

# Baby Boomers

FAIRFAX COUNTY TIMES



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# A celebration for the generations



TALL OAKS

Clockwise from left: Junior Tall Oaks visitor David P.; Resident Florence Carson; and Resident Janet Semple and her daughter, Marcia Gattoni.

## Fairfax County Times *Baby Boomers*

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ON THE COVER: FRIENDS ENJOY THE FALL LEAVES.  
PHOTO COURTESY ADOBE STOCK

### COURTESY OF TALL OAKS

National Grandparents Day is designed to celebrate the relationships between grandparents and grandchildren. It is also an opportunity to honor the elders who have positively shaped our lives – whether as a family member, friend, or mentor. The holiday is celebrated annually on the first Sunday after Labor Day.

At Tall Oaks, it was an exciting day for residents and guests. Squeals on Wheels, a mobile petting zoo, stopped by with a menagerie of friendly animals, including bunnies, ducks, rabbits, guinea pigs, a chicken, and an adorable piglet.

“We can host events that have great

food, music, and even prizes – but if you really want a guaranteed smile, hand someone a bunny. Nothing makes them happy quicker than that!” said Tall Oaks Executive Director George Winters.

Aside from being cute, these furry and feathered friends offered a kind of pet therapy for residents. Holding and petting animals can have a calming effect on people, and it can also lower blood pressure and heart rate! Interacting with animals can contribute to a healthier mind and improved physical strength. Plus, the outpouring of unconditional love that animals offer may also provide emotional fulfillment.

Children and adults of all ages enjoyed making memories with loved ones at this free community event.

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Dr. Andrew Budson will explain how to distinguish the signs of Alzheimer's from normal aging, what lifestyle habits can help, and how families can manage issues with memory, behavior, driving, and more.

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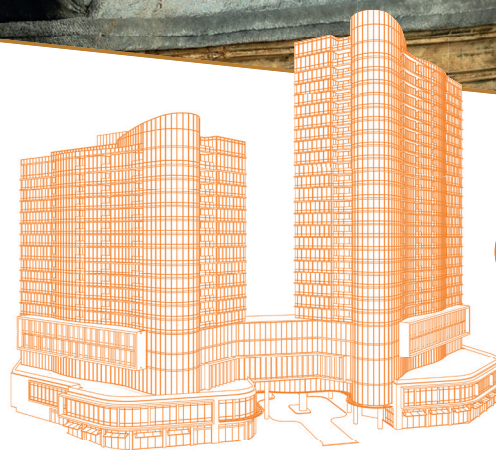
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# Tips to avoid travel scams

COURTESY OF BRAND POINT MEDIA

The internet brings vacations and getaways to travelers' fingertips, but instant access also means vulnerability to fraudsters looking to steal data. Scams such as fake phone numbers on popular search engine results can lead to stolen money or sensitive personal information like credit card details.

Next time you search the web to book that long-awaited vacation, consider these tips from the experts at Expedia to spot, avoid and report scams.

## Identify common Scams

- **Search engine and gift card scams:** Fraudsters will buy fake ads with illegitimate contact information for well-known companies to pose as agents and ensnare people searching for online support numbers. These imposters often request gift cards in exchange for services

such as a trip refund or flight change, wire transfers or sensitive personal information. They may even use personal data obtained from unaware customers to use an itinerary look-up tool and view real trip details in order to gain additional trust.

- **Phone call scams:** Scammers will sometimes use "spoofing" technology to make telephone numbers appear legitimate then claim a customer won a prize such as cash, a trip or credit for future travel from a trusted travel company. In exchange, these convincing scammers may ask for personal information including a name, address, payment information and social security number.

- **Email scams:** Phishing is a scam criminals use to ask for personal information via email by tricking recipients into clicking a link, opening an attachment

or directly providing the information. When they appear to come from established businesses or organizations, the emails can be quite convincing, as they sometimes even link to legitimate-looking websites.

## When in doubt, end the conversation

If you think you've received a fraudulent phone call or are in contact with an imposter, hang up or end the conversation immediately.

Do not click any suspicious links or engage further. Double check the sender's address and delete any suspicious emails. Take note of how you came into contact, such as the phone number you dialed, the contact information displayed and any other identifying information provided by the scammer.

Contact representatives of the com-

pany the scammer claimed to represent along with the Federal Trade Commission and state attorney general.

## Trust the experts

With a trusted travel group like Expedia, your experience and safety are the top priorities, meaning representatives won't request a gift card in exchange for services, call or send an email asking for account passwords, request personal information unrelated to a previous service issue or request wire transfers or payment information through text messages.

If you need help with your trip, visit Expedia.com or use the mobile app for self-service tools like a 24/7 virtual agent so you can easily change or cancel trips, redeem credits and check on the status of a refund, all without having to call in to speak with an agent.

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# This year, seniors at The Virginian are in a class all their own

## COURTESY OF THE VIRGINIAN

For today's more independent-minded seniors who wish to continue to learn and grow and explore new ideas in their retirement years, The Virginian Scholars Program at The Virginian senior living community in Fairfax is opening a whole new world of opportunities.

