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10

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## letter from publisher



### Let's Celebrate!

July is definitely my favorite month. We commemorate the birthday of our nation, and I celebrate my birthday, too. Watermelon, fresh corn and a strawberry cake are usual items at our summer holiday parties. And we always remember to make some essential oil bug spray. There is a lot more than just Uncle Sam's birthday to enjoy in July. Here are 10 more great ideas to keep you celebrating throughout the hot summer days of my favorite month.

- 2nd – World UFO Day
- 6th – International Kissing Day
- 9th – National Sugar Cookie Day
- 13th – National French Fry Day
- 15th – National Give Something Away Day
- 19th – Global Hug Your Kids Day
- 22nd – National Hammock Day
- 23rd – National Gorgeous Grandma Day
- 26th – Uncle and Aunt Day
- 30th – International Friendship Day



Mark is looking forward to the 9th, since I make great low-sugar cookies with monk-fruit and honey instead of processed sugar. And I plan to prepare for the 23rd by taking it easy on the 22nd.

If you are lucky enough that your grandparents, uncles and aunts are still living, then make sure that you let them know how much they are loved—not just on the 23rd and 26th, but all throughout the year. (Maybe we should expand the 19th to a free-for-all hug fest?)

However you celebrate this summer, I hope it is safe, relaxing and joyful for you and your family. If you want to try my essential oil bug spray, or to get more great recipes sent to your inbox, take time to sign up for our digital magazine, giveaways and newsletter. Visit the website, [NAOKlahoma.com](http://NAOKlahoma.com), or scan the QR code below.

With love and veggies,  
*Shanna*  
Shanna Warner



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## Eat Grains to Reduce Inflammation and Liver Disease Risk



Although most Americans eat only one-third of the recommended amount, nutrient-rich, whole grains already have been shown to play a key role in safeguarding against obesity and metabolic syndrome. Two new studies establish their positive effect on cardiovascular and liver health, as well. Researchers from Columbia University that followed 4,125 older adults for 25 years found that lower inflammation and fewer cardiovascular incidents were correlated with higher amounts of fiber in the diet—particularly from wheat, barley, oats and other grains—rather than from fruits and vegetables. And a Chinese study in *The Journal of Nutrition* Researchers tested the blood of 1,880 people, half of which had nonalcoholic fatty liver disease, to look for markers of whole grain consumption. The subjects that ate more whole grains had a significantly reduced risk of developing the liver disease.

Polina Tankilevitch/Pexels.com

## Don't Assume Selfies Show True Facial Features



Polina Tankilevitch/Pexels.com

The more than 100 million cell phone selfies taken every day have produced an unanticipated outcome: a documented uptick in plastic surgery. Younger women in particular are increasingly showing cosmetic surgeons their selfies to demonstrate why they want to change the size or shape of their nose, but these concerns may be based on a distorted perception because selfies distort facial features, say researchers from the University of Texas Southwestern. In their study involving 30 subjects, they took one photo 12 inches from the face with the arm bent and another at 18 inches with the arm straight. When comparing the 12-inch selfies against a third photo taken five feet away, the researchers found that, on average, the nose appeared over 6 percent longer and the chin seemed 12 percent shorter. This created a distortion total of over 17 percent in the nose-to-chin ratio. Selfies also made the base of the nose appear wider relative to the width of the face. “If young people are using selfies as their only guide, they may be coming to plastic surgeons to fix problems that don’t exist except in the world of social media,” says study leader Bardia Amirlak, M.D.

## Practice Sitting Tai Chi to Recover from a Stroke



Elnur/AdobeStock.com

Tai chi, an ancient Chinese martial art, typically involves moving the arms and feet in intricate, slow patterns, but a new study in the American Heart Association journal *Stroke* found that doing the hand and shoulder movements while sitting in a chair produced significant physical and mental benefits for stroke survivors. Researchers at the Yunnan University of Traditional Chinese Medicine, in China, found that after 12 weeks of performing sitting tai chi, 69 stroke patients had better hand and arm function, better sitting balance, a wider range of shoulder motion, less depression and a better quality of life compared to 65 people in a standard stroke rehab program. More than half of those doing the sitting tai chi continued to practice it after the study ended, with continued improvement.

## Try Music and Muscle Relaxation to Lower Surgery Anxiety



sasini pama/EyeEm/AdobeStock.com

Surgery often activates high levels of anxiety in patients, but a Chinese pilot study of 116 women undergoing operations for gynecological cancer found that simple strategies dubbed “expressive arts therapy” can help. In the study group, women were encouraged to dance and do handicrafts while listening to music the day before the surgery. They practiced progressive muscle relaxation and listened to music immediately after the surgery, and on the day before their release, they were invited to write and draw to express their emotions. The researchers found that women in the therapy group experienced significantly less anxiety during their operations than women in a placebo group, although the effects didn’t continue after discharge. Ninety-eight percent of the women found the therapy beneficial.

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*Making on Deep-Sea Mineral Stewardship: A Supply Chain Perspective*, has found that significant knowledge gaps make it hard to predict the scale of the potential effect, and decisions made now about mineral stewardship will have lasting effects for generations.

The World Bank and the International Energy Agency forecast a multifold increase in the demand for key metals used for decarbonization, many of which are found in mineral deposits in the deep seabed, but some organizations and more than 600 scientists have called for a pause or total ban on the exploitation of these minerals. Positive factors such as increased metal supply, wider use of decarbonization technologies and benefits to countries from extraction royalties must be considered against the generation of sediment plumes, noise from extraction and impacts on the seafood industry.

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Squawk Talk  
City Lights are Tough on Birds

Using satellite maps and radar to estimate the number of migratory birds streaming across the night sky, Chicago tops the list of cities where birds face the most danger from light pollution in both spring and fall. North America hosts about 3 billion fewer birds today than in 1970, according to a 2019 analysis published in *Science*. The causes include light pollution, climate change, vanishing habitat and pesticides. Scientists believe the combination of factors could lead many abundant bird populations toward extinction.

For example, Cornell University ornithologist Andrew Farnsworth found that the seven annual Tribute in Light twin towers anniversary memorials on September 11 that project intense beams of light into the night sky attracted an average of more than 1 million birds. Within the first 20 minutes of each event, up to 16,000 birds crowded into a tight radius. Bird conservationists listen for disoriented chirps and if too many are circling aimlessly in the beams, the lights are turned off.

BirdCast incorporates large-scale weather radar and machine learning to forecast the exact nights when hundreds of millions of migratory birds will arrive over U.S. cities. The team sends the data to conservationists and policymakers to help the birds by dimming lights along the way.

Native Wisdom

Indigenous Efforts  
Use Hemp to Remove  
Forever Chemicals From  
Superfund Site



The former Loring Air Force Base, in Limestone, Maine, on the Canadian border, closed in 2007, is now owned by the Aroostook Band of Micmacs. The superfund site is so polluted that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency gave it a waiver, deeming it technically impractical to clean, being loaded with per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), cancer-causing compounds commonly known as "forever chemicals". PFAS tend to bioaccumulate, building up in soil, water, animals and humans; they can persist for hundreds or thousands of years and have been linked to kidney and testicular cancer, liver damage and suppressed immunity.

In the spring of 2019, the Micmac Nation, nonprofit Upland Grassroots and their research partners began an experiment. Hemp is a good candidate for phytoremediation because it grows fast across much of the country. Its roots are deep and profuse to better absorb pollutants from the soil. By 2020, researchers discovered that the hemp plants were successfully sucking PFAS out of the contaminated soil via phytoremediation and hope that their example may help farmers that have discovered their soil is tainted. Micmac Chief Edward Peter-Paul says, "Anything we can do to contribute to making the environment better, we want to be a part of."

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# THE HEALTHY FOOD MOVEMENT

## Pandemic Trends are Shaping Better Local Food Systems

by Bob Benenson



Like so much else on the planet, the two-year coronavirus pandemic turned the health food world upside-down. “I found myself thinking real dystopian and wondering if people would be able to survive if grocery stores crumbled,” recalls Diana Mondragón, of Rockford, Illinois. “That scary thought train reminded me that I want to learn how to be more self-sustainable.” Her once-occasional drop-bys to farmers markets are now an essential weekly ritual. “I want to support local farmers and food producers to help communities grow stronger and healthier,” she says.

When the long supply chains of the conventional food system became disrupted, many Americans found themselves feeling insecure about food availability for the first time in their lives. The industrialized food system that had operated so efficiently for many generations had relied on long and complicated supply links; when they broke down or became gridlocked, the result was

empty supermarket shelves and long waits for home deliveries. Add the economic repercussions and job losses, and about one in nine households lacked enough nutritious food to sustain a healthy life, report researchers from New York University.

