OUR READERS, the Real Estate report and State of the Market for Hillcrest which we have printed since 2008, will resume next month. For any real estate questions contact Cindy Abraham and Brian Gaiefsky at 954-964-2559 or info@AteamFlorida.com

The Editor and staff of Inside Hillcrest would like to wish our readers and advertisers a very Happy Christmas! May we step into the New Year together with more laughter, more kindness, and a whole lot more peace.

POSTURING

Whenever someone asks what my “position” is in the Hillcrest community, I usually say, “I’m the Mom.” Depending on who you ask, you may also hear “Ms. Rolodex,” “The Connector,” or... a few less flattering nicknames we don’t need to repeat here. I remember one time an employee called me “La Bruja” and told me it meant “butterfly”. But back to “mom”. You know what a mom does, if she is cold, you will have to wear a sweater. So, because I am having a lot of neck and shoulder pain, I am going to tell you what to do.

First of all, how on earth did the word posture, once simply about standing up straight, evolve into meaning “a speech or action that is artificial, hypocritical, or calculated to mislead”? I’ve always admired people with good posture. They look confident, capable, and probably won’t end up at 70 with a neck that sounds like bubble wrap.

I, on the other hand, have never been one of those swan-necked, shoulders-back people gliding through the world. I tend to look down when I walk so I don’t trip over my own feet, especially on stairs, and I slouch at the computer like it’s an Olympic sport. Osteoarthritis hasn’t exactly helped, either. Over the last few years, things have escalated: shoulder pain, neck pain, and now my neck has started making weird sounds when I turn my head.

Enough was enough, I needed to actually do something. I now wear a back brace a few hours a day. I elevated my computer monitor so I’m looking straight ahead instead of at my shoes. I bought Nuzzle pillows, and they’ve worked wonders for keeping my neck aligned at night. But the real game-changer came from a simple Google search for “what to do about a creaky neck.” I watched the video linked below, started doing the exercises, and

I’ve been religious about it, easy to keep up while watching TV.

And yes, Brian has my full permission to call me out when I start to slouch or when I’ve been glued to the computer too long. But when he called me, “Snap, Crackle, Pop”... let’s just say it only happened one time. If any of this sounds familiar, go to the link and give the exercises a shot:

<https://share.google/ILoOpEPcYxxJYvTox>
Because I said so and it is for your own good.

Also, check out the article on page 10.

SHARING THE WEALTH...OF KNOWLEDGE

The “Ms. Rolodex” comes from unit owners who email me asking for the contact information of a vendor, contractor, or service provider. And “The Connector” comes from the building leaders who ask me who has completed a project recently that they are coming up in their building. And as your building board knows, we maintain a Condo Preferred Vendor List—a shared resource so buildings can get reliable bids from companies other buildings have already vetted. If a building has a maintenance issue, I can connect its president with another who successfully handled the same problem. Wise leaders never try to reinvent the wheel.

Next to each recommended vendor is the number of the building that uses them, so your leaders can reach out directly. It’s a simple, efficient system—if people use it. Every now and then a building gets a president who thinks he/she knows everything so they can’t learn anything. When someone refuses to use the preferred list and insists on choosing vendors no one else has ever heard of, the reason is usually one of the following:

1. Their ego is bigger than their common sense.
2. They don’t understand that “skilled labor isn’t cheap, and cheap labor isn’t skilled.”
3. Or—and this is the worst possibility—they are getting kickbacks.

Because let me tell you: presidents who use obscure contractors tend to stay away from HLC meetings but specifically the annual Preferred Vendor List Review in November. Sharing their vendors would blow their cover. When I was certain that one president was getting kick backs from the “no one else used them” vendor, I had another building president call the same vendor and “interview” him for the same big project telling him, “I want the same deal you gave F----o.” The vendor agreed, and of course, did not get the job.

Another switched plumbers and received “referral fees” when unit owners bought water heaters—with no permits. And then there was the truly outrageous case: a board member and a maintenance staffer who funneled major projects to companies owned by the staffer’s relatives. They made a small fortune before skipping town. The case was forwarded to the Hollywood Police Department Fraud Division, but the only thing that investigation accomplished was teaching the next president how not to get caught.

Right now, only three out of twenty-four building boards refuse to participate in or even listen to what other leaders are doing. Their residents pay dearly for that. Ask your building president board whether they use the Condo Preferred Vendor List. If they say no, ask them why not.

Residents have also suggested creating a **Residential Preferred Vendor List** for doctors, attorneys, handymen, and other services. We have the beginnings of one, but we need more strong recommendations. And yes, we vet every submission.

If you’re working with a great tradesperson or business, please share. Good recommendations keep our community strong and ensure good work for a fair price.

NEXT HLC MEETING

Because of the holidays and board elections, **the next HLC meeting will not be until Thursday, February 5, 2026**. At that time our City of Hollywood Police Chief, Jeffrey Devlin, new Fire Chief Jeffrey Levy (no relation to the Mayor) and new Fire Marshall Jorge Castano will meet with our Hillcrest leaders.

Therefore, our Inside Hillcrest reporter, Steve Schneider, will have not have any reports for you until the February 15 issue of Inside Hillcrest. But he has not stopped writing.



Building A Better Community

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Steve also publishes a free online column at **Substack.com**. His column is called **The 7 & Beyond** if you want to sign up for free email copies of his latest pieces on local issues. You can also comb through his free site to read articles he's already written.

If you have a problem signing up, just email us at Inside Hillcrest. We will get your information to him, and he'll sign you up for free articles.

To date, he's mostly written about Hollywood and Dania Beach topics, although the beyond part of **The 7 & Beyond** tells you he'll sometimes find a local angle to write about a state or national issue. Steve is doing this to keep his mind stimulated in retirement. It also helps keep him connected to his community.

Finally, he decided to call his column "**The 7 & Beyond**" because, as a Hillcrest resident, he lives near State Road 7. Our City, with the urging of District 6 Commissioner Idelma Quintana, rebranded State Road 7 The 7 to give it a catchy, modern name for an evolving part of town.

BOARD ELECTIONS

I'm going to repeat this every year until it finally sticks: *People get the government they deserve.*

Please think carefully about what your building truly needs before

voting; don't choose candidates just to fill a slot or because you happen to like them personally. If someone doesn't provide an information sheet or résumé, make sure you understand their background and what they can contribute and compare that to what your building needs.

If they do provide a résumé, verify it. I still remember a candidate who claimed to own a car dealership – not sure what skill that would provide. When we called to confirm, the manager told us he was actually a salesman who had been fired the previous week.

Also, be cautious when information is vague or incomplete. If someone claims to have a master's degree in HOA management, ask for the name of the school and the companies they've managed. You can check the DBPR website to confirm whether someone truly holds a law license or a Community Association Manager (CAM) license. The fact of the matter is that a CAM license is only necessary if they want to be paid to manage a building. It is no guarantee that they are effective.

Anyone with \$329 and 16 hours can go online and get a CAM license. It's literally easier than getting a driver's license—and we all know how "foolproof" that process is.

See page 5 for the qualities of a good board member and a GREAT board.

