



## Arthritis Treatment Center Newsletter June 2011

Change your thoughts and you change your world. Norman Vincent Peale

### **I was buried in sand up to my shoulders with my arms at my side...**

Today at age 59, Carol Hutson enjoys painting, sketching, hiking, fishing, bike riding, jogging, walking, and spending time with her eight grandchildren. As an active wife and mother of five children, she says, "I'm full of life and I intend on living it!"

Flashback to 2002, while working in Germantown as an office manager, and an accomplished artist who had paintings displayed throughout the world, she was stricken with pleurisy, which had completely immobilized her. It was shortly after this illness that she was beginning to notice that her hands were swelling, she couldn't raise her shoulder and her knees were hurting. "I could no longer paint." It was recommended that she see a rheumatologist who diagnosed her with lupus and started on Plaquenil.

For the next two years Mrs. Hutson could function but decided to leave her Germantown position to work closer to her home in Thurmont. Symptoms continued to persist, and she found herself frequently backing out of social events and committee meetings. Her husband of 29 years, Ed, took over most household duties, and actually on occasions had to help her in and out of the shower, and drive her to and from work because she couldn't grip the steering wheel. She recalls, "I felt like I was buried in sand up to my shoulders with my arms at my side. In the evening, I would just sit on the side of my bed and cry. It felt as if my body was shutting down."

She continues, "I began to keep a journal of my illness because I really thought I was dying."

Unable to shake someone's hand and barely able to walk, a neighbor recommended she see Dr. Wei. It was August 2006. Dr. Wei made an immediate diagnosis of rheumatoid arthritis and started her on methotrexate. "In October 2006, he added Humira. Within a month, I noticed relief."

Soon she was able to walk, sit, attend meetings, brush her own hair, and hold a toothbrush pain free. These were amazing accomplishments.

One year later, Mrs. Hutson, sporting a pair of 4" wedge sandals, walked into Dr. Wei's office "With no pain!" "It was like I was being released from a cage. You just can't understand how it feels, unless you've experienced the daily life pain and limitations I did."

She concludes, "This is my story of living a full life with rheumatoid arthritis. There is no documentation of this disease in my family history – dating back as early as the 1500's. My well-being is a testament to the fact that rheumatoid arthritis can be controlled." She adds, "I can't express how important it is to seek early diagnosis and treatment. Yes, the drugs to treat RA have serious side effects, but life is a scale—a balancing act. I had to choose between pain and further joint damage or the quality of life I would live, and I chose a full life." She adds, "I am able to keep a full time job and continue to paint and sketch for hours. During a 2008 trip to Colorado, I walked the desert and climbed the mountains."

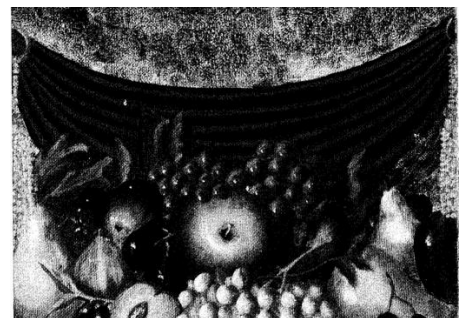
In the front cover of Mrs. Hutson's journal, she penciled a portrait of August Renoir, and she uses him as her inspiration that great things can be accomplished while living with arthritis.



Carol Hutson and Dr. Wei



Photo of August Renoir that Mrs. Hutson sketched and keeps in her journal.



"Fruit" by Carol Hutson which hangs in her home.

## Beyond Basil - Asparagus Pesto

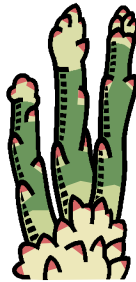
by Kelly Rossiter, May 2010

You don't have to wait until late summer when the basil plants are huge to make pesto. You can make pesto out of all kinds of vegetables.

Use asparagus pesto over pasta with grilled vegetables, or with fish and chicken. If you are using it on pasta, add a little bit of the cooking water to make a smooth sauce.

### Asparagus Pesto

1/3 cup walnuts  
1 tbsp butter  
salt and pepper to taste  
1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil  
1/2 cup old cheddar cheese, grated  
2 cups asparagus stalks, cut into 1 inch pieces



1. Heat water in a large pot until boiling and add asparagus. Cook until tender, about 7 or 8 minutes, depending on the thickness of the asparagus. Drain and rinse with cold water to stop cooking.
2. Place asparagus in a food processor and add walnuts. While food processor is running add olive oil until the pesto is the consistency you want. You may not need all of the olive oil.
3. Stir in cheese and butter, and add salt and pepper to taste.

