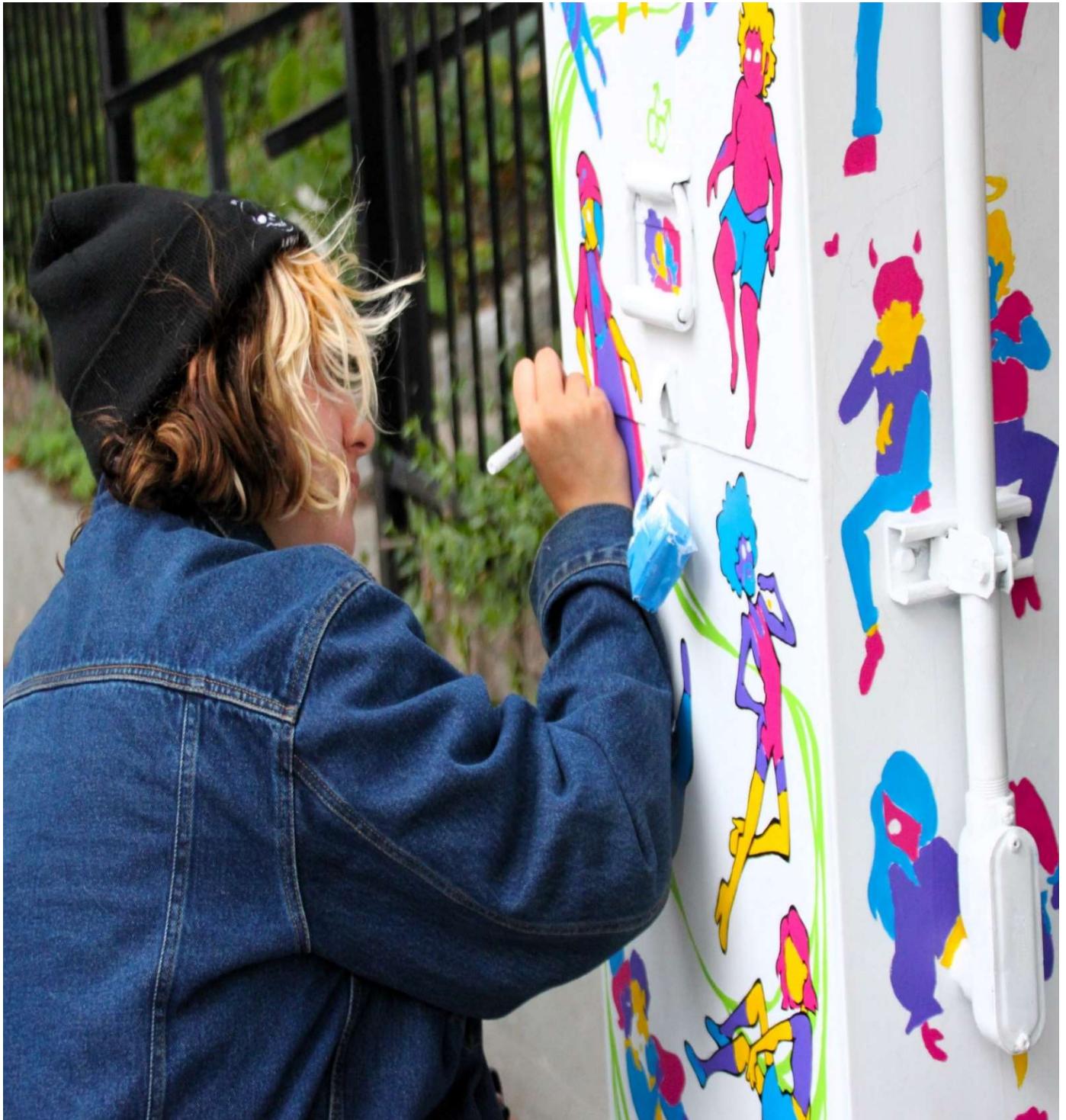


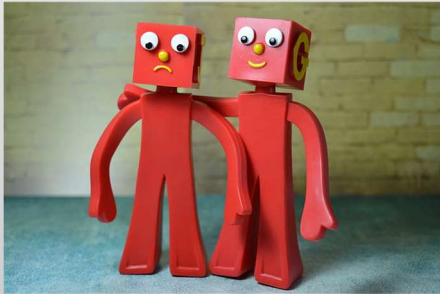
**THE ELECTRICAL BOX IN FRONT OF 484 GETTING JAZZED UP!**



**(Photo courtesy of John Gordon in 51)**

**LINK** is published quarterly  
as of January 2024.

The next **LINK** deadline for submissions  
is **March 22, 2024**.