Faced with the system’s shortcomings, a noteworthy outcome has been a surge in demand for healthier food production using sustainable and humane practices. Unable to drop by a nearby grocery store and get whatever they wanted whenever they wanted it, many consumers began buying locally grown produce for both practical and environmental reasons. After two high-growth decades, farmers markets initially took a hit during pandemic closures, but they have since bounced back with renewed energy. A wide range of innovative solutions are being pursued by e-commerce entrepreneurs and food-equity advocates to get healthier local food into more hands and more neighborhoods.

### Surging Concerns

Sales of natural and organic products in the U.S. grew by about 10 percent in 2020, the year of the COVID-19 outbreak, and by another 8 percent in 2021, reports SPINS, a Chicago-based data research firm, in *Nutrition Business Journal*. Sales growth in that sector was six to seven times larger than for conventional products, which experienced barely any sales growth at all.

Helping spur the trend, cheap food at supermarkets isn’t so cheap anymore, making organic food look better by comparison. The research company Data Weave reported in March that conventional food prices jumped by 11 percent in the previous 12 months of the pandemic, while prices for organic food increased by a relatively modest 2 to 4 percent.

The price pressures on conventional food “will continue to go up rapidly,” says Matt Tortora, co-founder of WhatsGood, a Rhode Island-based food e-commerce company. “The war between Russia and Ukraine is going to exacerbate that issue. And it seems like most of what’s going on in the world is going to affect our global supply chains even further, and in more profound ways than just our gas pump.”

### Food-to-Table Creativity

The dominance of supermarkets and big-box stores in the years following World War II greatly diminished supply and demand of farm-fresh local food. A back-to-the-future trend that started taking hold a generation ago spurred a five-fold increase in the number of farmers markets across the nation, along with a proliferation of farms selling community supported agriculture subscriptions that delivered weekly batches of fresh produce to members. These increased sales enabled many small farmers to offset the body blow from business lost due to pandemic-related restaurant shutdowns; a number of them thrived, with record sales.

The signs for the 2022 outdoor market season have been encouraging. Green City Market, widely regarded as Chicago’s premier farmers market, reported more than 13,000 visitors in a six-hour span on May 7, even though the weather was still on the cool side and few spring crops were in season after a chilly and wet April.

At the same time, a previously little-used conduit for local health food sales—e-commerce—shows signs of spurring long-term growth. Some individual producers nimbly built out their web-based product sales by also providing home delivery, previously a rarity in the local food scene. For example, the e-commerce site Avrom Farm (*AvromFarm.com*), of Ripon, Wisconsin, sells not only its own products, but also goods from other farmers, and Three Sisters Garden, of Kankakee, Illinois, which raises specialty vegetables, has converted entirely to e-commerce and home delivery.

Taking this concept to the next level is WhatsGood, which in 2014 began providing home delivery and pickup services for farmers markets in several cities. In the pandemic, the company became a lifeline to connect farmers with consumers at a time when stay-at-home orders and social distancing concerns hampered or closed farmers markets.

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Late last year, WhatsGood introduced a new business model that bypasses farmers markets to allow consumers to order goods online directly from farmers for home delivery. *Source* WhatsGood.com now operates in 21 states. Tortora estimates that demand for local food is about 12 times greater than it was before the pandemic, even as supermarkets again start stocking more faraway-grown, conventional produce.

## Even Better for the Planet

While the pandemic created a sense of urgency about healthier eating, it also elevated concerns about the health of the living environment. An April 2022 study issued by New York University's Stern Center for Sustainable Business found that products specifically marketed as sustainable had a 17 percent share of the market for consumer-packaged goods, up from 13.3 percent in 2015. Nearly half of all products introduced in 2021 touted sustainability benefits, up from 28 percent in 2017. Organic food sales in 2021 amounted to \$51 billion; 30 years earlier, that market was estimated at a mere \$1 billion, says the SPINS report.

Now there is growing support to take stewardship of the land to the next level through regenerative agriculture practices which focus on building and maintaining the health and biological vitality of the nation's soils, and in some cases, means restoring soils stripped of their vitality by conventional farming practices. It has been most heavily promoted by the Rodale Institute, based in Emmaus, Pennsylvania, which has developed standards for a Regenerative Organic Certified food label.

The sustainability issue resonates deeply with people like Katlin Smith, founder and CEO of Chicago-based Simple Mills, a 10-year-old company that's widely recognized as the preeminent natural baking mix brand nationally. "I started the company after seeing what a huge impact food has on all of our bodies, and I realized how much we had processed the heck out of our food. And it was really undermining people's health," she says.

In the last two years, the company has expanded its focus to work with farmers to improve soil health and biodiversity, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It recently joined forces with the frozen smoothie company Daily Harvest and gluten-free frozen pizza maker Capello's to advance regenerative soil practices in almond growing. "Regenerative agriculture is really just growing food in a way that leans into nature and builds a healthy ecosystem for all who are involved," says Smith.

## Supplying Underserved Communities

Local food communities around the country are also playing an increasingly dynamic role in addressing food equity, access and security issues. Less than a decade ago, fewer than half of all farmers markets nationwide accepted federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits for purchases. Today, backed by U.S. Department of Agriculture funding, most do, with many markets accepting state-backed debit cards. To further increase access to locally produced food for lower-income families, many states provide matching shopping funds up to a certain limit, as do programs run by nonprofit organizations such as California's Market Match and Double Up Bucks, run by the Michigan Fair Food Network.

To get healthy produce to people that live in urban "food deserts", nonprofits are pioneering creative approaches. The Urban Growers Collective operates eight farms on 11 acres of land on Chicago's Southside that combine education, training and leadership development with the growth of organic crops, which are then driven in a "Fresh Moves" bus to local community and health centers, and churches. Founded by food justice advocates Laurell Sims and Erika Allen, the Collective worked with a coalition of nonprofits during the pandemic to deliver boxes of free food to households in underserved neighborhoods across the city. The pandemic "forced us to do some of the things we'd been talking about, but said we don't have time yet. We just dived in," Sims says.

The dramatic impact of the COVID-19 crisis drove up local interest in the Collective's community gardens, with the number of volunteers jumping from 10 to 50. "It made a lot of people realize this ain't no joke. People close to us were passing away," says farm manager Malcolm Evans, who started volunteering for the Collective a decade ago as a teenager growing up in a nearby public housing project. "People wanted to really know how to grow food. We've been doing it for years, trying to bring this to folks' attention. Everybody needs to understand food and know where it comes from."

*Bob Benenson is publisher and writer of Local Food Forum, a newsletter that covers all aspects of the local food community in the Chicago region. He can be contacted at Bob@LocalFoodForum.com.*

## SAVVY SHOPPER TIPS FOR THE FARMERS MARKET

One longstanding obstacle to convincing folks to go all in on local foods at farmers markets is the widespread belief that it is prohibitively expensive. It's not. True, some items have always cost a bit more at farmers markets than at a local big-box supermarket. Farmers whose produce carries the U.S. Department of Agriculture Organic or other sustainably grown certification eschew artificial fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides and GMO (genetically modified organism) crops, which means that their methods are more labor-intensive than is the case for a majority of conventional farmers.

Most farmers market vendors are small- to medium-sized producers, and they don't have the economies of scale that enable conventional growers and retailers to offer deep discounts. Yet there are many ways to save money at farmers markets.

**COMPARE PRICES.** Most markets have multiple vendors selling similar varieties, so take some time to stroll around and check out the prices at the different stands. We might find one that is the price leader across the board or that different stands have lower prices for different items.

**BUY IN SEASON.** Simple supply and demand: The more of a product a vendor has to sell, the more likely it is that it is going to be priced to move. So, practice seasonality and look for favorite items at the peak of their growing season.

**BUY IN BULK.** Many farmers market vendors provide discounts for multiple purchases of the same or similar items. If summer squash is priced at \$1 per piece, but \$2 for three, it is the equivalent of, "Buy two, get one free."

**SAVOR SECONDS.** Consumers became familiar with the concept of perfect-looking (if not perfect-tasting) produce with the era of mass food retailing.

As a result, a lot of imperfect fruits and vegetables have been tossed away. The growing national concerns over food waste are leading some consumers to look closely at items—formally known as "seconds" and sometimes referred to as "ugly" fruits and vegetables—that don't have perfect appearance, but are perfectly edible, nutritious and usually cheaper. If they aren't visible at our favorite farmer's stand, just ask, because they are often tucked away. We may not want to serve them as-is to dinner guests, but when chopping and dicing or making stews or preserves, appearances make little difference.