### How to Write a Quick Will

By Alexis Lawrence, eHow Contributor

When it comes to writing a will, it is best to consult a professional. A will that is not handled through a lawyer can easily be challenged. There are times though when it may be a good idea to get your wishes down on paper without going through legal hoops or paying legal fees. For instance, some people like to write out a quick will before going on a long trip.

1. Write your will out by hand. Typing may be easier to read, but for a quick will, the most important piece of identification is your handwriting. Write as legibly as possible.
2. List your name, address, and some identifying information, such as your birth date and Social Security number. This will help people identify the will as yours if there is a question later.
3. State clearly that this will overrides all previous wills. Also state clearly that you are of sound mind. Stating that the will overrides previous wills makes it simpler for your executor if you have had previous wills drawn up that contradict the information in your new will. Stating that you are of sound mind will keep your mental health from being called into question.
4. Name an executor in the will. The executor will carry out the instructions in your will and

oversee your estate. Choose someone responsible that you know you can trust. State that the executor can pay your debts and expenses out of your estate, including selling any real estate that may need to be sold. You should also name an alternate executor, in case the first person is unable to carry out the required duties.

5. List what piece of your estate goes to each person, such as "To my son, John, I leave...". Your estate can be divided in exact numbers, like \$10,000, or by percentage. You can also list a provision that states to whom the percentage should pass if you outlive your beneficiary. If no alternate person is listed, the percentage will automatically return to the estate should your beneficiary not survive you.
6. Sign and date the will. For a simple will, witnesses are not required though it is not a bad idea to have someone witness it. The witness must be someone that is not the executor or a beneficiary. If your will runs more than one page, initial each page separately and sign and date at the end. Even though it is not a legal document, most courts will at least take your wishes into consideration when written out in your own handwriting and signed and dated.

### Marianne Morningstar

When Dr. Wei went looking for an x-ray tech, he checked in with his colleagues first. So, it was somewhat of a surprise when Marianne answered the phone one morning and it was Dr. Wei offering her a position with his practice—no interview—no resume. Working as a part time unit clerk at Washington County Hospital, it was an opportunity that she accepted. Twenty-two years later... Marianne is still firmly rooted with the Arthritis Treatment Center and a true asset to our organization.

It wouldn't be until a few years later that they both learned that their paths had already crossed... they discovered that Marianne and Dr. Wei's wife both had a child born on the same day and at the same hospital within hours of each other.

Marianne is no longer our x-ray tech, but works in our front office, running the daily operations. She says, "I have learned so much, and I really look forward to seeing our patients and working alongside my co-workers. I've had the opportunity to work closely with Dr. Wei and have noticed the gray hair... become more prominent."

She is married, the mother of five children, and two grandchildren. She wears several different hats and juggles many responsibilities both smoothly and efficiently. Her dedication to her work and her generous nature is irrefutable.

When Marianne is not at work, she enjoys attending church activities and spending time with her kids.

## Come Clean

### Remove unsightly stains with ease.

Heather Larson, Arthritis Today, April 2011

Remove stains without strain.

**Coffee, Tea, Tomato Sauce or Wine (Tannin Stains)** – Mix one part white vinegar, three parts water and a few drops of mild detergent, like Ivory Liquid, and rinse. Or apply 3 percent hydrogen peroxide and let dry naturally.

**Grease** – Mix equal amounts of laundry detergent and ammonia, and apply to stain with a soft brush.

**Ink** – Pour on isopropyl alcohol and blot with a clean, white towel. If the stain remains, apply a small amount of detergent to it. Then launder in the hottest water safe for the garment.

**Wax** – Scrape off the excess wax. Place a paper towel on the stain and a clean cloth on the top of the paper towel. Run an iron on medium heat over the cloth, replacing or moving the paper towel as it absorbs the wax.

**Blood** – Immediately rinse fresh stains with cold water. Then mix equal parts detergent and ammonia, and brush mixture onto stain. Launder after five to 10 minutes.

### Fun Bird Facts

By Alyson Burgess, About.com Guide

The practice of keeping birds has been around for centuries. Check out a few of these amazing bird facts that are sure to inspire interest and appreciation.