Your **LINK** Team:  
Editor/Coordinators: Bob Harrison Drue  
& Ursula Carter  
Contributors:  
Ursula Carter, John Pollard & John  
Gordon

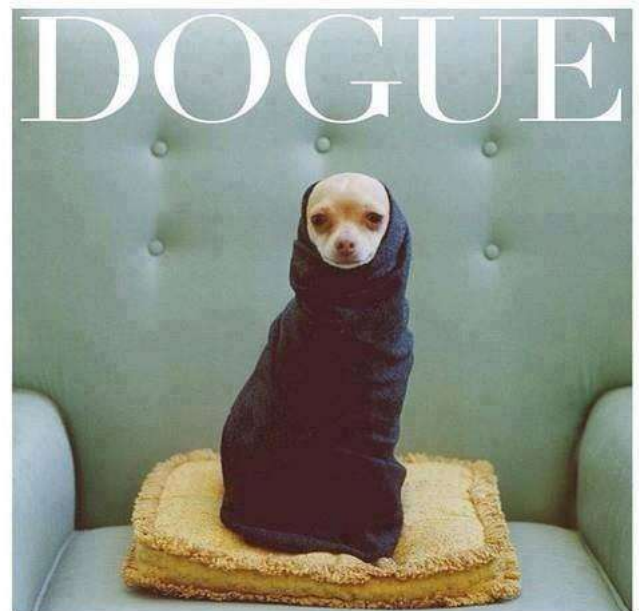
The full day of in-person learning will  
dive into the core management  
standards for housing co-ops and be  
structured so you have plenty of time  
to network and learn from each  
other. It also includes access to a  
course on CHF Canada's online  
learning platform to complete at your  
own pace. This is a popular course.  
Save the date now and look for  
registration announcements early in  
the new year!



**SAVE THE DATE: FOUNDATIONS OF  
CO-OP MANAGEMENT COURSE -  
APRIL 3**

This one-day course covers the  
foundational information every  
housing co-op manager in Ontario  
needs to know, whether you are a  
new co-op manager, [plan to be one  
in the future] or looking to refresh  
your skills. This course has  
something for everyone.

Save the date:  
Foundations of co-op management  
course  
Wednesday, April 3, 2024  
Oakham House, Toronto



**GARDENING AT CITY PARK**



The 2023  
gardening  
season at City  
Park was a  
success like in  
previous years.  
The Landscape

Committee with its members and  
volunteers have once again proven



that gardening is not just for the ‘green thumbs’.

Our gardens were visited by more bees, butterflies, moths, and hummingbirds than ever because of our efforts to plant native perennial species.



We thank all members, volunteers, past and present, and everyone who contributed to

the ongoing success of the Landscape Committee.

Aside from gardening, the Landscape Committee had other gardening events during the 2023 gardening season.

Early in the gardening season, in April, a presentation was held at the PMG Hall on ‘Balcony Gardening’. Michael Bratt, a City Park resident was the guest speaker. The event was well received and greatly appreciated by everyone.

In June there was a memorial in honour of Noreen Peters. Shrubs were planted in her memory. Noreen was a long-standing member of the Landscape Committee. At one time she served as the Committee’s secretary. She loved gardening so much. One of her many routines was working in her garden pod.

Residents would stop by and say hello to Noreen. Noreen will surely be missed.



The Landscape Committee has introduced and is engaged in an ongoing project: ‘The Pollinators

Paradise’, which started in the latter part of 2022. This involves the growing of plants from seeds, in an indoor environment (which has its own set of challenges), but, at the same time, lessons were learned. Our plant choices are focused more on pollinator plants. The Landscape Committee is continuing with the Pollinators Paradise initiative. We will be posting a schedule of activities for the Pollinators Paradise workshop, in the near term. Please watch for upcoming events!

Once again, many thanks to all.

Landscape Committee

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**I lost my khakis.**



**What it means in Boston.**





Joe & Suzanne setting up holiday decorations in front of 51 before it got too cold!