**KNOW THE FARMER.** Farmers market regulars almost certainly get to know their favorite vendors, and may quickly get to be on a first-name basis. They will freely share advice about how to prepare the items they sell and what's in stock now, soon or at the end of their growing seasons. It also improves chances of getting the occasional personal discount—but do not show up near closing time and ask for a discount on unsold products. Most farmers and market managers hate that. If lots of people wait until the last minute, a lot of farmers would soon be unable to stay in business.

**KEEP IT COOL.** Produce picked a day or two before hitting the market is going to be fresher, taste better, maintain a higher nutrient density and last longer than products that are picked before their peak and sit in warehouses for a while. But that shelf-life advantage can shrink if farmers market purchases are not protected from high temperatures. Some strategies are to shop early on hot days, bring along insulated bags and cold packs, and possibly buy frozen fish, poultry or meat on the way home to keep the produce chilled.



Green Community by Sandra Glover



# Cool Treats for Hot Days

DIY RECIPES EVEN KIDS CAN MAKE

by Sheila Julson



Many of us have fond childhood memories of cool confections from the neighborhood ice cream truck on sultry summer days. By creating homemade, hot-weather treats with our kids, we get to enjoy the delights of fresh, seasonal produce and inventive flavor combinations, while also providing our kids with kitchen fun, healthy fare without unwelcome additives and summertime memories of their own.

“There are plenty of frozen treats from the grocery store that are in the natural or organic categories, but sometimes those still have levels of sweeteners, sugar or other preservatives that we don’t want or need,” says Annie Wegner LeFort, a Milwaukee-based chef and founder of the healthy living business *EatMoveMKE.com*. She has been making frozen pops for her 13-year-old daughter Vera since she was a toddler. Anything that is homemade is more economical and has less packaging, Wegner LeFort says. Pop molds can be used over and over, and even cups can be used and reused as molds to reduce waste.

### Crafting Cool Treats

Making frozen pops can be as easy as mashing fruits and other ingredients in a bowl, pouring the mixture into molds and freezing them. A blender or a food processor can be used to make a smoother mix, with parents supervising younger kids. Older children that know how to use small appliances can safely blend—and clean up—without supervision. Wegner LeFort notes that young kids might enjoy straightforward flavor combinations, but older kids with more developed palates can experiment with herbs or exotic concoctions.

Parents can deftly blend vegetables and herbs into frozen pops and refreshing summer smoothies without being detected by finicky eaters. She recommends adding spinach to fruit blends with berries or dark-colored fruits: “You don’t even really see the greens. They are overtaken by the blue and purple fruits.” Beets or beet juice, which is high in iron and vitamins, also add a beautiful color to berry blends. Cooked and mashed sweet potatoes lend a vibrant orange to red and yellow blends made with strawberries or pineapple.

Gwen Eberly, a Lancaster, Pennsylvania-based chef who teaches cooking to kids and teens through the Zest! cooking school, recalls making healthy, decadent, frozen orange cream pops with her mother and enjoying them on her farmhouse porch on hot summer days. “The original orange cream pops recipe came from a cookbook called *More With Less*, a compilation of recipes offered by Mennonite women in the 1970s,” Eberly says. She made them with her own children when they were young, and they became a family favorite. Now, as teenagers, they make the treats themselves all year long.

Other simple cool snacks include monkey tails—frozen bananas rolled in melted chocolate. “That’s a simple and healthy treat that can be topped with nuts or seeds. If you use dark chocolate, that helps cut down on sugar,” Wegner LeFort advises. Ice cream sandwiches can be made with either store-bought or homemade cookies and ice cream. “Those have endless options for creativity and different flavor combinations.”

Jessi Walter Brelsford, founder and “Chief Bud” at the cooking school Taste Buds Kitchen, based in New York City, recommends putting a fun twist on fruit salad with Rainbow Kabobs, which parents and kids can make together. “Our recipe uses fresh, summer favorites like strawberries, cantaloupe, kiwis and blueberries, but depending on your family’s preferences, you can easily make these with any fruit sturdy enough to go on the skewers,” she says. “Kids love helping out, so get them even more excited to be involved by using cool tools together, like a melon baller or crinkle cutter. It will help them practice fine motor skills and pattern recognition by threading the fruits onto the skewers in specific patterns.”

With a little encouragement and experimentation, kids will be proudly and happily creating their own delicious and healthy summer snacks.

Sheila Julson is a freelance writer and regular contributor to *Natural Awakenings* magazine.



### ORANGE CREAM POPS

YIELD: 8 SERVINGS

- 1 banana
- 1 cup vanilla yogurt, whole milk
- 1 cup fresh-squeezed orange juice
- 1 Tbsp honey

Combine all the ingredients in a blender until smooth. Pour blended mixture into molds, leaving ½ inch for them to expand. Freeze until hard, about 4 hours. When ready to eat, run under warm water and remove from the mold.

Variations: omit bananas or substitute milk with full-fat coconut milk.

Recipe courtesy of Gwen Eberly, adapted from *More With Less*.



### VEGAN WATERMELON-BEET POPS

YIELD: 6 TO 8 SERVINGS

- ¾ cup vegan vanilla yogurt
- ½ cup non-dairy milk
- 2 heaping cups frozen or fresh watermelon cubes
- 1 red beet, cooked, peeled and chunked
- 1 small frozen or fresh banana
- ½ lemon, juiced

Add all ingredients to a blender and process on high until smooth. Pour into popsicle molds and freeze solid.

Recipe courtesy of Annie Wegner LeFort.





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## MIXED BERRY POPS

YIELD: 8 SERVINGS

- 2 cups mixed berries (frozen or fresh)
- 1 ripe banana
- ¾ cup fresh-squeezed orange juice
- 1 cup milk
- 1 cup plain yogurt
- 1 Tbsp honey

Combine all the ingredients in a blender and process until smooth. Pour blended mixture into molds, leaving ½ inch for it to expand. Freeze until hard, about 4 hours. When ready to eat, run under warm water and remove from the mold.

Variations: omit bananas or substitute milk with full-fat coconut milk. For smoothies, add 2 cups of ice to the recipe and pour the blended mixture into a glass.

Recipe courtesy of Gwen Eberly.

## RAINBOW FRUIT KABOBS

YIELD: 18 SERVINGS

- 18 4-inch bamboo knot picks
- 9 strawberries, cut in half
- 6 oz cantaloupe, cut into balls or ½-inch cubes
- 1 banana, cut into half-moons
- 2 kiwis, cut into half-moons
- 18 blueberries
- 18 purple grapes

Prepare fruit for kabobs. Cut strawberries in half. Cut cantaloupe into ½-inch cubes or use a melon baller to make balls. Cut bananas and kiwis into half-moons. Leave blueberries and grapes whole.

Thread fruit pieces onto bamboo knot picks, placing fruit in the rainbow order of color: strawberries, cantaloupe, bananas, kiwis, blueberries and purple grapes. Skewer the grape last, so that it can be used to cover the pointy end of the stick. Put one piece of each fruit on each skewer. Arrange the fruit kabobs decoratively on a serving platter.

Recipe and photo courtesy of Taste Buds Kitchen.



photo courtesy of Taste Buds Kitchen

## eco tip



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## Earth-Friendly Hiking

Hiking in the great outdoors is undoubtedly one of the most enjoyable sports on Earth, especially in the summertime, when the weather is temperate and the sun shines upon us. Unfortunately, nature's charm can quickly fade when we stumble upon empty beverage cans, plastic sandwich bags or even worse, somebody's still-smoldering cigarette butt, which could so easily become the next uncontrollable wildfire.

As stewards of the environment (and kind human beings), it's important that we hike responsibly, leaving no detritus behind, respecting wildlife and preserving the pristine setting for everyone to enjoy. Here are a few tips for treading lightly on the next hiking trip.

**Avoid overcrowded places.** The most popular national parks and hiking trails have been hosting a record-breaking number of visitors lately, severely stressing the flora and fauna. Consider exploring less trafficked spots so that these areas can recover.

**Stay close to home.** Choose a trail close by to cut down on travel-related carbon emissions. For most of us, a beautiful natural setting is usually a short walk or bike ride away.

**Use sustainable gear.** Wear outdoor gear by eco-friendly brands that strive to lower the carbon footprint in their sourcing, manufacturing and shipping practices, such as Patagonia or Merrell.

**Don't litter.** Leave no trash on the trail, including biodegradable items or food scraps, which could negatively impact wildlife. Remember to bring a bag on the walk to carry all refuse home—score extra points for picking up items that someone else might have left behind.

**Pack responsibly.** Limit waste by wrapping homemade snacks and beverages in reusable bags and containers. Bring bamboo utensils.

