



WALT SHURDEN LAW

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Learn a new skill – those crossword Puzzles might not be enough

By Walt Shurden

We have been told for years that when it comes to our brain, we need to “use it or lose it.” We have been encouraged to do word puzzles and keep up social activities to keep our minds active in order to retain our cognitive functions. A study a few years ago by researcher Denise Park of the University of Texas at Dallas found that it takes more than a cross-word puzzle to really make a difference to an aging mind.

Ms. Park’s study compared the brains of study groups that did word puzzles and took part in social activities to a group that learned a new skill. Some in the study group learned digital photography and some learned to quilt. Only the group that was confronted with a real challenge had cognitive improvement. They were tested again after a year and were found to have maintained the improvement.

The important factor, according to *Psychological Science*, is that the activity takes you out of your comfort zone. You need to participate in an activity that really challenges you. Learning a new skill is the perfect example. Taking a class to learn something new, not only challenges your mind but also causes you to interact with other people. Both are important factors when trying to keep the mind from aging. It has been determined that new brain cell growth can happen even late into adulthood. The goal need not be to get a degree, the goal is to learn something new. There are colleges around that allow seniors over the age of 60 to audit classes at no cost. When they talk about classes, they don’t mean it has to be algebra. They stress the importance of selecting a class that is something you are interested in. Maybe you have always wanted to learn more about the Civil War, world religions or to speak Spanish. Maybe you would like to learn to paint or to write a children’s book.



There are classes available at churches, community centers, and local colleges. USF and St. Petersburg College are two excellent resources for classes that can be audited at no cost. There are photo clubs, quilting clubs, chess clubs, and more. Anything that challenges your mind will do.

According to the study, “It is not enough just to get out and do something – it is important to get out and do something that is unfamiliar and mentally challenging, and that provides broad stimulation mentally and socially. When you are inside your comfort zone, you might be outside the enhancement zone.”

Our Goal

*To provide exceptional
legal service to our clients.*

This Month's Spotlight

Ron Reagan

We are lucky that Ron Regan relocated to Pinellas County from Boston 18 years ago.

Ron helps our Community by:

- Training young men for *Boy Scouts of America*;
- Dispatching for *Morton Plant Hospital*;
- Singing and doing public relations for *Suncoast Singers of Florida* and *Gypsy State Players*
- Singing, and serving as Masters of Ceremonies, Treasurer, and Program Director for *Matinee Opera Players*
- Managing the calendar and communications for *Better Living for Seniors*

Ron Belongs to both a sailing and bicycling club. At one time he spent a year in Texas volunteering with *Vista*, which is a domestic version of the *Peace Corps*.

That's Amazing Ron! Thank you so much!



HOW MANY WORDS CAN YOU MAKE FROM THE PHRASE "HAPPY NEW YEAR"?

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Call our office to let us know how many you found, 727-443-2708. We want to recognize you in next month's newsletter.



IN OUR EAR

Are all Hospice Agencies the Same?

Medicare has a new website that helps you find hospice in your area. The website: www.medicare.gov/hospicecompare/ says, "Find hospices that serve your area and compare them based on the quality of care they provide. Hospice agencies most often provide services where you live, whether it's at home, an assisted living facility, or a nursing home."

The website tells you if the agency you are inquiring about is non-profit or for profit. You can compare all local agencies to one another as well as to the national average in the following areas and more:

- Percentage of patients or caregivers who were asked about their beliefs and values at the beginning of hospice care;
- Percentage of patients who were checked for pain at the beginning of hospice care;
- Percentage of patients who were checked for shortness of breath at the beginning of hospice care; and
- Percentage of patients taking opioid pain medication who were offered care for constipation.

You will find they are not all the same.

Thank You Silver Santa's

In last month's newsletter, you saw the tree in our office with the names of lonely elderly people who could use a gift for Christmas. We were part of a county-wide effort to make those people feel like they are not forgotten. Our staff and clients added 9 bags to the 900 that were distributed to the needy. Walt also donated more than six hours of employee time to help get the gifts out on time. Thank you to all who participated.



Between the cold weather, colds and flu, January is the perfect month for chicken soup.

Crockpot Chicken & Rice Soup (can be made gluten free)



Ingredients

- 1 lb of chicken breasts cut into pieces
- 1/4 cup brown rice – wild rice blend
- 2 sliced carrots
- 2 sliced rib of celery
- 1/2 small minced onion
- 2 tbsps butter (or Earth Balance vegan butter)
- 2 cloves minced garlic
- Bits of bay leaves, dried rosemary, thyme, and sage
- Salt & pepper to taste
- Place all ingredients in 6 quart crock pot
- Add 6 cups of chicken broth (gluten-free if you want)
- Cover and cook on low for 4 hours

Thank you Kristin at @Iowa Girl Eats for this great recipe.

Discover 100 new ways to improve your hearing

Three local chapters of the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) are joining forces to host the Healthy Hearing Expo to educate and mentor people who don't know if there is anything out there to help with their specific hearing loss need.

- Try Hearing Devices Risk Free
- Free Consultations & Screenings
- Discover the Latest Technologies from 40+ Exhibitors
- Panel Discussions – Learn from users firsthand how their lives have been improved.

The biggest hearing health fair in Tampa Bay is, *HEALTHY HEARING EXPO* on Saturday, February 3, 2018 from 9 am to 3 pm at the First Presbyterian Church of Brandon, 121 Carver Avenue, Brandon, FL.

There are 500,000 people with hearing loss in Hillsborough, Pinellas and Pasco Counties and, according to Johns Hopkins Medical Research, 86% of them do not get the treatment that can help them hear better and improve their quality of life.

Are you or a loved-one one of those people?



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Legal Term of the Month

Harassment – A course of conduct directed at a specific person that causes substantial emotional distress in such person and serves no legitimate purpose.

How to get off the Newsletter List

If you would like to have your name removed from our newsletter list, please email your request to jennifer@shurden.net or call our office at 727-443-2708.



Walt's parents: Kaye & Buddy



**Indian Rocks Beach
Boat Parade**



Hayes and Shep

Published for informational purposes only and no legal advice is intended. Each case is different, you are invited to discuss your legal issues with Mr. Shurden with no obligation.