(Photo courtesy of John Gordon ~ 51)

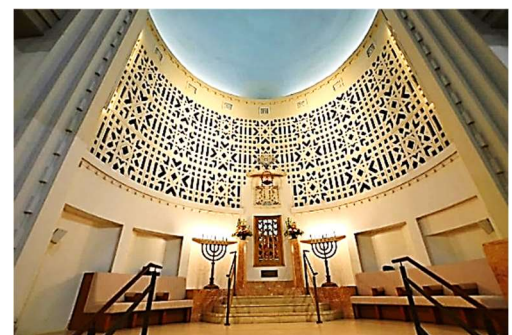
## TORONTO ATTRACTIONS XVI

Forest Hill is Toronto's neighbourhood for all things wealthy. Along these streets are some of Toronto's nicest homes, best schools, and wealthiest residents. The area was originally called Spadina Heights. This came from the Ojibwe word 'ishpadenah,' which translates to little hill or rise of land. It all changed when the area was incorporated as a village in 1923. It was then named after a summer home that stood on present-day Eglinton Avenue in the mid-1800s. While the hill is still there, the forest was cut down to make room for residential and commercial developments.

In 1967, Forest Hill Village was finally annexed by the City of Toronto. It was one of the last independent villages to be annexed. Presently, the greater neighbourhood is known

as Forest Hill, while Forest Hill Village is a small stretch of Spadina around Lonsdale Road. It's a charming Village with a barber shop, delightful cafes, entertaining bars, and local food markets, all of which give it that community feeling its residents know and love.

In the late 1800s, Jewish immigrants mainly settled in the Kensington Market area, with the more well-to-do establishing themselves north of St. Clair in Forest Hill. They were the fortunate wealthy second and third-generation immigrants, mainly from Western Europe, who chose to settle in the neighbourhood. Holy Blossom Temple, first established in 1856 at Yonge & Richmond, and then on to Victoria & Richmond, moved to their present and permanent home on Bathurst Street in 1938 as the reformed congregation grew.

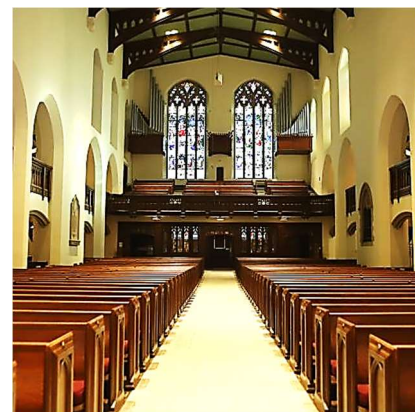
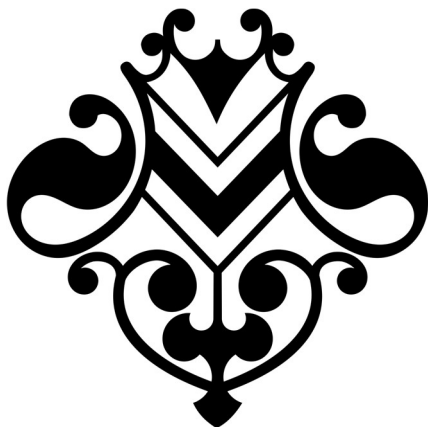




Due to building codes and bylaws implemented in the 1920s, the homes in this area are almost all uniquely designed, showcasing a broad selection of architectural styles. Georgian and Tudor-style houses are common, as well as French colonial designs and English country manors. The properties have large lawns decorated with sculptured gardens, some with gated entrances. While detached, multi-storeyed homes form the majority in Forest Hill, there are condominium buildings west of Spadina on Lonsdale Road. The neighbourhood also has historic buildings such as the Timothy Eaton Memorial Church. Completed in 1915, the stained-glass windowed church exhibits English Gothic architecture.



Timothy Eaton Memorial Church





Aside from its mansions, the neighbourhood is also known for being home to some of the city's top private schools.

Bishop Strachan School for girls, as well as Upper Canada College and St. Michael's College for boys. These private schools are rated amongst the best in Canada and serve as great springboards to higher education for generations to come.

The Bishop Strachan School for girls was founded in 1867 and currently has 900 students.



Upper Canada College for boys was founded in 1829 and currently has 1,200 students.



St. Michael's College for boys is a constituent of the University of

Toronto. It was founded in 1852 and currently has 1,400 students.

In 1980, the Forest Hill War Memorial was erected at Eglinton Avenue and Vesta Road. It was created in memory of those who lost their lives in World War I and World War II.