**Bring a reusable water bottle.** Single-use water bottles are out. Bring a lightweight, reusable bottle. For longer hikes near fresh water sources, invest in an on-the-go water filter.

**Ditch chemical products.** Use chemical-free sunscreens and insect repellents to keep toxins out of the environment. This is especially important when taking an outdoor swim.

**Don't take a souvenir.** Resist the temptation to handle, move or take home items found on the trail. Rocks, shells, a handful of sand, pinecones, flowers—they're all integral parts of the ecosystem, serving as food and habitat for wildlife.

**Stick to the trail** to avoid trampling plants or causing other unintentional damage.

**Don't engage with the animals.** Getting uncomfortably close to touch, photograph or feed wild animals is a big no-no.

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# That Natural Glow

## RADIANT SKIN WITH FEWER HEALTH RISKS

by Marlaina Donato

For basic hygiene and improved appearance, we wash, slather, hydrate, scrub and cover up, often forgetting that our skin is our largest organ and much of what we expose it to can be absorbed and accumulated in the body over time. If we are using products with potentially toxic additives, we are putting ourselves at a higher risk for hormone disruption, reproductive cancers and allergic reactions.

Many chemicals that have been banned or controlled in Japan and some European countries are still being used on an unregulated basis in the U.S. Even products labeled “organic” and “natural” can have harmful elements alongside the good stuff. Recent research from the University of Vermont Cancer Center has linked phthalates, the “forever chemicals” used as bonding agents in many personal care products, to a higher risk of cancers in children. The encouraging news is that with a little savvy preparation, these hazardous ingredients can be avoided, and we can have glowing skin with fewer health risks.

### Knowledge is Power

Being an informed consumer is important when it comes to what goes into the body, and reading labels is just as vital for what’s applied on the outside. “The beauty industry can become fascinated with chemical-based ‘quick-fixes,’ but so often what you find is that these interventions can have long-lasting effects that may actually damage the skin,” says Tammy Fender, founder of Tammy Fender Holistic Skincare, in West Palm Beach, Florida.

Liver-compromising and potentially cancer-causing formaldehyde, phthalates and parabens are plentiful in shampoos (including baby shampoo), soaps, deodorants, antiperspirants, body lotions and moisturizers, and have been linked to breast cancer and other malignancies, kidney damage and depression. While some sources claim these substances to be low-risk due to minimal amounts in skin care products, looking at the broader picture can be disturbing when we consider long-term use and the number of products used daily.

On a superficial level, the skin just responds better when it is exposed to fewer toxins. “Our skin is our biggest organ and absorbs up to 60 percent of whatever you put on it. When you eat healthy, your body feels great. The same goes for your skin,” says Shannon Reagan, owner of Glimmer Goddess Organic Skin Care, in Frisco, Texas. “Throughout my life, I’ve tried just about every product in the stores



looking for something that wouldn’t irritate my skin. I found that the cleaner the products, the better my skin looked and felt.”

### What Our Skin Loves

An outstanding resource for information about a particular product’s safety is the Environmental Working Group’s Skin Deep database at [EWG.org/skindeep](http://EWG.org/skindeep), which evaluates and grades more than 88,000 personal care products for toxicity. When shopping online or in a store, nixing any that have long, difficult-to-pronounce ingredients is key. Any label that simply lists “fragrance”

is also a red flag for hundreds of possible chemicals. Instead, opt for skin care products with Latin botanical names for herbal and essential oil-based scents.

“Natural products may cost a bit more than store brands, but the benefits far outweigh the incremental cost. They contain vitamins, phytonutrients, antioxidants and flavonoids that help heal, rejuvenate and protect skin,” says Reagan.

Fender, a holistic aesthetician and pioneer of clean skin care, concurs, “There is so much care that comes through the plants. Nature is generous.” Her favorite go-to ingredients in her organic skin care line range from white lily to citrus. “I love rose for its powerful rejuvenating benefits. I also love chamomile, an ancient calming and soothing remedy, which is so beneficial for sensitive skin.”

### Fun in the Sun

Chemicals found in conventional sunscreens such as avobenzene, homosalate, octinoxate, oxybenzone and PABA activate free radicals in the body, but natural sunscreens offer total protection without the elevated cancer risk. Reagan, whose products offer broad-spectrum sun protection, explains, “Chemical sunscreens are absorbed into the skin while natural sunscreens (mineral-based) sit on top of your skin, blocking the sun’s rays at the surface. Natural sunscreens such as zinc oxide and non-nano titanium dioxide are usually thick like a body lotion texture. They work by reflecting UVA/UVB rays away from the skin and start to work right away.”

Essential oils like red raspberry seed and carrot seed are also reliable ingredients to look for in any natural sunscreen, and may even be helpful for certain types of precancerous skin lesions caused by UVA/UVB rays.

Overall, healthy skin comes from a well-balanced lifestyle. For Fender, it is truly a holistic approach. “I love how inspired and educated my clients are these days. They come to the treatment room with insightful questions, and they understand that caring for the skin is not separate from caring for the soul.”

Marlaina Donato is an author, composer and painter. Connect at [WildflowerLady.com](http://WildflowerLady.com).

### HEALTHIER SUMMER SKIN

Tips from Shannon Reagan, owner of Glimmer Goddess Organic Skin Care

Our skin needs hydration all year round, but most especially in the hot summer months. The keys to keeping our skin soft, healthy and hydrated is to drink plenty of water, wear lip balm with sun protection and apply a broad-spectrum sunscreen throughout the day.

For ultimate summer goddess skin, be sure to not over-wash your face, which would dry out our skin. Instead, use a gentle cleanser and lukewarm water in the morning and night. Use a sunscreen during the day and a body lotion or body butter at night.

Shea butter is a great moisturizer for all skin types and is packed with skin-nourishing vitamins. Almond oil is an all-around gem when it comes to skin health. As a child, my mom would melt down shea butter and mix it with almond oil to soothe my eczema. These two natural ingredients have become a staple in my line of natural and organic skin care products.



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# Flower Power

## EDIBLE BLOOMS ADD FLAVOR AND COLOR TO SUMMER FARE

by April Thompson

Fruits, leaves, stems and roots are commonly eaten as part of a plant-based, farm-to-table diet, but until recently, the only flowers on the table were in a vase. Today's health-conscious foodies are finding edible flowers to be a fantastic way to eat the rainbow, adding fun flavors and colors to all sorts of dishes.

Urban homesteader Holly Capelle turned her family's backyard in the Portland, Oregon, suburbs into expansive edible gardens, enjoyed by their flower-eating chickens and children alike. "We grow everything from seed, including 15 to 20 edible flower varieties, from spring through fall," says Capelle. "I love to grow edible flowers for two reasons: one, to eat, and second, for the natural pest control they provide. I think of flowers as a beautiful army that I can eat along the way."

Capelle's favorite edible flowers are pansies and violets, as they "pop up again and again all growing season and make a beautiful garnish without overpowering flavor." The home gardener likes to freeze the fresh flowers in ice cubes, press them on the outside of herb butter or dry them between pieces of wax paper to later add to the tops of homemade chocolate bars, along with dehydrated strawberries, lemon balm, mint or other botanical flavors.

The family's fowl get in on the flower fun, too. "We make frozen treats for the chickens out of edible flowers, corn and strawberries, which they love in summer. We also add dried flowers like marigolds to their nesting boxes," she says, adding that marigolds, with their bright orange hues and distinct flavor, are great in scrambled eggs or as a substitute for saffron.



photo courtesy of Marie Viljoen

For larger blooms like sunflowers, Capelle recommends pulling off the often-hard centers. "I often see whole zinnias on edible cakes, but no one wants to eat an entire zinnia. With daisies, for example, I will pull off the petals and recreate the flower on top of a dish, using peppercorns or chocolate chips in place of the center," she says.

Capelle also loves chamomile for its distinctive, apple-like flavor that has the "feel of fall," and dianthus, with a slightly spicy taste like cloves. "Nasturtiums are another super defender in the garden, with a delicious peppery flavor and nice orange pop of color in a salad," she adds.

"Flowers brighten any dish up, especially hors d'oeuvres, omelets and soups. Pea soup is an ugly soup, but sprinkle some microgreens and a viola on top and it's beautiful," says Jan

Bell, of Gilbertie's Organics, in Easton, Connecticut. The 34-acre farm, which recently celebrated its 100th anniversary, grows herbs, vegetables and microgreens in 24 greenhouses, including a micro-green blend with nasturtium and viola flowers. "If you pick the flowers on herbs, the plant will grow better and last longer," Bell adds.

Flowers like wild violets, chive blossoms and common milkweed can add bold color and flavor to vinegar with pinkish purple hues that power up salad dressings. Bell also likes to dry chive flowers to use year-round. "They are a nice purple sprinkle to add to dishes when things are boring in winter," she says.