1301 PROJECT HEARING AT CITY HALL – By Steve Schneider

"The Fab Five" on the Hollywood City Commission approved a land use amendment change for the 1301 Project on Dec. 10. The 5 to 2 vote came after hours of public hearing that went into the night. The land use amendment helps the developers move forward with their plans to build a 27-story high-rise building on city-owned land on Hollywood Beach. The City will now forward the amendment to Broward County, according to Andria Wingett, the Director of Development Services. The City Commission will also hold a second reading on the issue.

Before the Commission vote, developer attorney Keith Poliakoff told a packed City Commission Chamber that he has already reached out to the County. In fact, Poliakoff said he expects to discuss with County officials his contention that Broward County maps going back to the 1970s already label the land in question as zoned Medium-High Residential. The City action Wednesday changed the land use designation to Medium-High Residential, setting the stage for an entity connected to the Related Group to build 111 luxury condo units.

The 1301 Project, now called Portofino Hollywood, also calls for construction of a new City-owned community center, new parking and increased park space. The decision follows years of controversy in Hollywood, dating back to 2022, when the Commission approved a Public-Private Partnership Comprehensive Development Agreement and a Land Lease Agreement.

Before the vote, residents waited their turn to speak in opposition to the project. In a nutshell, speakers charged the deal violates the City's Comprehensive and Master Beach Plans; puts an already vulnerable barrier island at greater risk from climate change and sea-level rise, and flooding. These inexorable climate conditions also put beach residents at risk during floods and emergency evacuation orders, speakers contended.

Additionally, they questioned the wisdom of a 99-year lease, and whether the City got a fair financial return on the deal. One speaker even offered an alternative place to construct the building. Offer the Related Group entity a piece of land at City Hall Circle that intersects with Hollywood Boulevard, the speaker said. Various residents also challenged the Commission majority to put the 1301 Project to a city-wide vote next year. Commissioners said that wasn't necessary; voters elected or re-elected them to speak for them. Some of the Commission majority also noted they got re-elected after approving the 2022 Public-Private Partnership Agreements.

The five commissioners who approved the land use amendment pushed back. They argued large sums of money will flow into City coffers for the

duration of the lease. And that money is needed to hold back property tax increases and pay for City services.

Called the "Fab Five" by a local supporter, they tend to vote together on controversial issues. Only District 1 Commissioner Caryl Shuham, and Vice Mayor and District 6 Commissioner Idelma Quintana, opposed the change.

Shuham leveled a long indictment before casting her vote. Among other things, she noted the proposed construction project has changed significantly since the Commission signed the Public-Private Partnership Agreements.

Therefore, Shuham said, the new plan ought to go before the City Planning and Development Board before the Commission passes judgment. She also called for a new financial review to determine whether the shrinking size of the project will generate all the revenue promised the City in the contract.

What's more, Shuham said, the reduction from 30-stories to 27-stories, and 190 units to 111 units, means the Comprehensive Development Agreement must be modified. Developer attorney Poliakoff agreed, announcing he planned to seek modifications from the City Commission.

Mayor Josh Levy, District 2 Commissioner Peter Hernandez, District 3 Commissioner Traci Callari, District 4 Commissioner Adam Gruber, and District 5 Commissioner Kevin Biederman, voted for the land use amendment. Members of the ruling majority said they love the City, care for its residents, and take actions that they believe benefit the people.

The Commission must still approve a revised site plan and design. But Poliakoff said his team is continuing to make improvements to please as many City residents as possible. Despite this olive branch, he also lashed out at residents who spoke against the project, branding them liars. Poliakoff also admonished volunteer City Planning and Development Board members who spoke during the hearing, charging they conflicted themselves in case the matter comes before their Board again. In another fit of pique, he chastised environmental and land use attorney Richard Grosso for not understanding the law in connection with the land use amendment application.

Moving forward, it's clear a significant group will continue opposing the 1301 Project, with an email to the commissioners becoming public before the hearing. That email came from attorney Grosso who wrote the email on behalf of a client. Grosso reminded City leaders they must act in a way that is consistent with state law.

STATE OF THE COUNTY - County Commissioner Beam Furr - District 6



Greetings Hillcrest Residents,

Happy New Year! 2026 is shaping up to be an exciting year. While the state and national environment may be full of divisiveness and conflict, I am proud to say that Broward County continues to lead in a unified, wholehearted fashion. This year, I look forward to working together to address some of the biggest issues facing Broward County. This includes continuing to build our resilience and sustainability through our new Broward County Resilience Plan, further enacting our Broward Mobility Advancement Program through our surtax, expanding affordable housing, fighting for our libraries and our cultural division in the face of funding cuts and speech restrictions, and much, much more.

2026 is significant in that it is my final year as a Broward County Commissioner. I am so proud to have served as a County Commissioner representing Hillcrest since 2026. Hillcrest is one of the most active communities anywhere in Broward County, and it has been a privilege to work with residents like you on everything from small issues to huge projects. I am still your County Commissioner until November 2026, so never hesitate to reach out!

Reorganization

The past month brought the formal reorganization process for our Broward County Commission. This means that a new Mayor and Vice Mayor were elected to serve for 2026. Congratulations to Mayor Mark Bogen on his selection by our Commission. Mayor Bogen has served on

the Commission since 2014 and represents District 2 in Northern Broward County. His priorities include Animal Care, clean water, and his signature Broward County Heart Project, which has provided free heart scans to many Broward residents in need of life-saving care. The new Vice Mayor is Robert McKinzie. Vice Mayor McKinzie has served since 2022 and represents District 8 in Central Broward. His top priorities include small business, neighborhood improvement, and the arts. I look forward to continuing the great work of our Commission!

During my final meeting as Mayor, before I handed over the gavel, I had the honor to present the annual State of the County. The State of the County was an opportunity to reflect on all the progress we made in 2025. It was particularly noteworthy given the immense challenges faced from our federal government as well as Florida DOGE and other budget complexities. In a time when many of our principles and progress has been abandoned, I am so proud of how Broward County lead by example and continued our long tradition of compassion and service. Thank you to the thousands of Broward County employees who helped make this a productive year, and to the two million Broward residents of all backgrounds who make this a wonderful place to call home.

Contact Us

My District office staff is available to you from 10 AM to 5 PM, Monday through Friday. Due to an accident at the Hollywood Library, this location is currently closed. My staff is also working from my office in Fort Lauderdale and from other locations within our District 6. The Fort Lauderdale office is open for your convenience Monday through Friday from 9 AM to 5 PM. If you would like to schedule an appointment, call 954-357-7006/7790, or email me at bfurr@broward.org.

SEEK TO AVOID PROBATE? CALL THE LAW OFFICE OF STANLEY G. SWIDERSKI, P.A.