Lonsdale Gallery is a local art hub in Forest Hill. The curators present artwork from both Canadian and international artists. Another art gallery in this area is Art Interiors. This innovative gallery's goal is to present an extensive roster of artists at reasonable prices for both novice and seasoned art collectors. The Reuben & Helene Dennis Museum on Bathurst Street is where you can see North America's fifth-largest Judaica collection. The museum showcases thousands of artifacts representing Jewish art and history.



**Lonsdale Gallery:**



**REUBEN & HELENE DENNIS MUSEUM**



On top of being the perfect community for families, Forest Hill features its own village full of boutique shops and is revered by locals. You can settle down for a delicious brunch, grab a cup of coffee and explore, or have a spa day. Forest Hill Village has over 60 unique merchants and the small-town feel makes it a truly special community.

If you're looking for an elegant eating experience in Forest Hill, here are some suggestions:

**Forest Hill Farmhouse:**



**Marron Bistro (Kosher):**



**Bistro Grande:**





But, if you prefer something light and easier on your pocketbook, try Hotel Gelato, a café offering homemade gelato and baked goods. A block east on Eglinton is Ferraro 502 Restaurant, a family-owned Italian eatery serving wood-fired pizza, fresh pasta, salads, and wine by the glass. There are a few sushi restaurants in this area, such as Sake Bar Kushi, a highly rated establishment serving sushi, rice dishes, and an extensive beer and sake menu.



Ferraro 502:



Saki Bar Kushi:

The latest addition to Summerhill Market's mini empire - the fourth and largest outpost of the gourmet



grocer — is not in Summerhill, but Forest Hill. Spanning two floors, the main floor is dedicated to fresh produce, dairy and dairy alternatives, grab-and-go meals, and all your typical daily essentials. Upstairs is where customers will find refrigerator cases stocked with the brand’s popular heat-and-eat items, a butcher, a deli and cheese counter, and all kinds of frozen food and pantry staples. Also, unique to this location: an extensive selection of kosher goods.



Green space is important to the character of any reputable neighbourhood and Forest Hill has it in abundance. Suydam Park, close to St. Clair and Spadina, is one such popular park that is a favourite among families and dog walkers. The

park features a path into Cedarvale Trail, which winds its way to an off-leash dog park. There are also several pretty parkettes you’ll stumble upon when exploring the neighbourhood. Forest Hill is truly bursting with century-old trees, a unique feature compared to other suburban areas.

**Suydam Park:**



Also running right through the neighbourhood is the Beltline Trail, a popular spot for locals and those



coming from other parts of the city. The entire Beltline Trail is a nine-kilometer route used for walking, cycling, or running.



The closest public ice rink for people in Forest Hill is the Larry Grossman Forest Hill Memorial Arena. The facility offers recreational skating, hosts birthday parties, and books rink rentals for hockey teams and other skating organizations. The Forest Hill Tennis Club near Chaplin Crescent and Eglinton Avenue has eight painted courts. The club has a membership program, runs summer camps for children, and organizes leagues for men's and women's singles, doubles, and mixed tennis matches. There are also a few fitness facilities on Eglinton Avenue West including Coreset Fitness, Innovating Fitness and Barre Belle Forest Hill.

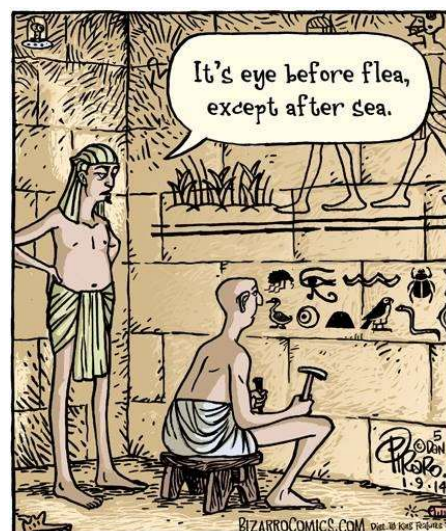
Here's some notable folks who live in Forest Hill – Kurt Browning – figure skater, Drake – musician, Sharon Fichman – tennis player, Nelly Furtado – singer/songwriter, Doug Gilmore – NHL player & winner of the Stanley Cup, Stephen Lewis – politician and diplomat, Lorne Michaels – Executive Producer &

creator of Saturday Night Live, David Mirvish – theatre producer & developer, Ted Rogers former President of Rogers Communications and Nelson Thall – owner of the Toronto Star.