Marie Viljoen, a New York City forager, chef and author of the cookbook *Forage, Harvest, Feast: A Wild-Inspired Cuisine*, incorporates numerous wild and cultivated flowers, including tree flowers like magnolia and black locust, into her hyperlocal, seasonal meals.

Even common garden roses can add a delicious dimension to dishes and drinks, according to Viljoen. "I like to ferment roses into a simple soda, using organically grown rose petals, honey or sugar and tap water. It's ready within a few days, or else you can leave to ferment a few months to make a sipping vinegar," she says. "You can also combine really fragrant rose petals with a neutral honey like clover, then strain after a few days for a rose water essence you can add to yogurt or other dishes." Viljoen also uses rose petals as edible garnishes for deviled eggs or as edible plates for goat cheese balls on her gourmet picnics.

Some flowers are for the eyes only, however. Many can be poisonous, so it's important to ensure a particular species is edible before digging in. Viljoen also advises carefully distinguishing between poisonous lookalikes when foraging: A delicious daylily and a toxic true lily look similar, but are in different plant families, for example. She also says to look for organically grown flowers that haven't been sprayed with pesticides.

Connect with Washington, D.C., freelance writer April Thompson at [AprilWrites.com](http://AprilWrites.com).

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# The Great Nature Gym

## OUTDOOR WORKOUTS MAKE THE MOST OF SUMMER

by Carrie Jackson

Summer is the prime time to skip the gym and exercise in the fresh air. Studies show that outdoor workouts improve mental well-being and result in greater feelings of revitalization, increased energy and positive engagement. Exercising in nature can reduce stress levels even more than being indoors and can make a workout seem easier.



Many outdoor activities are free or low-cost, can be done solo or in groups and are easily worked into a schedule. From a simple walk in the park to an organized club meet-up, there's no shortage of options to get the heart pumping.

### Outdoor Safety

There are a few factors to keep in mind when moving an exercise routine outside. Be sure to drink plenty of water, as the warmer temperatures can cause increased sweating and dehydration during exertion. Products like hydration packs provide an insulated way to easily carry water hands-free during a workout. While some exposure to vitamin D is beneficial, sun protection is essential as harmful UV rays can cause the skin to burn and lead to melanoma. The Skin Cancer Foundation recommends using a waterproof, broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher and reapplying it every two hours. UVA rays can also lead to cataracts, macular degeneration and pterygium (a benign growth called “surfer’s eye”), so wear sunglasses that have UV protection.

### Walking

An easy activity that can be done almost anywhere, walking requires only a pair of supportive shoes and a bit of wanderlust. It is a great introduction for people looking to get started with a fitness program. Relatively low-impact, it can ease joint pain, help reduce stress, improve sleep and boost the immune system. Research suggests that distance is more important than speed for health benefits, so add a leisurely stroll to a daytime routine.

### Running

As a weight-bearing exercise, running helps build strong bones and protects against osteoporosis. Over time, it can also reduce the risk of heart disease and lower the resting heart rate. Long-distance running is stellar for cardiovascular endurance, while sprinting is a quick way to jumpstart weight loss. Running clubs all over the country can help newcomers find inspiration, camaraderie and motivation when the couch is calling.

### Biking

Cycling is easy on the joints, can help improve balance and is a great low-impact cardio workout. Biking can be done solo or in groups and is a great option for families, as even little kids can ride along. Many cities have bike-friendly street lanes, allow bikes on public transportation and have rental bikes such as Divvy available for short-term rides.

### Yoga

Classes in yoga and Pilates, traditionally done indoors, can be moved outside when the weather is nice. Practicing in the open air means breathing in higher quality oxygen while practicing deep breathing or moving through asanas. The ambient warmth allows soft tissue to relax more, making deeper poses more accessible. Plus, it's just more relaxing to practice outside, and taking in the surroundings will heighten a mindfulness practice.

### Water Sports

Canoeing, kayaking and paddleboarding can be done on any kind of open water, including lakes, ponds and rivers. These activities strengthen the upper body as well, and water itself can have a calming effect. Take a class or rent a boat for an afternoon paddle, either alone or with friends.

### Rollerblading

Popular in the 1990s, rollerblading is again having a heyday. Online skate manufacturer Rollerblade saw a 300 percent increase in sales at the start of the pandemic, as consumers looked for creative ways to get around outside. Rollerblading helps build endurance in a wide range of muscles, including upper legs, hips, back and glutes. It can improve balance, is easy on the joints and is just plain fun. Invest in a set of protective gear such as a helmet, wrist guards and kneepads to ensure safety.

### Urban Fitness

To create workouts in the city, run up and down a hill or set of stairs, then find a nearby playground and do pull-ups on the monkey bars, tricep dips on a park bench and other bodyweight exercises. Or, grab a few friends and create a high-intensity interval training circuit in the park. Change up the routine and location to keep it fresh and fun.

Carrie Jackson is a Chicago-based writer and frequent contributor to Natural Awakenings magazine. Connect at [CarrieJacksonWrites.com](http://CarrieJacksonWrites.com).

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# Pollinator Haven

CREATE A TOXIN-FREE YARD FOR CRITICAL CRITTERS

by Sandra Yeyati



Aimée Code has stopped trying to grow roses in her Eugene, Oregon, backyard, where the ground is too muddy for them to flourish. If we stick to plants that do well in our own region, they’ll be less susceptible to disease and pests, and we won’t need to use dangerous chemicals in our gardens, says the pesticide program director at the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation.

Code works to preserve invertebrate species that are threatened by habitat loss, climate change and pesticides. “Many of these animals provide valuable services,” she says. “Solitary wasps feed their young certain caterpillars that we consider pests because they eat our crops. Riverbed mussels filter our water. Stone flies help break down organic matter. Bees are effective pollinators, helping to sustain our most nutritious food sources.”

U.S. bees are declining at alarming rates, thanks in part to neonicotinoids and other harmful pesticides, Code reports. The good news is that a few gardening modifications can provide food and safe haven for beneficial invertebrates, while keeping our families (and pets) free from scary chemicals.

### Gardening Tips from Aimée Code

Create a resilient garden with hardy, native plants that invite both pollinators and natural enemies like solitary wasps, lacewings and hoverflies, which help control pest populations. Use restraint when trimming plants or clearing debris. Many bees create nests inside pithy stems and downed wood or underneath bunch grasses and fallen leaves.

Develop a greater tolerance for weeds, embracing a slightly wilder garden aesthetic. Avoid using herbicides by mulching and manually pulling weeds before they go to seed.

A few pests in the vegetable garden are okay, as long as they don’t harm over-all production. Search online for non-chemical solutions by vegetable type and location. As in farming, try rotating crops or look into companion planting to learn which plants work well together. Ensure the soil has what each plant needs. For example, blueberries require an acidic soil.

Pesticides address the symptom rather than the problem. Killing pests may be a temporary fix, but won’t address the underlying cause, so the problem will likely return. Even so-called “reduced risk” products contain concerning chemicals for

pollinators. Always try non-chemical solutions first. For example, instead of applying a fungicide to address powdery mildew, water the affected plant less and prune it to improve air flow.

### Eco-Friendly Pest Management

According to Ryan Anderson, community integrated pest management manager at the IPM Institute of North America, “Chemicals should only be used in a lawn or garden as a last resort, and even then, only the least amount of the least harmful product.” For reduced-risk and organic product lists, visit [Tinyurl.com/EPA](http://Tinyurl.com/EPA) [PesticideList](http://PesticideList) and [MidwestGrowsGreen.org](http://MidwestGrowsGreen.org).

Anderson laments the rampant overuse of noxious products, including glyphosate and 2,4-D, which are classified as probable and possible carcinogens, respectively, by the International Agency for Research on Cancer; commercial fertilizers that lead to nitrogen and phosphorus runoffs, threatening marine wildlife; and pyrethroid insecticides for mosquito control, which kill most insects.

He champions sustainable measures, starting with a reduction of turf grass. “People like sitting on their lawn, but try keeping it as minuscule as possible and plant native plants which require less maintenance,” he says. “Make sure you’re not planting grass where grass doesn’t want to grow.”

Consider an eco-lawn with micro-clover in the mix, Anderson advises. “Clover recycles nitrogen and stays green in drought conditions, so you don’t have to fertilize or water, and you only need to mow eco-lawns once a month.”

### Lawn Care Strategies from Ryan Anderson

For weeds, the best defense is a dense, deeply rooted, turf grass system that will out-compete for air, water, nutrients and sunlight.