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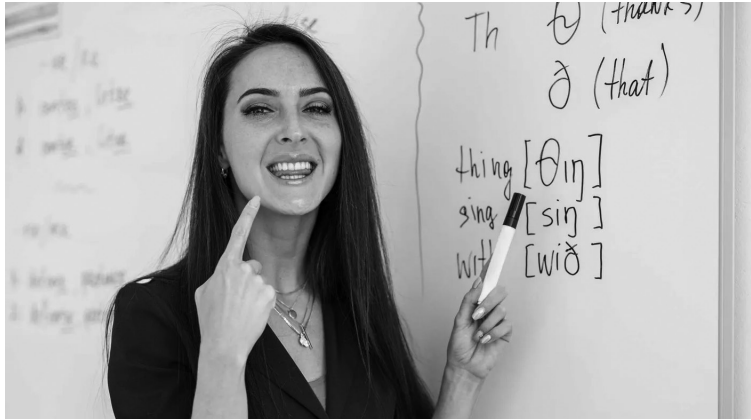
- Wills • Trusts
- Lady Bird Deeds
- Living Wills • Quit Claim Deeds
- Healthcare Surrogate
- Durable/Medical Power of Attorney



(954) 966-0700
1930 Tyler St. Hollywood

www.SwiderskiLaw.com

YOU SAY PO-TAY-TOES AND I SAY PO-TAH-TOES – by Cindy Abraham



This following article interested me because my sister used to work with a woman named Renee who constantly mispronounced words or used phrases inappropriately. It was getting under her skin so much that it was affecting her mood at work. When she told me about Renee and some of the things she said, I laughed like crazy. So, then it became a game. She started looking forward to “Renee-isms” and couldn’t wait to call me with the latest. It saved her sanity for sure.

Some of my favorites were “itinuary” instead of itinerary, “contribution” and “smallerized parts”. But the one that tickled me the most was when she would misuse phrases. “Absence makes the heart grow bigger!”, “A rolling stone doesn’t gather grass!”

We have all heard the phrase “slower than molasses” but Renee took it a step further as in: “It is hotter than molasses out there!”, “It was busier than molasses yesterday”, “That made me madder than molasses” – and the weirdest one – “It’s so *jury outside... jury as molasses!” *(dreary)

The English language is hard to master, even for native speakers. With over an estimated one million words in the language, not only

are English words hard to memorize, they can be hard to properly pronounce and enunciate. Getting tripped up with pronunciation can make your communication unclear, or worse, make you sound uneducated.

The most mispronounced words that drive me crazy are “ax” for “ask” and dropping the “T” in words like: “Bu-un” instead of button, “im-por-ant” instead of important.

Another favorite of the poorly educated is “Sposebly” instead of “supposedly”. And for the love of all that is holy, words that start with “st” are pronounced exactly like they are written: street, stress, stranger, strong; NOT shstreet, shstress, shtranger or shtrong.

Many mispronounced words are common and used in daily conversation due to tricky consonants and vowels in English words. But by knowing the proper pronunciation, it can help you become a more confident speaker, which is why a poll was taken to find out which words people mispronounce the most. The following are some of the words on the list that people say are the hardest to enunciate. I had to admit I do say probly instead of probably, so I need to work on that. But the only time I say punkin instead of pumpkin is in the sentence, “What is going on in your punkin head?!”

Some other common ones are nucUlar for nuclear, remuneration v renumeration (first one is correct), FebUary v February, eraser v erasure, exacerbated v exasperated, asterix v asterisk, liberry v library, specific v pacific, tUmeric v turmeric, eXpresso v espresso, and CardamoN v cardamom. As for Jewry instead of Jewelry, yes, there is a word Jewry but it has a whole different meaning. And Yosemite can be a challenge, although “Yo! Semite!” is pretty funny unless said by a world leader.

There is nothing funny about weaponizing language to divide and dehumanize. The word “woke,” coined in the 1970s, means aware and attentive to important issues, especially those of racial and social justice. Awareness should never be an insult. And it should not be said by those who refuse to understand it.

MARTY KIAR BROWARD COUNTY PROPERTY APPRAISER



Homestead Exemptions Automatically Renew

After your initial application for Homestead Exemption has been approved, this exemption automatically renews each year unless there is a change of ownership or eligible use of your homesteaded property. Each January, our office mails a Homestead Exemption Renewal Receipt and “Change Order” card to all Homesteaded properties. Florida law requires the property owner to notify the Property

Appraiser of any change which may affect homestead eligibility. This “Change Order” card provides an easy way to communicate any important changes to our office.

If there are NO changes to the use and/or ownership of your property, simply keep the card as your receipt that your Homestead Exemption has automatically renewed for another year. However, if there are changes, please mark the Change Order accordingly and return it to our office.

If your name is not printed in the “HOMESTEADED OWNERS” section on this card, it means you are not protected by Homestead Exemption at this property. You may be on title to your property, but you are not receiving Homestead Exemption. If you are eligible for Homestead Exemption on this property, but your name is not listed in the Homesteaded Owners section of the renewal you must complete your own Homestead Exemption application. Please visit our website at web.bcpa.net to apply for the 2026 Homestead Exemption.

If you are a co-owner, surviving spouse, trust beneficiary or otherwise believe you are eligible for this exemption, you must file your own Homestead Exemption application to receive the benefit. If you have any questions relating to the death of the owner, the Change Order card or need assistance with filing for Homestead or other tax-saving exemptions, please visit our website at web.bcpa.net or contact our Customer Service Department at 954-357-6830.

WHERE DID MY PORTABILITY SAVINGS GO?

A portability deduction is only posted to your property record page in the first year you receive your new Homestead Exemption. The portability savings from the first year form the basis of your new Save Our Homes (SOH) Value on a going forward basis and -- in subsequent years -- will rise or fall based upon market value changes and the SOH cap, as your new Save Our Homes value has incorporated your portability savings. When our website is updated to display subsequent year property values, your portability deduction is no longer shown independently because it is already factored into your new Assessed/Save Our Homes Value.

If my office can ever be of assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact me directly at martykiar@bcpa.net.

Take care,

Marty Kiar, JD, CFA

WHAT MAKES A GREAT BOARD?



A great board develops and protects its credibility and integrity. It acts with vision, fairness, and unity, always keeping the community's long-term success in focus.

Great Boards Focus on the Big Picture

They create mission statements and policies that guide all decisions to insure goals are achieved.

Great Boards Hold Productive Meetings

They arrive prepared, follow agendas, assign responsibilities, respect unit owner input, and focus on results.

Great Boards Protect Against Liabilities

They act quickly on risks and use only licensed and insured vendors. They keep rogue members in check.

Great Boards Uphold Fiduciary Duty

They make decisions based on facts, reason, and expert input for the good of the entire community, not personal agendas.

Great Boards Value Teamwork

They acknowledge staff and volunteers, support one another, and speak with one voice even when they disagree privately.

Great Boards Make Wise Choices

They understand the true cost of services, investigate low bids, and accept that quality comes with fair value.

Great Boards Embrace Learning

They seek information, attend workshops and HLC meetings to stay informed and better serve their community.

Great Boards Communicate Well

They share updates regularly, frame rules positively, and foster openness and trust through newsletters, websites, and conversations.

Great Boards Maintain Perspective

They know it is not personal, they keep humor alive, and they focus on what truly matters.

Great Boards Lead with Integrity

They are consistent, respectful, welcoming to new members, and mature in their decisions. Integrity and credibility are their foundation.

WHAT MAKES A GREAT BOARD MEMBER?



The willingness to dig in

The readiness to put in effort, time, and attention, even when the work is difficult or unpopular.

A bent toward consistency

The ability to maintain stability, fairness, and reliability in actions and decisions.

The ability to play fair

The practice of treating others with equity and respect, while upholding rules and standards.

A sense of honesty

The commitment to truthfulness and integrity in words and actions.