- At any given time, there are between one and two billion birds living on the planet.
- The most common bird on the planet is the chicken.
- A bird's feathers weigh more than its skeleton.
- The most yolks ever found in a single chicken's egg is 9.
- An ostrich egg needs to be boiled for two hours to get a hard-boiled egg.
- A bird's normal body temperature is usually 7-8 degrees hotter than a human's. Up to three-quarters of the air a bird breathes is used just for cooling down since they are unable to sweat.
- A bird's heart beats 400 times per minute while resting and up to 1000 beats per minute while flying.
- Migrating ducks and geese often fly in V-shape formations. Each bird flies in the up-wash of its neighbor's beating wings and this extra bit of supporting wind increases lift, thereby saving energy.
- Falcons can swoop at over 200 mph.
- Hummingbirds eat about every ten minutes, slurping down twice their body weight in nectar every day.

## Swim Your Way to Arthritis Relief With Water Exercises

Christina Venessa Becherer, February 2011  
<http://www.livestrong.com>

If you suffer from arthritis, consider trading your gym shoes for a swimsuit. Lessening the stress to body joints, water exercise is a therapeutic method of treating arthritis pain. In addition to providing a calming environment, water's buoyancy reduces the strain on achy joints while allowing for aerobic activity and muscle toning. Consult with a health care provider before beginning a water exercise program. Your physician may recommend a physical therapy evaluation before participating or may refer you to supervised pool therapy.

**Sea Gold...** It's the purest form of Omega-3 fish oil available. Omega-3 fish oils have been shown to be a remarkably effective and safe treatment for the inflammation of arthritis. And Sea Gold is the purest, most effective dietary fish oil manufactured.

Omega-3 fish oils have been recommended by more rheumatologists than any other dietary supplement for the control of inflammation that accompanies rheumatoid arthritis, psoriatic arthritis, and other forms of inflammatory arthritis. 90 tablets per bottle.

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- ✓ Live a strong healthier life!
- ✓ **And, studies show that supplementation with fish oils can markedly reduce morning stiffness and the number of painful joints for people who have rheumatoid arthritis.**

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(Wei's World continued from page 4)

since he's about my size. So he did and when he came back, he said, "Nice... and the price... you can't beat it."

So that's how I made the decision to buy a bike. And now that I've had it and have been able to ride it, I'm very happy with it. I can see how cycling is good exercise and is particularly good for people with arthritis who want to avoid impact to their joints. So I guess it was fate. The rheumatologist gets a bike and discovers firsthand why something like this is good for his patients.

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We're looking forward to many more opportunities to help you. Please call if you need anything.

## ***Wei's World***

This past month, I bought a bicycle. Let me tell you the story behind it.... Some good friends had come in from out of town and they were visiting their daughter and invited us to join them for brunch in Annapolis.

After lunch, my wife and I went exploring and since there were a lot of stores, we decided to shop a bit. Our first visit was to Whole Foods. Gigantic store with tons of wonderful food... But we didn't get anything.

My better half then wanted to go to the Anthropologie store. I wasn't keen on that so I wandered into Eastern Mountain Sports, which is an outdoorsy kind of store.

They were having a huge sale and I like outdoors stuff so I decided to check things out. After walking around a bit, I didn't see anything that grabbed me so I walked outside. On the sidewalk in front of the store, they had a display of other sale items including bicycles.

Now... keep in mind, I was not looking for a bicycle. I have to admit that in the back of my mind, I was thinking about alternatives to running, which was beginning to cause more injuries... after all I'm 61.

So there I was slowly meandering my way to the Anthropologie store to meet my wife (and probably

sit around for half an hour as she continued to shop) when a bicycle on display, caught my eye. It was a very nice bicycle and I saw that it was half off, prompting me to ask why. The young man who was watching the bikes and assisting people with the sidewalk sale replied, "It's last year's model."

He then asked, "Would you like to try it?" I really didn't have a reason to try it... but then again I didn't have a reason not to either. So I asked, "How do you know what size a bike should be?" He replied, "How tall are you?" I said 5'7". He said, "If you stand with the bike between your legs and lift the bar up, there should be about two inches of distance from the ground.... Here, let's look." Well, I agreed and the bike fit perfectly. He then said, "Why don't you take it out for a spin. Let me get you a helmet."

So I put the helmet on, and after a few instructions, took a ride. It's been a while since I was on a bike, so it took some getting used to but it was nice.

Then our friends that we had had brunch with earlier showed up because they were looking for a bike for their daughter. Howie, the husband, is an avid cyclist, so I asked him, "Howie, what do you think?" He looked at the bike and said, "Nice equipment... it's built well." And then I showed him the price tag. Howie looked up, amazed, and said, "Wow, that's a great price." I then asked Howie if he wouldn't mind taking it for a spin (Wei's World continued on page 3)