Aerate the lawn in the fall by removing narrow, three-to-six-inch-deep cores and leaving them on the soil. After a day or two, mow the cores over to return nutrients to the soil. Spread turf seed over bare-soil areas and over the entire lawn whenever aeration is conducted.

Before or after aerating, spread one-quarter to one-half inch of compost over the lawn to promote a nutrient- and microbiology-rich, spongy soil structure. Visit [CompostingCouncil.org](http://CompostingCouncil.org) for reputable suppliers and DIY instructions for high-quality compost. Apply leaf mulch and grass clippings to feed and promote protozoa, bacteria and fungi that break down organic matter, recycle nutrients, inhibit plant pathogens, balance pH and aerate the soil. Mow less often and as high as possible to minimize stressing the grass plant. Lawns need only a single, one-inch watering per week.

Sandra Yeyati, J.D., is a professional writer and editor. Reach her at [SandraYeyati@gmail.com](mailto:SandraYeyati@gmail.com).



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**Q:** What's the best dog food brand to feed my chihuahua?

**A:** My answer over the years has changed. Now I rarely recommend a certain brand. Statistics show that pets who live to 10 years old, have a 50% chance to get cancer. So, I would ask what kind of food is good for *you* to eat? Foods with less processing and fewer chemicals. Since we have a holistic practice, we get many clients that are already feeding raw food diets with plenty of organ meat and added vitamins. I caution them to not just feed raw hamburger from the kitchen, but to look for a balanced product that has good clinical history and to definitely be cautious of bacterial contamination (which is fairly common in dry foods as well.) Others prefer to homecook their own dog food which I am not against either as long as care is taken to avoid nutritional deficiencies. There are some organic dog food brands on the market but they tend to be very pricey. If you need some help figuring out what is best for your lifestyle and breed then call the clinic for nutritional counseling. 405 605-6675

Brad Roach, DVM, provides natural care for pets, including acupuncture, nutritional consults, herbal remedies, cancer and arthritis treatments. See ad on the back page.

Email questions for Dr. Roach to: [Publisher@NAOklahoma.com](mailto:Publisher@NAOklahoma.com) (Advertorial)

# Canine Calm

## ANTI-ANXIETY TIPS FOR DOGS

by Ronica O'Hara



**W**hen they signed the Declaration of Independence, little did our country's founders know that more than two centuries later, their revolutionary act would lead to millions of dogs trembling, cringing and running for cover. As many as 45 percent of American pet dogs are struck with "fireworks phobia", studies show, and more dogs run away over the July Fourth holiday than at any other time of the year, report animal control officials.

The kind of situational anxiety caused by sudden loud noises can affect almost any dog, but it happens most often to those pets predisposed to anxious behavior because of breeding or troubled pasts. A new study in *Frontiers in Veterinary Science* from the University of California, Davis, has found that even common noises such as a vacuum, microwave or beeping smoke alarm can trigger anxiety in many dogs, and that many owners don't recognize subtle signs.

"Monitor your dog's behavior for anything unusual, such as excessive barking, panting, shaking, trembling, licking or drooling," advises John Woods, a New York City professional

Studies have confirmed that music can ease situational anxiety for up to half of dogs, but the genre matters: classical soothes, heavy metal agitates.

dog trainer and editor-in-chief of *AllThingsDogs.com*. "Also look for cues in your dog's body language, paying particular attention to their eyes, ears, mouth and tail for other signs of anxiety or discomfort."

Happily, research shows that a number of strategies can help soothe anxious pooches both from immediate terror and ongoing anxiety.

**TURN IT AROUND.** Swiss scientists at the University of Bern's Companion Animal Behavior Group that analyzed the New Year's fireworks strategies of 1,225 dog owners concluded that the most effective method was what they called "counterconditioning"—turning a negative into a positive with treats. As the fireworks exploded, these owners played with their dogs, gave them chews and treats, and expressed positive emotions; their dogs were on average 70 percent less anxious. The method works best when a dog's calmness is reinforced on a daily basis, say the researchers.

Megan Marrs, an Austin, Texas, dog trainer and founder of *K9OfMine.com*, lowered her rescue pit bull's anxious behavior by giving him cold, chewable treats whenever he calmly sat on his bed and didn't cause trouble. "This did require keeping treats on me at all times, but it worked wonders," she says.

**IT'S A WRAP.** The Swiss study also found that 44 percent of dogs became calmer during fireworks after being wrapped in a tight-fitting pressure vest. Sold commercially under such names as ThunderShirt and Anxiety Wrap, the vests can also be easily improvised at home by following YouTube videos. A tight wrap helped soothe the trembling of Zed, the Japanese Chin of Amy Tokic, editor-in-chief of the Toronto-based *PetGuide.com*. "He's still not

comfortable with loud noises, but when he's snuggly swaddled, he doesn't get into a panic state over it," she says.

**PLAY MELLOW MELODIES.** Studies have confirmed that music can ease situational anxiety for up to half of dogs, but the genre matters: classical soothes, heavy metal agitates. Researchers at Pooch & Mutt, a British natural-health dog food maker, surveyed Spotify playlists and concluded that the ultimate calming songs for dogs were reggae and soft rock, because of their simple arrangements, minimal electronic orchestration and gentle beats that match the heartbeat of a puppy's mother. "The wrong music or music that is being played too loud has the potential to upset your dog," warns London veterinary surgeon Linda Simon.

**THE SWEET SMELL OF SAFETY.** The sense of smell in dogs is 10,000 times greater than that of humans, so the right scent—like of their lactating mother—can comfort them. Pheromones are synthetic or herbal formulations in sprays, collars, plug-in diffusers or wet wipes that replicate nursing scents, and studies have found them effective for many dogs during fireworks, thunderstorms, and for mild anxiety. Jeraldin Paredes, a New York City professional dog sitter at *TalkTheBark.com*, suggests simply using an old T-shirt to bundle up a pooch during a high-stress situation or to put as a "baby blanket" into their favorite hiding place. "That way, no matter where they hide, a piece of you is always with them," she explains.

**SPEAK STRAIGHT.** "Simply speaking with your pet can make a huge difference in their anxiety," says animal communicator Nancy Mello, in Mystic, Connecticut. "Don't just say goodbye to them, but tell them how long you will be gone and when you will be back. Use a visualization: 'I will be home at 7 p.m.,' while visualizing your house at dark. Or say to an anxious pet, 'You are safe,' on a daily basis. Even if your pet doesn't get the exact wording, they understand the connotation behind it."

Health writer Ronica O'Hara can be contacted at [OHaraRonica@gmail.com](mailto:OHaraRonica@gmail.com).

  
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## MORE HOME REMEDIES

Pharmaceuticals are widely prescribed by veterinarians for highly anxious dogs and have a study-proven track record, but come with side effects. For example, the sedative acepromazine (ACP) actually increases noise sensitivity in dogs while lowering their ability to respond. Another sedative, dexmedetomidine (Dexdomitor), can pose serious health risks even at low doses.

Natural remedies, although seldom backed by large, double-blind clinical studies, have done well in smaller studies, pose few potential dangers and have proven their worth to many pet parents. It may take trial-and-error to find what works, a process that holistic veterinarians can help fast-track.

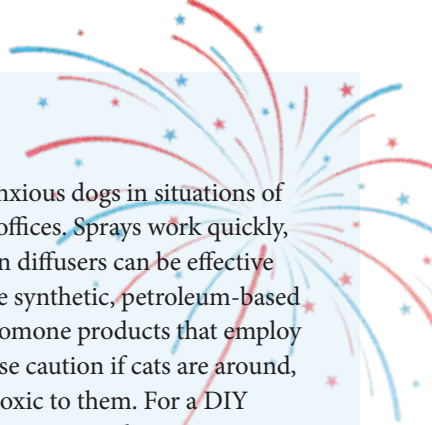
These approaches may be worth trying out at home:

**CBD.** This non-psychoactive compound of the hemp plant, increasingly used for canine pain management, has been shown in some studies to calm dogs. It's best to choose a high-grade, broad-spectrum, organic product in a tincture or oil form so the amount can be adjusted drop by drop, advises the American Kennel Society.

**PHEROMONES.** The collars, sprays, mists, wipes and diffusers that deliver a calming scent to a dog have been found

effective for many, but not all, anxious dogs in situations of loud noises, car travel and vet's offices. Sprays work quickly, but last only a few hours; plug-in diffusers can be effective for as long as a month. Many are synthetic, petroleum-based products. Instead, look for pheromone products that employ essential oils, with one caveat: use caution if cats are around, because some essential oils are toxic to them. For a DIY approach, dab a drop of vanilla, coconut, valerian or ginger essential oil onto a bandana and if the dog likes the scent, tie the bandana around its neck. A British study in *Applied Animal Behaviour Science* found those scents lowered barking and excessive activity in shelter dogs.