The good sense to ask for help

The awareness that collaboration and guidance strengthen results and prevent mistakes.

The ability to delegate

The skill of entrusting responsibilities to others to maximize efficiency and build trust.

A flair for openness and conciliation

The capacity to listen, to welcome dialogue, and to resolve conflict in constructive ways.

The willingness to share

The practice of offering time, knowledge, and resources for the benefit of all.

The ability to adapt and change

The adjust to adjust to new circumstances and to embrace improvement.

A thick skin

The resilience to handle criticism and setbacks without losing focus or composure.



BUILDING A STRONGER COMMUNITY THROUGH TRUSTED VENDORS

As many of you know, we established the Residential Preferred Vendor List several years ago to help residents connect with reliable, high-quality service providers. When a Hillcrest/Parkview resident has a positive experience with a business that delivers exceptional service, we invite that vendor to be considered for inclusion on the list.

If you have worked with a service provider who truly exceeded your expectations, please share your recommendation by emailing us at info@HillcrestLC.com. Your referrals help strengthen our community by promoting trusted professionals and quality workmanship.

2025 RESIDENTIAL PREFERRED VENDOR LIST

ATTORNEYS (See last page)

A/C & HEATING – 2

Mike Balan Appliances & A/C

Contact: Mike
954-931-4752
mikebalanac@gmail.com

Everything Cool A/C & Appliances

Contact: Audie Powell
954-240-2127

APPLIANCE REPAIR

TMM Appliance Repair

Contact: Jason
(954) 874-5132

ARTHRITIS AND SPORTS MEDICINE

Juan Carlos Galvez, M.D.

3700 Washington St. Ste 202
954-964-6114

ASSISTANCE FOR SENIORS

Area Agency of Aging of Broward Count

Vivian Piereschi, Community Affairs Director
954-745-9567 Ext. 10235
piereschiv@adrc.org

ASSISTED LIVING FACILITY

Five Star Premier Residences

Contact: Darline Osser
2480 N Park Rd.
954-963-0200
www.FiveStarSeniorLiving.com

AUTO/HOME INSURANCE

State Farm Insurance

Contact: Sharon King
954-925-5490
sharon.king.cp6j@statefarm.com

AUTO SERVICE & REPAIR (2)

South Park Auto Repair

Contact: Alex Sofianos
3325 Pembroke Road
954-962-3896
Southpark3325@gmail.com

Mike's Great Bear

Contact: Mike Pulidore
2004 Hollywood Blvd.
954-922-4105

AUTO BODY REPAIR

Pro Solutions Body Shop

Contact: Nelson Hernandez - Bilingual
305-399-7786
5630 Dawson, Hollywood 33021

BATHROOM RESURFACING

Florida Tub Restoration Inc (shower tiles/cabinets)

Contact: Brando
954-652-9518
floridatub@yahoo.com

CABINETS

A-1 Custom Mica

Contact: Chris Bencivenga
954-613-7277
a-1custommica.com

CARPET CLEANING

ACU Carpet and Upholstery Cleaning

Contact: James (son) or Peter (dad)
854-584-6538
ACUcarpetcleaning@gmail.com

CAR SERVICE (24/7 Driver)

Personal Car Service

Contact: Henry
786-525-3470

CHIROPRACTOR

Action Chiropractic Center

Dr. Ted Berger
7574 Pembroke Road
954-927-PAIN (7246)

CONCIERGE SERVICE - Personal Services

Transportation, Errands, etc.

Contact: Lisa
954-303-3795
Lisa.delgrosso@gmail.com

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DENTIST

Rothfield Dental Associates
Dr. Elizabeth Rothfield
4601 Hollywood Blvd.
954-989-8800

DERMATOLOGIST

Nelson Charlie MD (General)
Carol Lattouf MD (Cosmetic)
1800 SE 10 Ave. Ste 305
Ft Lauderdale, FL 33316
954-467-4100
www.fortlauderdaleacademic.com

DRY CLEANER – PICK UP AND DELIVERY

Contact: Kevin
954-496-6526
ganeshmungal@gmail.com

ELECTRICIAN (3)

Crossroads Electrical Services Corporation
Contact: John Kansman- Lic: EC13003338
954.327.8831 or 954-931-4640
johnkansman@gmail.com

Mike Kovacs Electrical Maintenance
Contact: Mike
954-445-4021
Mkovacs1@msn.com

R&R Electrical Contracting Inc.
Contact Rusty
954-658-3391
Rwrelectric@gmail.com

EYE DOCTORS (2)

Eye Surgery Associates
(General Eye Exams & Surgery)
300 South Park Road Suite 300
954-925-2740

Hollywood Retina
Gary Shienbaum MD
7261 Sheridan Street Ste 320
954-372-2220

FINANCIAL/INVESTMENTS ADVISOR

Treece Financial Group
Contact: David Treece AIF CLTC MBA
305-751-8855
info@davidtreece.com

HAIRDRESSER – In-Home

Rachel Suissa - Hillcrest
Hair Stylist & Color Specialist
954-261-0867
Suissa1@yourgmail.com

HANDYMAN (for Non-Permitted projects)

Brian Zuniga
786-372-3317
HANDYMANB@MY.YAHOO.COM

Lasanta Maintenance
Contact: Tony (Habla Espanol)
954-579-2750
joselasanta1964@yahoo.com

HOUSEKEEPING (2)

High Class Cleaning Solutions
Contact: Catherine or Brenda (Bilingual)
786-856-3809
Branda29.Tejada@gmail.com

Sandra's Cleaning Service
Contact: Sandra
954-798-4036

IMPACT WINDOWS

MIS (Modern Installation Solutions)
Contact: Rose-Ann or Shirley
954-507-6429
office@miscontractors.com

IN HOME CARE SERVICES

Concierge Care- Physician home visits
Contact: Angela
954-412-9441
conciergcareflorida@gmail.com

INTERIOR DESIGN

Terry Vargas Interior Design
(954) 401-7673
vargastdesign@gmail.com

INSURANCE ADJUSTER (2)

Disasterstruck Public Adjusters
Contact: Ilya Levitis
954-455-1380
Info@Disasterstruck.com

Triumph Consulting Public Adjusters
Contact: Sean Murray
305-725-7580
Sean@TriumphFL.com

JEWELRY APPRAISAL & REPAIR

Justingems
Contact: Dino - Hillcrest
347-610-3067
justingems@aol.com

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KEYS (Replacements \$3.00)

AAA Vacuum Inc.
5708 Washington St
954-983-7102

LOCKSMITH

Half Price Locksmith
Contact: Sharon
754-888-9470
halfpricelocksmith@gmail.com

MASSAGE THERAPIST

Lucia Venancio - Hillcrest
Lic: MA82709
786-326-1022

MEDICARE INSURANCE (3)

Healthcare Advantage Group
Contact: Erica Horns
954-232-5816
Erica.insuranceinfo@gmail.com

Humana Medicare Advantage
Contact: Alla Alexander – Hillcrest
754-246-7250
Aalexander25@humana.com

Hara Frankel
Independent Insurance Agent
305-965-5832
HaraFrankelAgent@gmail.com

MORTGAGE BROKER

Mortgage Solutions – Reverse Mortgages
Contact: Lou Silver
954-895-5801
Lousilver8@aol.com

Mortgage Masters, Inc.
Contact: Sara Lavenka, Sr. Loan Adviser
O: 954-964-2220 C: 954-699-3109
saralavenka@yahoo.com

MURPHY BEDS

Contact: Ty or Greta
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CHRISTMAS SONGS GONE WRONG



Remember when “Baby it’s Cold Outside” was pulled from Christmas playlists because of how the words were interpreted by WTHK (Who The Heck Knows)? These other holiday songs are potentially also on the chopping block. How did our generation ever survive?