If you take a peek through the Forest Hill Village on a Saturday morning, you'll stumble upon neighbours walking perfectly manicured dogs, fitness freaks, sweaty from a run around the area and old men sitting on park benches reading the paper and watching people cross the road. It seems everyone knows everyone, and you get to hear the most fascinating conversations. The village has always been a place where cordial chatter among neighbours exists on patios, along walkways, in stores and on public seats, while eating deli meats or sipping coffees.

That's Forest Hill Village - a great place to explore!

Ursula Carter ~ 51 Alexander





**WALKING IS GOOD FOR YOUR HEALTH, FULL STOP.**

“Walking affects multiple systems in the body, and so it offers a lot of great benefits,” says James N. Robinson, MD, a sports medicine physician at the Hospital for Special Surgery in New York City.

Despite being low-impact, walking is considered a moderately intense aerobic activity — if you do it at a pace at which you can still talk, but singing would be difficult — meaning it works your cardiovascular system.

When walking, Dr. Robinson suggests folks go at a pace that gets their heart rate up a bit. You should be a little breathless but not completely out of breath; use the ‘talk test’ described above. “That’s a good monitor that the walking you’re doing will improve your cardiovascular fitness,” he says.

Aim for 150 minutes of this type of walking per week, spanning multiple days (not all at the same time), says Robinson. That’s in line with the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans (PDF) from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, which recommends 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise per week for adults



(or about 30 minutes, five days a week).

It’s also okay to break it up into even smaller chunks throughout the day, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). For example, you might do three 10-minute walks during the day.

In addition to being an aerobic exercise, walking strengthens the muscles in your legs, as well as your core, which has the job of holding you upright as you step, says Robinson.

As great a full-body workout as walking is, it’s still important to take rest days. He recommends doing intense walking workouts no more than five days per week, to reduce the risk of injury. However, rest days don’t mean being entirely sedentary. It’s okay to do light- or moderate-

intensity walking every day, since getting steps in on a daily basis is beneficial to your health. (More on that below.)

Here are other ways that walking can buoy your health from head to toe:

**1. Walking may lengthen your life**

Walking can take you well into your golden years. In a study of more than 2,000 adults, those who hoofed it for least 7,000 steps per day had a 50 to



70 percent lower risk of dying (from any cause) by the end of the 11-year study period, compared with those who took fewer steps, according to research published in JAMA Network Open in 2021. The researchers controlled for several behavioral and lifestyle factors, including age, smoking history, body weight, alcohol intake, and diet, as well as health markers like cholesterol levels, fasting glucose, blood pressure, some medication usage, and more.

“Being active benefits nearly all parts of the body, such as the brain, muscles, bones, cardiovascular system, kidneys, and lungs,” says Amanda Paluch, PhD, the study’s author and a physical activity epidemiologist and kinesiologist at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.



And walking is a great way to get that activity in, she says. “Walking more can help prevent many chronic conditions that lead to early deaths. There is no single drug that does what physical activity, such as walking, can do.”

## 2. Walking can boost bone strength

Walking is a weight-bearing exercise (meaning you perform it upright with your bones supporting your weight, per Mayo Clinic), so it may help preserve bone health and potentially

decrease osteoporosis risk, says Robinson. (What’s more, walking also improves core strength, increasing stabilization and balance to help prevent falls as you age, he says.)

Most notably, walking can improve bone strength in your legs and spine, per the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, which recommends starting with a 10-minute brisk walk three times per day.

For the biggest benefits to your bones, Robinson advises combining walking with a strength-training program.

## 3. Walking gives your mood a lift

When you’re feeling down, head out for a walk. Remember the #stupidwalkchallenge

trend? It works — and it doesn’t even have to be a long walk. In a study published in Health Promotion Perspectives in 2018, young adults who performed a 10-minute bout of brisk walking saw their mood rise — particularly when it came to feelings of fatigue — compared with a control group who were instructed to simply sit.

Getting up and moving helps you shake off feelings of low energy, which can contribute to an overall sense of feeling down. Earlier

research by the same authors, published in Mayo Clinic Proceedings in 2017, found that even five minutes of walking helped improve mood and lower symptoms of depression.

#### 4. Walking is good for weight loss

If you're setting out to lose weight, know that you don't have to participate in a strenuous exercise program (unless, of course, that's the type of workout you prefer).