**FISH OIL.** Purina researchers found that adding DHA-rich fish oil to the diet of 24 anxious Labradors for 12 weeks reduced cortisol responses and lowered their heart rate during anxiety-provoking events for 21 of the dogs; it cut by almost half the time they spent jumping, pacing, spinning and barking. A general guideline is 300 milligrams of combined EPA/DHA per 30 pounds of a dog's body weight. Other commonly used supplements to discuss with a veterinarian are L-theanine and L-tryptophan, amino acids shown to help calm down dogs with mild to moderate anxiety.



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calendar of events



SATURDAY, JULY 2

**Freedom Fest Bethany** – 10am-10:30pm. Featuring a parade at 10am on Route 66 from SNU to Eldon Lyon Park. Street Fest from 10am-4pm at downtown Bethany. College Ave/38th St/Asbury. Fireworks show starting at 9:55pm. Free. Eldon Lyon Park, 7400 NW 36th St, Bethany. Facebook.com/CityBethanyOK.

**Radiant Skin Begins Within Edmond** – 1-2pm. Learn to nourish your skin from within against harmful UV rays and other AGE accelerating factors. Sample a skin hydrating smoothie and summer melon salad with feta and fresh herbs. One full-sized collagen supplement giveaway. Free. Natural Grocers, 3325 S Blvd, Edmond. 405-341-4700. NaturalGrocers.com.

SUNDAY, JULY 3

**Red, White and Boom OKC** – 8:30pm. Come see the OKC Philharmonic Orchestra for an uplifting musical celebration of Independence Day. Bring your own family picnic or purchase food from the food trucks. Free. Scissortail Park, 300 SW 7th St, OKC. 405-445-6277. ScissortailPark.org.

MONDAY, JULY 4

**Fireworks Pre-Party Tulsa** – 7-9pm. Enjoy festive entertainment before the QuikTrip Freedom Fest Fireworks. DJ dance party with DJ Phil the Vib3s, festive food and drinks, and lawn games for all ages. Free. Riverside trail on the North Land Bridge Lawn. The Gathering Place, 2650 S John Williams Way E, Tulsa. 918-779-1000. GatheringPlace.org.

**FreedomFest Celebration Tulsa** – 9:30pm. Featuring one of the largest free fireworks displays in Oklahoma. Join the crowds at Tulsa’s River Parks, line the banks of the Arkansas River with lawn chairs and enjoy the show. Free. View from River West Festival Park and along the Arkansas River, including the Gathering Place. Tulsa.

**LibertyFest Edmond** – 9:30pm. The largest fireworks display in the Oklahoma City metro area. Bring a blanket or lawn chair; sit back and enjoy the fireworks. Free. Hafer Park, 1034 S Bryant Ave, Edmond. 405-359-4630. LibertyFest.org.

SATURDAY, JULY 23

**Indian Taco & Native American Arts and Crafts Sale OKC** – 11am-7pm. Guests can feast on delicious Indian tacos or enjoy juicy Pow Wow burgers. Enjoy browsing through the onsite Native American arts and crafts for sale after filling up with tasty Indian tacos. Free. Church of the Open Arms UCC, 3131 N Pennsylvania Ave, OKC. 405-923-1254.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 27

**Microdosing Entheogens 101 Online Class** – 6-7pm There is a lot of growing excitement about using entheogens (aka psychedelics) for getting unstuck and finding peace in life. But is it right for you? Learn from expert, Oklahoma-based entheogen coaches and discover what exactly is microdosing, how to decide if microdosing is right for you & what successful microdosers do for life-changing results. Audience Q&A. \$10. Register at SacredPillars.Church/Calendar.

THURSDAY, JULY 28

**Conservation Conversation: A Lecture Series Tulsa** – 6:30-8pm. Each month, hear two local professionals speak about their work in the conservation field. “You and Sustainability” by the Executive Director of Sustainable Tulsa, Corey Williams, and “Oklahoma and the Ocean” by Dr. Ann Money, Director of Development and Research at the Oklahoma Aquarium. Light refreshments will be provided. Free. ONEOK Boathouse. The Gathering Place, 2650 S John Williams Way E, Tulsa. 918-779-1000. GatheringPlace.org.

**Indian Hills Pow Wow OKC** – 7/28-7/31. Featuring traditional dancing and competitions for all ages, from hand game and horseshoe tournaments to turtle races and the gourd dance. Visitors can purchase authentic Native arts and crafts and cheer on competitors in the men’s, women’s and children’s tournaments. Indian tacos and other traditional foods will be available. Free. 9300 N Sooner Rd, OKC. 405-528-5026.

plan ahead

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 17

savethedate

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 17

**Be Well Expo Tulsa** – 10am-5pm. Come talk with holistic providers, practitioners and business owners. Enjoy classes & seminars. Healthy food will be available. Tickets are free, but please bring a canned good for the Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma or make a \$2 donation at the door to the United Way. Reserve your free ticket today. The Lodge at the Kaiser YMCA, 5400 S Olympia Ave, Tulsa. 918-805-0546. BeWellExpo.org. *See ad, page 3.*



ongoing events

Submit your listing online at [NAOklahoma.com](http://NAOklahoma.com) by the 5th of the month, one month prior to publication. Please email [Publisher@NAOklahoma.com](mailto:Publisher@NAOklahoma.com) with questions.



various

**NAMI Family Support Groups Statewide** – Free, virtual, confidential and safe group meetings for families helping other families living with mental health challenges. Free. NamiOklahoma.org/local-affiliates.

**Oklahoma Contemporary Arts Center OKC** – Daily exhibitions, performances and public programming, focusing on living artists, the art of now and what’s next. Free with reservation. Oklahoma Contemporary Arts Center, 11 NW 11th St, OKC. 405-951-0000. OklahomaContemporary.org.

sunday

**A Course in Miracles Tulsa** – 9:15-10:15am. Come join the class and be inspired. A Course In Miracles (ACIM) is a widely revered, fairly recent spiritual text. Simply put, it teaches readers to replace fear with love. The class is taught by Chris Myers-Baker with 40+ years of teaching the course. Free. Unity of Tulsa Midtown, 3355 S Jamestown Ave. TulsaUnity.com.

**Sunday Twilight Concert Series OKC** – 7:30-9pm. Each week brings a different genre of music from local and regional acts. Free. Myriad Botanical Gardens, Devon Lawn, 301 W Reno, OKC. 405-445-7080. MyriadGardens.org.

tuesday

**Art in Photo Ark Tulsa** – 10am-Noon. Create nature and animal themed art through activities facilitated by local artists and organizations. Free. ONEOK Boathouse. The Gathering Place, 2650 S John Williams Way E, Tulsa. 918-779-1000. GatheringPlace.org.

wednesday

**Dog Play Wednesday Tulsa** – 9am-8pm. Bark your calendars; Dog Play Wednesday is back! Tails are wagging just thinking about it. Free. The Patio at The Gathering Place, 2650 S John Williams Way E, Tulsa. 918-779-1000. GatheringPlace.org.

PLANS CHANGE  
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friday

**First Friday Art Crawl Tulsa** – 6-9pm. 1st Fri. Come explore artwork galleries, studios, museums and live music performances. Free. Tulsa Arts District, 1 W Reconciliation Way, Tulsa. 918-492-7477. TheTulsaArtsDistrict.org.

**First Fridays on the Paseo OKC** – 6-9pm. 1st Fri. Over 80 artists in more than 25 businesses and galleries. Some galleries offer refreshments, and food trucks will be available. Free. Paseo Art District: between NW 30th & Dewey and NW 28th & Walker, OKC. 405-525-2688. ThePaseo.org.

**Norman Art Walk 2nd Friday** – 6-9pm. 2nd Fri. A celebration of arts & creativity with a wide variety of shops, restaurants, bars, and concert venues. Free. Downtown Norman. 405-360-1162. 2ndFridayNorman.com.

**LIVE! on the Plaza 2nd Friday OKC** – 6-10pm. 2nd Fri. Monthly artwalk, featuring art, live entertainment, great food and local shopping. This month is Pride Month. Free. Plaza District: NW 16th St between N Blackwelder Ave and N Pennsylvania Ave, OKC. 405-578-5718. PlazaDistrict.org.

saturday

**Adult Birding Walk OKC** – 8-9:30am. 2nd Sat. Go birding and socialize with other birders in the quiet hours of the morning. Led by retired Naturalist Neil Garrison. Free. Martin Park Nature Center. 5000 W Memorial Rd. OKC. 405-297-1429. Okc.gov/Departments/Parks-Recreation/Martin-Park-Nature-Center.