1. “I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus”

- Adultery & Subjecting minors to softcore porn.

2. “The Christmas Song”:

- Open fire? Pollution.
- Folks dressed up like Eskimos? Cultural appropriation

3. “Holly Jolly Christmas”:

- Kiss her once for me? Unwanted advances

4. “White Christmas” - Racist

5. “Santa Claus is Coming to Town”

- Sees you when you’re sleeping? Knows when you’re awake?
- Peeping Tom stalker

6. “Most Wonderful Time of the Year”

- Everyone telling you be of good cheer? Forced to hide depression

7. “Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer”

- Bullying

8. “It’s Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas”:

- Forced gender-specific gifts: dolls for Janice and Jen and boots and pistols (GUNS!) for Barney and Ben

9. “Santa Baby”:

- Gold digger, blackmail

10. “Frosty the Snowman”:

- Sexist; not a snow woman

11. “Do You Hear What I Hear”:

- Blatant disregard for the hearing impaired.

12. “Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas”

- Make the yuletide GAY? Wow, just wow!

13. “Jingle Bell Rock”:

Giddy up jingle horse, pick up your feet: - Animal abuse

14. “Mistletoe and Holly”:

- Overeating, folks stealing a kiss or two? How did this song ever see the light of day?

15. “Winter Wonderland”:

- Parson Brown demanding they get married
- Forced partnership

16. “I’ll Be Home For Christmas”:

-Not if you are homeless. That’s just Insensitive

17. “Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer”:

- Homicide, Extremely violent and promotes alcoholism.

HOW TO FIX POOR NECK POSTURE

Condensed from an article by Holly Grace Callis | Published August 11, 2025

You know the feeling: you’re scrolling through your phone, walking hands-free, or hunching over your laptop. It seems harmless at the moment, but over time, poor neck posture can lead to tightness, chronic pain, and even nerve pressure. The good news? Posture can be retrained. With small daily changes and the right tools, you can support your neck and gradually restore its natural alignment. The secret is consistency, not perfection.

Tech Neck and Nerd Neck

Neck posture problems rarely appear overnight. They develop gradually from repeated habits, weak muscles, or even a poor sleep setup. Hours spent on screens encourage your head to drift forward, away from its natural alignment with your shoulders. Hence the term “tech neck.”

Even a slight forward tilt of your head increases the load on your cervical spine. Research in *Surgical Technology International* shows that forward head posture can add up to **60 pounds of pressure** on the neck, depending on the angle. That constant strain affects your muscles, discs, and joints in the upper spine, leading to pain, stiffness, and fatigue.

Nerd neck, also called forward head posture, happens when the head remains in front of the shoulders for long periods. The good news? It’s often reversible. A combination of strength training, stretching, and posture awareness can make a real difference. Key exercises focus on your **deep neck flexors**, while ergonomic tweaks to your desk or phone habits can prevent further strain. Even small posture aids like wearable devices or gentle traction tools can help maintain proper alignment throughout the day.

Sleep Matters

Your neck posture isn’t just about daytime habits—how you sleep makes a huge difference. Pillows that are too flat, too high, or unsupportive can tilt your neck in awkward ways for hours at a stretch. Sleeping on your

stomach is another culprit, forcing your neck into rotation and making it harder to recover overnight.

Some people try sleeping without a pillow, but this often worsens the problem. Without proper support, your neck may bend too far forward or backward as you shift during sleep. A **cervical support pillow** that matches the natural curve of your neck can keep your spine aligned, reduce morning stiffness, and support long-term correction of forward head posture.

Notice and Correct

The first step toward better posture is awareness. Many people let their heads drift forward unconsciously while working, scrolling, or even standing in line. A simple self-check: are your ears lined up over your shoulders? Keep your chin level, pull your head slightly back, and open your chest. Set a reminder on your phone if you have to, but consistency is important.

Most people notice improvements within **two to four weeks** when they practice consistently. The key is small, repeated actions: stretch in the morning, check posture while at your desk, or use a support tool during long periods of sitting.

Small Steps, Lasting Change

Fixing neck posture doesn’t require a massive overhaul. It works best through small, daily habits that train your muscles and relieve tension. Start with one or two manageable actions, like stretching in the morning or adjusting your phone position. Over time, these actions strengthen your neck, reduce soreness, and make upright posture feel natural.

Remember: it’s about progress, not perfection. Each small change builds on the last, and eventually, good posture becomes second nature.

WHEN TO USE BAKING SODA VS. BAKING POWDER VS. CORN STARCH



Baking Soda

- What it is: Pure sodium bicarbonate — a base.
- How it works: It needs an acid (like lemon juice, vinegar, buttermilk, or yogurt) and moisture to create bubbles of carbon dioxide. Those bubbles make baked goods rise.
- Use it when: Your recipe already includes an acidic ingredient.

Example: Buttermilk pancakes, chocolate cake, banana bread.

- What it is: Baking soda plus a built-in acid (usually cream of tartar) and a drying agent (like cornstarch).
- How it works: It releases gas when mixed with liquid and again when heated which is why it's called double-acting.
- Use it when: Your recipe does not have an acidic ingredient.

Example: Regular cakes, muffins, cookies, biscuits.

Cornstarch

- What it is: A fine, starchy powder made from corn.
- How it works: It thickens liquids when heated; it doesn't make things rise.
- Use it when: You want to thicken sauces, soups, puddings, or pie fillings

Example: Gravy, custard, stir-fry sauces.

BAKING SODA AND CRISPY POTATOES

Try this one! Add 1/2 teaspoon baking soda to your boiling pot of halved honey gold potatoes. Then drain them and roast them in a hot oven. The potatoes come out of the oven extra crispy, thanks to the baking soda.

The reason this works is because of the alkalinity of the baking soda. Cooking potatoes covered with baking soda will break down the outer edges of the potatoes, releasing starches and giving them a rough and starchy outer surface. The exterior gets super crisp while the inside of the potato stays nice and fluffy.

Once the potatoes are parboiled, take it one step further by removing them from the boiling water, let them cool and dry out a bit and then toss them in a bowl of melted butter and grated Parmesan cheese. Roast them in a 350 degree oven 20 minutes and you will have an even more crispy, crunchy exterior.