In a study of adults whose weights were considered overweight or obese, those who consumed a calorie-reduced diet and walked for 2.5 hours per week for 12 weeks reduced fasting insulin levels and had greater fat loss, compared with calorie restriction alone, according to research published in The Journal of Nutrition in 2017. (Both groups also lost about 8 percent of their body weight, meaning they both lost the same amount of weight, but those who added walking to a calorie-controlled diet lost more fat, which is the type of weight you want to be losing, rather than losing weight because of decreased muscle mass.)

#### 5. Walking promotes heart health

Walking regularly will work your heart — notably taking down your cholesterol numbers. High cholesterol is a risk factor for heart disease, says the CDC, and decreasing total cholesterol

numbers by 10 percent can slash your risk of heart disease by nearly one-third. Walking can help you make that happen.

In a meta-analysis of 21 studies that focused on women who were overweight or obese, doing a walking routine for at least four weeks (but making no other intentional behavior changes) helped them decrease total cholesterol and LDL ('bad') cholesterol by about 7 mg/dL, per the American Journal of Health Promotion.

In addition, a 2021 Cochrane review of 73 trials concluded that walking may also help decrease blood pressure — another risk factor for heart disease — if done three to five times per week for 20 to 40 minutes each time, over the course of three months.

([womenshealth@everydayhealth.com](mailto:womenshealth@everydayhealth.com))

Submitted by Jo-Anne Kennedy of 51 Alexander

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Life is like eating artichokes. You must go through so much to get so little.

There's one good thing about being poor – it's inexpensive.

Reality is only an illusion that occurs due to a lack of alcohol.

I'm always slightly terrified when I exit my computer and it asks me if I want to save my changes to a document I swear I didn't make any changes to!



## ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM



The Rom is free on the 3rd Tuesday of every month from 4:30pm - 8:30pm.

No advance tickets are required. First come, first served.

## DO YOU REALLY HAVE TO THROW OUT THAT EXPIRED FOOD?

Expiration dates don't indicate food safety—they're more about food quality and how long products can be displayed at grocery stores.

The food in your fridge and pantry sometimes lasts longer than you think. Whether it's a carton of milk or fresh fruit, you can use your senses and spoilage estimate tools to determine if it's still safe for consumption.

### Here's Why You Can't Trust Food Expiration Dates

Spoiled food often looks, smells, and feels spoiled: Think about those cucumbers in the back of your produce drawer that got soft and slimy, or the fish that started smelling 'fishier.'

Very Well Health (dot com) spoke with food safety experts to make it easier for you to decide how long your foods can stay beyond expiration dates.

### NOTE:

Infant formula is an exception.

You should always follow the expiration date for infant formula. It is the only food product with an expiration date regulated by the FDA. All infant formula should be thrown away after that date.

### Dairy

Unopened milk lasts about a week in the fridge after its expiration date. Plant-based milk, like soy and almond, can last for 10 days beyond the expiration date when stored in the fridge.



Once it's opened, dairy milk lasts about five to seven days afterward, while

plant-based milk lasts 7 to 10 days in the fridge, according to Isabel Maples, MEd, RDN, a national spokesperson for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics in the States.

Keep milk in the coldest part of your fridge, usually in the back of the bottom shelf, to help it last longer. If



the milk smells sour, or if the carton looks bloated, it's time to throw it away, Maples said.

Heavy cream is a tricky one. It's usually good for 10 days based on the expiration date label, but the high-fat content might keep the cream from going bad for as long as a month.

"Some dairies will use ultra-high processing to allow the cream to last longer. Look for UHT (ultra-high temperature) on the label," Maples said.

Butter, the star ingredient in butter boards, can last for up to two months if you refrigerate it from the date of your purchase. It's OK to leave butter out at room temperature, but the flavor can go rancid within two days. You can also store butter in the freezer for up to nine months.

All soft cheeses, including cream cheese, ricotta cheese, and goat cheese, must be refrigerated. They can last for about a week in the fridge, but cream cheese can last longer, for about two weeks.

Hard cheeses, such as cheddar, American, block and grated Parmesan, don't need to be refrigerated, but they will last six months in the fridge if unopened, or three to four weeks after opening. If the cheese you bought was shredded, it's only good for about a month after opening.

A little molding on hard cheese isn't a problem. "You can safely cut mold off firm cheese, because the moisture content is low—the mold doesn't spread to other parts of the cheese," Maples said. "The issue is more about taste and food quality, not food safety. Throw out the whole container when a soft cheese is moldy."