The Virginian Scholars Program combines the Life Enrichment activities currently offered by The Virginian with external health, wellness, and continuing education programs for residents seeking engagement and lifelong learning opportunities.

In Fall 2022, the program will allow residents to earn credit hours for health and wellness activities within their senior living community and through outside educational organizations as well.

The Virginian Scholars Program was designed by Andrew Carle, founder of Georgetown University's graduate curricula in senior living administration and The Virginian's former Executive Director. The program encourages residents to participate in life enrichment activities within their own community as well as provides access and motivation to engage with educational opportunities within the greater community.

Through the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at George Mason University, the Lifetime Learning Institute of Northern Virginia Community College, and the online educational platform Mas-



terClass, residents can take classes and attend lectures, workshops, and other special activities.

### Helping Virginian residents make their mark

Placing value on learning and participation, there are no tests or grades in the program. Instead, residents are rewarded by their participation with several incentives, such as earning a place on the Dean's List by completing over 100 credit hours.

At the end of each academic year, a graduation ceremony will be held to celebrate each other's achievements. Graduates will be recognized for reaching magna cum laude-level — those who complete 500 or more credit hours — summa cum laude — who accrue 400 credit hours — and cum laude — who reach 300 hours.

The resident with the most credit hours

during the year will be named valedictorian and receive a \$1,000 Continuing Education Award. This award can be applied to pay for rent, services, meals, or other offerings available at The Virginian.

### How credit hours are accumulated

Credit Hours are earned by completing both internal and external activities designated within the Virginian Scholars Program, including:

- Activities completed through the Life Enrichment group or approved individual activities
- Activities completed through The Virginian Fitness Center
- Activities completed through classes or events at Oak Marr Recreation Center, or additional approved outside organizations

- Documented George Mason OLLI, MasterClass, or LLI NOVA class hours

- Documented volunteer hours completed on behalf of The Virginian or additional approved outside organizations

- Virginian Ambassador hours (including visits provided to prospective residents/families, "Welcome Visits" to new residents, or other requested representations on behalf of the community)

*Credit hours are awarded based on completion of approved activities valued at one credit hour per 60 minutes of participation.*

During this first year, program members have complimentary access to MasterClass courses and many of the local Fairfax area lifelong learning programs.

"The Virginian is a natural place to launch a Scholars Program like this because six of the nation's highest educated counties are located in the northern Virginia area," Carle said.

"A program like this is a perfect fit for a senior population that values learning and who would love to show their grandkids you are never too old to learn," said Carle.

And as it happens, it's also an excellent way to show the younger and older generations that aging may not be what you think it is, and you never have to stop learning and getting the most out of life.

### The Virginian Scholars 2022 – 2023 Academic Semesters

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# Properly manage your blood pressure

COURTESY OF FAMILY FEATURES

Nearly half of all American adults have high blood pressure, or hypertension, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Of those, about 75% don't have it under control, and many may not even realize they have it unless they experience other complications.

In fact, high blood pressure is a leading cause and controllable risk factor for heart disease and stroke as well as other issues such as kidney failure, vision loss and sexual problems. However, the American Heart Association recommends taking these simple steps to help control your levels and manage risks.

## Know your numbers

In most cases, normal blood pressure is 120/80 mm HG or less. Readings consistently higher than 130/80 are considered high blood pressure. Have your blood pressure measured at least once a

year by a health care professional and regularly monitor it at home with a validated monitor then discuss the readings with your doctor. Getting accurate readings can help ensure the most appropriate treatment should any problems arise.

## Maintain a healthy weight

If you're overweight or obese, you're at increased risk of high blood pressure. Losing just 3-5% of your body weight can help improve your numbers. There are an abundance of plans and programs available that can assist with weight loss, and taking positive steps with a friend or family member may help with motivation.

## Get active

To maximize health benefits and help keep blood pressure in the normal range, the American Heart Association recommends adults get at least 150 minutes per week of moderate activity, 75 minutes of

vigorous activity or a combination of the two. Try activities like brisk walking, swimming, bicycling or dancing. For example, the Get Down with Your Blood Pressure campaign uses music and dance to help remember the four easy steps to self-monitor blood pressure:

- Get It – grab your self-monitoring blood pressure (SMBP) device
- Slip It – slide the SMBP cuff up your arm
- Cuff It – wrap the cuff snugly, but not too tight
- Check It – check your blood pressure on the device

## Eat well

Making small, simple changes to your eating habits can go a long way toward keeping you and your family healthy. Eating fruits and vegetables, such as mangos, avocados and blueberries, can lower blood pressure over time. Other

smart choices include nuts and seeds, whole grains, lean proteins and fish.

## Reduce alcohol and tobacco usage

Smoking compounds risk factors for heart disease, such as high blood pressure and diabetes, and the chemicals in tobacco smoke can harm your heart and blood vessels. Similarly, consuming alcohol excessively (more than two drinks per day) is associated with high blood pressure. Limiting alcohol consumption and stopping smoking – or avoiding secondhand smoke – can help reduce your risk.

If you develop high blood pressure, work with a health care professional to manage it, and visit [heart.org/hbpccontrol](http://heart.org/hbpccontrol) to find local blood pressure resources, step-by-step self-monitoring videos and more.

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