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Braciola (brah-JYOH-lah)	unless you are Italian, then it is
Capicola (kah-pih-KOH-lah)	MOOTZ-a rell
Coq Au Vin (kohk-oh-VAHN)	Nicoise (nee-SWAHZ)
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Creme Fraiche (krehm FRESH)	Paella (pi-AY-yuh)
Croissant (kwah-SAH; kruh-SAHNT)	Pho (fuh)
Crudite (kroo-dee-TAY)	Quinoa (KEEN-wah)
Espresso (ehs-PREHS-oh)	Radicchio (rah-DEE-kee-oh)
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Hummus (HOOM-uhs)	Vichyssoise (vihsh-ee-SWAHZ)
Jicama (HEE-kah-mah)	Worcestershire (WOOS-tuhr-shuhr;
Kamut (kah-MOOT)	WOOS-tuhr-sheer)

Note to Our Readers

It has been a tough 6 months for **Leon Cortez**, our Inside Hillcrest graphic designer. Leon put this paper together through tears, I can assure you. The love of his life for decades, **Chickie Blumberg**, had been hospitalized for months. She finally came home on Friday, December 5th, looking forward to preparing for her full recovery before the holidays, and passed away in her sleep unexpectedly on Monday morning, December 8th. Chickie was one of the most amazing women I have ever met. She had it all – she was beautiful, gracious, kind soul, funny and smart. To see the love that passed between them whenever I was around them was a joy to watch. In the January issue, we will honor Chickie and inspire you with her story.

On a personal note, I lost another dear friend, “**Chicago Jimmy**” the day after Thanksgiving. We talked and/or texted most days. I cooked for him and he brought me Sam’s Club chickens at least once week. On Fridays we would go to the pool for an hour or two. I called him my “pool husband” and referred to himself as Chicken Man. We were the perfect friendship match. He was a Jewish Republican FSU Seminole and I am a Catholic, Democrat Florida Gator. Yes we CAN all get along.

December Kitchen Korner - by Cindy Abraham

This article I geared to those who live alone or are cooking for two. I promise the leftovers will be GREAT! Aldi sells a pound of shredded Rotisserie chicken for less than \$8.00 so here are two recipes.

AMERICAN ROTISSERIE CHICKEN CORN SKILLET – Easy and Fast

15 oz. can whole kernel corn, drained OR 6 oz. frozen corn
2 cups shredded rotisserie chicken
½ cup shredded gruyere, Swiss or gouda plus ¼ cup for topping
1/3 cup mayonnaise
1 tsp garlic powder
½ tsp sugar, Salt and pepper
2 TBS cup thinly sliced scallions

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Mix together corn, ½ cup cheese and mayo in a medium bowl.

Stir in chicken, sugar, garlic and seasonings.

Toss remaining cheese with scallions. Transfer to 8" baking dish and bake for 11 minutes.

Switch setting to high broil for 2 minutes until mixture is bubbling and slightly charred in spots. Serve hot.

Cajun Chicken Fettuccine for Two

4-5 oz. fettuccine
1 TBS butter
¼ cup chopped sun dried tomatoes in oil
1/4 cup chopped celery
1/3 cup chopped onion
1 TBS minced garlic
2 cups shredded chicken
1 TBS Cajun seasoning,
1/4 teaspoon black pepper
1.5 TBS flour
1/2 cup half-and-half
2 ounces shredded cheese of your choice
1/4 cup sour cream
1/3 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
1 green onion, green parts sliced
1 TBS chopped fresh parsley

Cook pasta according to package directions. Drain and set aside. While pasta cooks, melt butter over medium heat in a Dutch oven. Add sun dried tomatoes, celery, and onion. Cook until soft, about 5 to 7 minutes. Add garlic and cook 2 more minutes.

Add shredded chicken, Cajun seasoning, and black pepper and cook 2 to 3 minutes. Sprinkle flour over the mixture. Stir and cook 1 minute. Stir in half-and-half. Cook until mixture comes to a simmer.

Add shredded cheese, sour cream, and Parmesan cheese and cook over medium heat until cheese is melted. Stir in cooked pasta, green onions, and parsley. Serve.

Finally, a way to make almost Brussel sprouts taste good. And we LOVE this one on baby potatoes...

GARLIC PARMESAN BRUSSEL SPROUTS OR POTATOES

¾ cup shredded parmesan cheese.
2 TBS unsalted butter, melted

1 tsp garlic powder
1/4 tsp fresh ground black pepper
1 lb. Brussels Sprouts trimmed and halved

1/4 cup sour cream
1 TBS grated parmesan cheese
½ tsp Dijon mustard
1 tsp chopped chive, fresh
½ tsp garlic, finely grated
Dash black pepper

Preheat oven to 425°F. Combine Parmesan, butter, garlic salt and pepper in medium bowl. Sprinkle cheese mixture in an even layer over a nonstick rimmed baking sheet. Press Brussels sprouts or potatoes cut-sides-down on top of cheese mixture in a single layer about ½ inch apart.

Bake until cheese is light golden-brown about 15 to 18 minutes. Let the pan sit at room temperature for at least 5 minutes (until cheese mixture hardens) before gently separating with pizza cutter. Meanwhile, combine sour cream, Parmesan, mustard, chives, garlic and pepper in a small bowl. Serve.

What would Christmas be without the Feast of the Seven Fishes Stew? And the best part, it is done way before your guests arrive for dinner.

FEAST OF THE SEVEN FISHES STEW – even if you don't usually like anchovies, don't leave them out. They add just touch of briny salt flavor. Be sure you have all the ingredients prepped before you start cooking. Coincidentally there are SEVEN steps, and the final result serves SEVEN people!

1 TBS olive oil
½ lb. medium dry-packed scallops
½ lb. skinless salmon fillet, cut into 1" chunks
½ lb. cod or other mild white fish cut into chunks
½ lb. peeled & deveined medium raw shrimp
1 oz. anchovies chopped and save the oil (most cans are 2 oz. so use ½ can)
½ cup wine mixed with ½ cup water
12 clams (fresh or frozen)
1 lb. mussels (fresh or frozen)
1 medium fennel bulb, cored and sliced, save some fronds for garnish
4 chopped garlic cloves
1 tsp orange zest
28 oz. crushed tomatoes (open the can and add 1 tsp crushed red pepper)

1. Let scallops, salmon and fish come to room temperature. Heat oil in a large pot of medium-high. Add scallops and cook until one side is golden brown – about 2 minutes. Remove from pan and set aside.

2. Add wine-water mixture and clams to pan. Cover and turn heat on high until clams open, 5-7 minutes. Transfer clams to a bowl and discard any that don't open. Add mussels to pan and cook until they open, 3-4 minutes. Remove and set aside – discard any that don't open.

3. Pour all the liquid in the pot through a fine mesh strainer into a bowl and set aside.

4. Add the anchovy oil to the pan over medium-high. Add anchovies and cook until they dissolve; about 2 minutes. (Add a little olive oil if needed). Stir in the sliced fennel and cook for about 5 minutes, add the orange zest and cook for another minute.

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5. Stir in reserved liquid, tomatoes and crushed red pepper. Reduce heat to medium and simmer uncovered for 12-15 minutes until the sauce is slightly thickened.
6. Gently add both fish and shrimp, cover and reduce heat to low. Cook for 6-8 minutes until seafood is opaque. Stir in the cooked scallops. At this point you may want to transfer the mixture to a heat-proof serving dish or crock pot set on low (or not). Top the stew with the clams and mussels facing up – it looks amazing! Garnish with fennel fronds and serve.
7. You can make the dish four hours ahead of time and let it sit in the crock pot on low until an hour before and then turn it down to warm. The longer Italian food sits the better it gets; and you will have time to relax before your guests arrived.