**Saturday Morning Birding Tulsa** – 8-9:45am. 1st Sat. Birding at Oxley. All skill levels are welcome. Binoculars are recommended. Free. Oxley Nature Center, 6700 Mohawk Blvd, Tulsa. 918-596-9054. OxleyNatureCenter.org.

**Myriad in Motion: FREE Yoga OKC** – 9am. Yoga in the Gardens offers a space of beauty and tranquility to help relieve stress and quiet your mind. Classes are open to all levels. Free. Myriad Botanical Gardens, Water Plaza Room, 301 W Reno, OKC. 405-445-7080. MyriadGardens.org.

**Farmers Market at Scissortail Park OKC** – 9am-1pm. Shop local Oklahoma farmers, producers and artisans. Free. Scissortail Park, 300 SW 7th St, OKC. 405-445-6277. ScissortailPark.org.

**Story Time at Full Circle Bookstore OKC** – 10:15am. Weekly morning story time with occasional special guests. For ages 10 & under. Free. Full Circle Bookstore, 1900 NW Expressway, OKC. 405-842-2900. FullCircleBooks.com.

**Explore the Flora Tulsa** – 10:30am-noon. 4th Sat. Come out and explore the beautiful Oxley flora. Free. Oxley Nature Center, 6700 Mohawk Blvd, Tulsa. 918-596-9054. OxleyNatureCenter.org.

**Concerts at the Creek OKC** – 7-9pm. Local musicians will perform on the Water Stage at The Pointe. Free. Chisholm Creek, 1332 W Memorial Rd, OKC. 405-728-2780. ChisholmCreek.com.





community resource guide

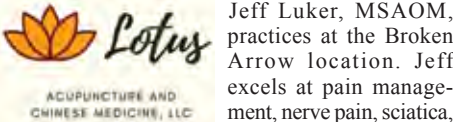
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The School of Natural Medicine offers many different programs starting with our massage therapy program that is owner-financed and maintains a low student to teacher ratio for a very high first-time pass rate at the national exams. We also offer a two-year acupuncture training program and an eight-week master herbalist program. Visit our website or call for more information. Massage Therapy classes starting soon. *See ad, Body Works page 2.*

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NOW HIRING VETERINARIANS AND ANIMAL ASSISTANTS – Business is good, thanks to our ad in *Natural Awakenings* magazine. Holistic Pet Care, 3001 Tinker Diagonal St, OKC, and Best Friends Animal Clinic, 1313 N Harrison Ave, Shawnee, are looking to hire veterinarians and animal assistants. Call 405-605-6675 or 405-275-9355.

MEDICAL MARIJUANA

H&H PROCESSING  
26427 S Hwy 125, Afton  
866-726-3420  
Amber@HigherHealthOklahoma.com



H&H Processing produces Orion Cannabis Tablets and Blossom Canna Capsules as well as craft FECO (Full Extract Cannabis Oil). The tablets and the capsules are all-natural, vegan, celiac-safe, gluten-free and sugar-free. Blossom mushroom capsules contain FECO and five varieties of mushrooms. The tablets are dissolvable sublingually. *See ad, page 6.*

METAPHYSICAL SHOPS

OAK, ASH AND THORN  
112 E Main St, Shawnee  
405-219-4325



Spiritual shop offering incense, smudging and altar supplies. Self-care, crystals, candles, books, herbs, teas, gemstone jewelry, tarot and Oracle cards. Tarot and mediumship readings available. Fine selection of various art from local artisans.



## PLANT MEDICINE

**SACRED PILLARS CHURCH**  
Edmond, OK  
SacredPillars.church  
Info@SacredPillars.church



We're "a different kind of church." Our non-denominational spiritual community empowers people on their divine path through the safe use ofentheogens, preparation, integration, transformational coaching, ceremonies, support circles and holistic healing services.

See ad, page 21.

## QIGONG

**QIGONG OF TULSA**  
Tom Bowman, CQI, CQP  
5800 S Lewis Ave, Suite 139, Tulsa  
918-855-4222 • QigongOfTulsa.com



Qigong of Tulsa is a wellness center specializing in Clinical Qigong treatments and Qigong exercise training. Certified by the National Qigong Association as a Clinical Qigong Practitioner and an Advanced Qigong Instructor with over 20 years of experience. Training includes exercises, meditation and self-treatment techniques. Clinical practice includes energy work, cupping, acupressure and more. Email Tom@QigongOfTulsa.com. See ad, Body Works page 2.

## REIKI

**CARI REIF, LAP, RMT, CHHC**  
918-401-0377  
TulsaHealing.com



Reiki Master, Life Activation, Health Ninja. Reiki is a form of energy healing through a nonphysical and invisible universal energy that vibrates at a level higher than personal energy and can help alleviate suffering, whether it be of a physical, emotional, mental or spiritual nature. See ad, Body Works page 2.

## SEXUAL HEALTH

**DESIRE OKC**  
Charity Danker  
2932 NW 122nd, Ste 5, OKC  
405-254-0926 • DesireOkc.com



Sex does not have to be backward. My goal is to empower women and men to developed more meaningful relationships, live more authentically, all while creating a more fulfilling sex life. Are you ready? Let's Talk Sex! See ad, page 19.

## VETERINARIAN - HOLISTIC

**HEALING HANDS VET**  
Kimberley Weiss, DVM  
1916 NW 39th St, OKC  
405-525-2255  
HealingHandsVetCenter.com



Offering holistic pet care including chiropractic, acupuncture and essential oils. Care for your pet begins in a kid-friendly, comfortable and calm setting. Offering integrative medicine along with conventional methods. See ad, page 7.

**THE NATURAL VET**  
Brad Roach, DVM, CVA  
Serving OKC, Del City & Shawnee  
405-456-9508, 405-275-9355  
BradRoachDVM.com  
BestFriendsAnimalClinic.vet



Integrative pet care includes: vitamin therapy, homeopathy, acupuncture, herbal medicine and electro-medicine. Decades of experience with integrative and conventional methods. Complementary care does not invalidate any current treatment plans. See ad on back cover.



## WELLNESS CENTER

**AZALEA HOUSE OF HEALING**  
56 Expressway Pl  
5601 NW 72nd St, #106, OKC  
405-905-2772 • AzaleaHealing.com



In the Victorian flower language, the azalea represents the message "take care of yourself". At Azalea House of Healing, our mission is to help Take Care of You through the power of holistic wellness. We offer massage, counseling, yoga, tai chi, reiki and other modalities to assist with your self-care. See ad, Body Works page 2.

**DIVINE LOTUS HEALING HANDS WELLNESS CO-OP**  
2817 S Harvey Ave, OKC  
888-643-7699  
DLHHWellnessCoop@gmail.com



We are a wellness center for holistic seekers & practitioners to come together and heal the mind, body and spirit. We offer a variety of services including energy & body work, shamanic healing, breathwork & sacred sound, spiritual life advising and many other holistic wellness services. See ad, page 21.

## WOMEN'S HEALTH

**TOTAL FAMILY WELLNESS**  
3336 E 32 St, Tulsa  
918-398-3586  
TFWOK.com



Advanced holistic lactation support and personal wellness. Let us help you enjoy a happy, healthy breastfeeding relationship. We utilize chiropractic, fitness, nutrition, medical herbalism and personalized coaching to empower the families we serve to be the healthiest versions of themselves. We now have a fitness studio for women of all ages. In-home, virtual & office consultations available. See ad, page 7.

**Empower** yourself  
with an everyday  
**Armor**  
of **clear, calm**  
**energy ...**  
in just 10-20 minutes.

Lost and forgotten for generations, the rare, ancient secrets of the **OJAYA Deep Meditation "Armor"** technique are now revealed to you with our 100% online Course.



**OJAYA**  
the MARTIAL ART of  
Deep Meditation

**Q**UIETLY hidden and closely-guarded for centuries, the supremely rare **OJAYA Deep Meditation** Armor technique protects your mind and emotions with an "armor" of calm serenity and **core inner strength**. Far more potent than mindfulness or guided meditations, **OJAYA** is totally effortless. As you meditate, a soothing resonance **attacks stress**, clears out brain fog

and recharges your vital energies in just 10-20 minutes — the perfect antidote to the fatigue and frenzy of high-tech living. **Sukaishi David** shares the ancient **OJAYA** teachings with you step by step with exquisite videos from the Earthborn Rainforest. But to qualify to learn the **OJAYA** "Armor" technique, you must first watch the free **OJAYA Foundation Lessons**. Enjoy!

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**— OJAYA.COM —**

The not-for-profit School of OJAYA Deep Meditation in the Earthborn Rainforest / US Tel. 641-472-3300

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**405-273-5617**

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