I know I don't print many beef recipes, but this is the time of year when beef tenderloin is on sale and Beef Wellington is easy to make so it is a great dish if you have company. AND it is on sale this time of year, although double the price it was last year. The garlic parmesan potatoes and a Caesar salad would make perfect side dishes!

BEEF WELLINGTON

- 1 ½ pound center cut beef tenderloin trimmed Olive oil
- 1 pack white button mushrooms (about 12 oz.)
- 1 shallot cut in half
- 2 garlic cloves
- 1 tsp fresh thyme leaves
- 6 thin slices prosciutto
- 1 TBS Dijon mustard
- Flour for rolling out puff pastry
- ½ lb. store bought puff pastry thawed

- 1 large egg beaten
- ½ tsp coarse salt
- Place the mushrooms, shallots, garlic and thyme in a food processor and pulse until finely chopped. In a large sauté pan over medium heat, cook the mixture stirring until most of the liquid is evaporated. Season with salt and pepper and set aside to cool.
- Tie the tenderloin in 2 or 3 places to hold it together while cooking. Drizzle with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Heat a heavy bottomed skillet lightly coated with olive oil until hot and sear all sides of the meat including the ends. Remove from heat and smear lightly all over with the Dijon mustard and let cool.

Take a sheet of plastic wrap and shingle the prosciutto so it forms a rectangle that is big enough to wrap over the tenderloin. Use a spatula to spread the mushroom mixtures over the prosciutto. Place the tenderloin in the middle and using the plastic wrap, wrap it up tight. Tuck in the ends of the prosciutto and twist the ends of the plastic to seal it completely and hold it in a log shape. Refrigerate for 30 minutes to maintain the shape.

Preheat oven to 425 degrees.

On a lightly floured surface roll out the puff pastry to form a rectangle large enough to completely encompass the prosciutto wrapped beef. Get your beaten egg ready. Remove the plastic from the beef and set it in the middle of the pastry. Fold the longer sides over the meat and brush the edges with the egg to seal. Brush the ends with the egg and fold over to completely seal the beef. Top with coarse salt and place seam-side down on a rimmed baking sheet.

Brush the top of the pastry with egg and make a few slits in the top of the pastry with a knife tip to allow steam to escape while cooking. Bake for about 30 minutes until pastry is golden brown.

Remove from oven and let it rest before cutting into thick slices.

FEASTING WITHOUT FEAR: A LIGHTER, TASTIER WAY TO EAT WELL

I believe in eating only what I truly enjoy, not forcing down foods simply because they are labeled healthy. Instead, I learned to eat more of the nutritious foods I already love. I will not touch tofu, but I pile my plate with broccoli, cauliflower, mushrooms, spinach, celery, carrots and tomatoes.

Spinach and mushrooms anchor most of my pasta dishes, and I slip spinach into chicken soup where it quietly boosts nutrition. Honestly, I think if I put spinach in a PBJ, you wouldn't taste it. Mushrooms have a stronger presence, so I understand why they divide people. I rely on chickpeas and cannellini beans far more than black beans. I began eating popcorn because I enjoy it, and salmon makes an occasional appearance as well.

Weight loss often seems to revolve around eliminating foods. You cut calories, you cut fat and you banish anything sugary, fried or heavy in carbohydrates. Yet healthy eating does not have to feel restrictive. Focusing less on calories and more on whole, minimally processed foods can make balanced eating far more sustainable. Vegetables, especially nonstarchy ones like broccoli, celery, zucchini and bell peppers, can be eaten generously because they are low in calories but rich in nutrients. Still, even with vegetables, variety matters. Overloading on a single food crowds out other nutrients and can cause imbalances. Moderation and diversity keep the diet both nutritious and enjoyable.

Guidance from a primary care doctor or a dietitian can help tailor dietary changes to personal needs, ensuring healthy vitamin and cholesterol levels and building a meal plan that lasts. The following foods fit easily into a balanced lifestyle, offering flavor, satisfaction and nourishment.

1. **Berries:** Colorful, low in sugar, rich in fiber and antioxidants.
2. **Chickpeas:** High in fiber and protein, great in salads and spreads.
3. **Mushrooms:** Flavorful, low calorie and useful as a meat substitute.
4. **Celery:** Crunchy, hydrating and extremely low in calories.
5. **Popcorn:** Light, whole grain and satisfying when air-popped.
6. **Grapefruit:** Hydrating and filling, though it may interact with medications.
7. **Spinach:** Dense with vitamins, minerals and fiber.
8. **Cottage cheese:** High in protein and calcium, though often high in sodium.
9. **Cauliflower:** Mild, versatile and low calorie.
10. **Carrots:** Excellent source of vitamin A and fiber.
11. **Oatmeal:** Rich in soluble fiber that supports fullness and heart health.
12. **Black beans:** High in protein and fiber, useful as a meat replacement.
13. **Lettuce:** Very low calorie; darker varieties offer solid nutrients.
14. **Pomegranates:** Antioxidant-rich and full of vitamins.
15. **Broccoli:** Fiber-rich, antioxidant-packed and highly filling.
16. **Salmon:** Loaded with omega 3 fatty acids and lean protein.
17. **Oranges:** High in vitamin C, fiber and hydration.
18. **Tofu:** Versatile, high in plant protein and very nutrient-dense.
19. **Kale:** Packed with vitamins and minerals and endlessly adaptable.
20. **Eggs:** High in protein and concentrated nutrition in the yolk.
21. **Tomatoes:** Naturally rich in lycopene and antioxidants.
22. **Brown rice cakes:** Light, crunchy and a simple swap for calorie-heavy snacks.
- These foods are easy to mix, match and enjoy. Focus on variety, listen to your tastes and build meals around foods that make you feel energized rather than deprived.

REP. DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ SAYS PRESSURE TO STRAIGHTEN HER CURLY HAIR FOLLOWED HER THROUGHOUT HER CAREER.

— Condensed from an article by Sarah E. Needleman



(Ed. Note: I am including this article because I realized I was part of the problem. Even though I think Wasserman Schultz does an excellent job, whenever I saw her on TV, I'd make some snarky comment about why she "permed" her hair. After reading this article, I felt ashamed. It made me confront the fact that, even though I know our culture places far too much value on appearance over ability, I had still fallen into the same bias. Guess I know what one of my New Year's Resolutions will be.)

Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz says she has faced pressure to straighten her curly hair throughout her political career. When she first ran for the Florida State House in her 20s, advisers told her to get "more manageable" and "professional" hair. Though she softened her style, she refused to straighten it, a choice that drew mockery, including being called "Frizzilla" on Fox News and having Adweek compare her curls to "ramen noodles."

Her experience reflects a broader bias against curly hair. Studies show women with straight hair are often rated as more professional, and Black

women with natural styles face especially strong discrimination. As a result, people with curly hair still feel pressured to hide their natural texture.

Wasserman Schultz said that in the early 2000s, she let a hairdresser convince her to temporarily straighten her hair while she was serving in Congress. She said she quickly regretted the move.

"I went to the House floor because we had votes that day, and people went berserk," she said. "They thought I looked completely different, but they also said, 'Wow, you should wear your hair like that all the time. You look amazing.' The implication, Wasserman Schultz continued, was that they thought she didn't look as attractive as when she wore her hair naturally. "It was kind of an insult. They didn't realize it," she said.

Making matters worse, Wasserman Schultz said that around this time, she was named to a list of the 50 most beautiful people in Congress by The Hill newspaper. It made her feel "cruddy," she said, because it implied that she wouldn't have been selected had she not straightened her locks. Wasserman Schultz, who is Jewish, has since stuck with her curls and come to appreciate them even more. She said she has given talks at Jewish organizations such as Hillel and B'nai B'rith and had girls in the audience pull her aside to thank her for wearing her hair curly in public.

"I would never, ever change my hair now," she said. "How you look — especially when you've been teased for it — really does matter."

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THE ART OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

– Written by Aruna Ladva, Revised and submitted by BK Etta Stevens

“The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn.”

The whole of life is a school, and learning is life-long. When we accept that everything we are presented with teaches us something, this keeps us humble and allows us to grow and excel. Staying curious about life and interested in our own growth is essential for learning. Failure is then not seen as the end of the world, but as an opportunity to develop.

To do this, it is important to stay relevant and adaptable in our ever-changing world. Many a huge commercial enterprise has collapsed because it did not have the ability to stay connected to what was relevant. They failed to see what was coming, what was happening on the world stage and their own previous success blinded them to the winds of change. Our world is changing fast, and to keep pace with it and develop strength of character and resilience, we need to be constantly learning and adapting. This in and of itself is a great motivator for learning, but self-respect is also a driving force. If I am not growing, I am at a standstill. Life is offering me opportunities to discover more and more about how I deal with the world and with other people – if I am at a standstill and happy just with the success so far, then I am not learning anything from life's lessons. Spiritually, I am not embracing the changes that are needed. It becomes a form of complacency. This is similar to someone who has always lived in one country and considers the way that things are done there, is the right way to do things. Only when they travel to another country do they realize that people in other parts of the world are also handling life's systems and challenges very well, and they are doing it very differently, but equally effectively.

Learning keeps the brain alive. Without challenges, the brain slows down. Learning something new sharpens the memory, increases creativity and delays cognitive decline. When we have the attitude of wanting to learn something new, we keep on the lookout for where we could grow, and what new ideas and approaches might make our own challenges easier to deal with. When we put in the energy to learn something new and implement it, our confidence increases, we feel less intimidated, we develop self-trust and can face challenges with more power. Learning brings freedom; transferrable skills open more doorways and options and hence we have more freedom. Learning helps us to understand ourselves and what we are good at. It also highlights what we are not that good at, but we can always put in the effort to become a little better in those areas. It is all about self-discovery. The things we learn about life and ourselves are never lost.

Learning fires up new neural pathways in the brain. The Harvard Medical School conducted a study about gratitude and neural pathways. They found that writing down 10 things one is grateful once a week, over a period of 10 weeks resulted for those taking part, more optimism, better feelings about life and fewer physical complaints. They also noted that over time, the brain becomes wired to notice and focus on blessings in life and not the problems. Meditating every day, and more than once a day, is a way to create new and powerful neural pathways.

Meditating every day and more than once a day is a way of creating new and powerful neural pathways. Meditation is paying attention. Paying attention is vital for learning. Contrary to popular belief, we cannot do more than one thing at a time. If we try to multi-task, we are constantly losing concentration and loss of attention. It takes mental energy to create a new neural pathway. Whatever we want to learn, we must give focused attention. The key to retaining what we learn is to make the learning meaningful, relevant and emotionally engaging. Along with meditation, we need to study spiritual wisdom because the deep thinking required to make that wisdom our own, is emotionally engaging and likely to stay with us for all time.

The way to learn is through repetition, but with built in spaces of time to let the knowledge ‘settle’. Learning is enhanced through sharing the insights we have gained. It helps someone else and brings clarity to the self. We need a personal reason for putting all this energy into learning and we are likely to continue when we make small improvements every day.

Teaching is simply the art of inspiring understanding, cultivating curiosity and sharing what we know, based on love and trust. We do not actually teach anyone anything. Our own example is the way to teach. Developing a strong, resilient, virtuous character through learning and application, through meditation and spiritual study, is the way to face the challenges of the world we are now living in, and through that, we can be an example to inspire others.

Real Success Looks Different. It's time we redefine what it means to be an excellent teacher and succeed. Real success isn't about accumulation; it's about inner contentment. Here are some powerful points that can help us make those internal shifts to create a life of meaning, contentment, and joy:

Happiness and Gratitude. Happiness isn't something you chase. It emerges when you appreciate what you already have.

Simplicity. Life becomes lighter when you simplify everything in it. Your home, your calendar, your expectations, and especially your thinking.

Purpose over Position and Possessions Your value isn't in your title or your bank balance — it's in you and the purposeful way you live.

Inner Stillness and Meditation The world will never stop being noisy. Stillness is an inner mastery — a calm that the soul carries deep inside, that calmness travels with you wherever you go.

Sit with Yourself Look within. Listen. Reflect. Self-awareness is where you begin ... that is where you will find richness ... within. I teach a FREE Meditation Class every Tuesday morning on Zoom. Looking within is a way of meditating and realizing your full potential.

When I was a younger person, in high School, my father who was a professional man, always wanted me to be a teacher. I finally accomplished that goal and I know he would be very proud of me. Teaching, inspiring and also learning in any capacity fulfills life in so many ways. It makes life purposeful and shows you a very valuable lesson yourself. If you can inspire even one person to be their best self, you have made a giant mark in the world.

Meditation is a very simple and kind way to inspire others. It is a very spiritual and loving way to live.

The class on Zoom is free, and you will learn the basics and even better than that, you will learn to calm yourself to have PEACE OF MIND in this truly caustic world.

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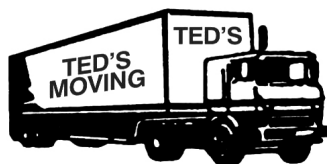


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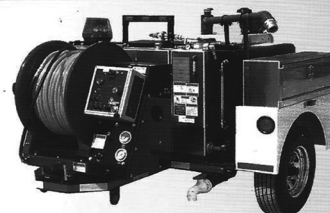
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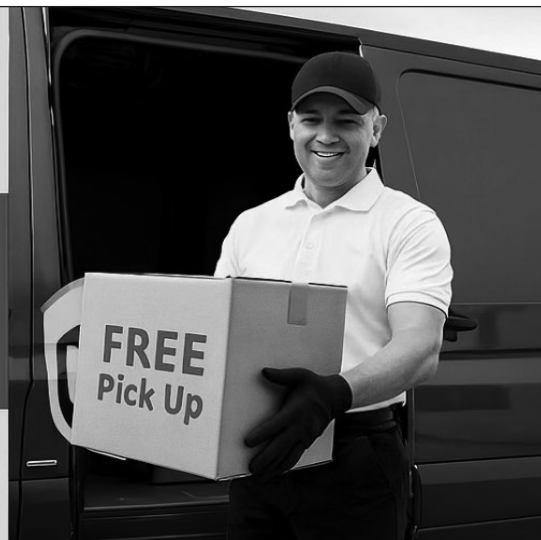




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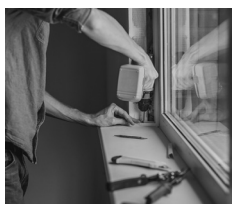
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