Yogurt stays fresh in the fridge for about two weeks after purchase. The liquid and solids might start to separate, but you can just stir those back together unless you notice any mold, according to Maples.

## Eggs

Those eggs you recently spent a fortune on can stay fresh in the fridge for three to five weeks past your purchase date.

If you aren't sure, you might be tempted to do the good old egg float test: If an egg floats to the surface in a glass of water, it's bad. But this test isn't always accurate. An egg can float when its air cell becomes larger to keep it buoyant—it just means the egg is old, but it might still be safe to eat.

The best way to test whether an egg is still good is to crack it into a bowl and sniff it. Discard it if it smells rotten or looks funky.



## Meat, Poultry, and Seafood

Ground beef and pork are good for one to two days in the fridge from the date of purchase, or you can keep them in the freezer for three to four months. For plant-based meat like Impossible Burger, you should finish it by the ‘best by’ date or within three days of opening—whichever comes first.

Chicken breasts and thighs can stay fresh for nine months in the freezer, but only one to two days in the fridge. Pork chops can be kept in the fridge for three to five days and up to a year in the freezer. Bacon and uncooked chorizo should last about a week after opening if refrigerated, and about a month if frozen from the date of purchase.



You might notice browning on your meat after a few days, but

color change alone is normal. You’ll know the meat is spoiled if feels sticky or slimy, and smells sour or ammonia-like. Spoiled poultry will turn dark, feel slimy, and smell like rotten eggs.

Seafood follows a similar pattern as meat: it usually keeps in the refrigerator for one to two days, but cooked fish can last twice as long. Fatty fish like tuna and salmon are good for two to three months in the

freezer, while lean fish like cod and flounder can last up to eight months. Maples said that spoiled fish will develop slimy skin, a strong ‘fishy’ smell, and the eyes will start to look glassy.

Shrimp and squid can last half a year to 18 months in the freezer. For fresh clams, mussels, and oysters though, finish them within five to 10 days from the date of purchase, and the USDA doesn’t recommend freezing them at all.

## Fresh Produce

You might already rely on your senses when it comes to fruits and vegetables since most produce doesn’t come with an expiration date anyway. Moldy berries clearly need to be composted, but how should you judge the rest?

Apples can last in the fridge for four to six weeks from the purchase date, but you’ll know they’re spoiled when they start to smell bad, feel very soft, or the skin peels away easily.

Lemons, limes, oranges, and other citrus can be refrigerated for about three weeks, or until they’ve become smelly, moldy, soft, or dried out. You don’t have to throw them away if there’s a little bruising on the skin as long as the inside smells and looks fine.

Store whole ripe avocados in the fridge to keep them fresh for three to

four days. But don't store cut avocados in water as some TikTokers suggested. Instead, squirt some lemon or lime juice on the flesh, wrap it in plastic wrap, and eat it within two days.

### **FYI: Eat More Avocados. Research Shows They're Good for Your Heart**

Bagged leafy greens stay fresh for three to five days if unopened.



They'll keep longer once opened if you wrap the leaves in dry paper towels.

Most fresh herbs will last for about 10 days in the fridge, especially if you keep the stems in a jar of water covered with a bag to maintain moisture.

Carrots can stay in the fridge for two to three weeks, while onions can be refrigerated for two months from the purchase date. Even if your onions or garlic start to sprout, they are still safe to eat until they get moldy, soft, and discolored.

### **Bread and Flour**

Bread might seem like a pantry item, but it lasts longer when chilled. Freeze bread for up to three months or keep loaves in the refrigerator for up to two weeks after opening. Bread might start to go stale in the

fridge, but you can pop it in the toaster unless it smells bad or has started growing mold.

Refrigerating flour can extend its shelf life, but you'll want to trust your senses on this one. Whole wheat flour stays fresh in the fridge for six to eight months after opening, while white flour lasts up to a year. If you notice the flour starting to clump or smell sour, it's time to part with it.

Most other baking staples don't benefit from refrigeration. Even though sugar never goes bad, it's best to toss it two years after opening. Ground spices can stay fresh in the pantry for two to three years, and whole spices can last an extra year. But remember to clean your spice containers from time to time—they're some of the germiest items in the kitchen.

### **Is Your Fridge at the Right Temperature?**

Always remember to put your groceries away as soon as you get home. Stick to the two-hour rule: Never allow foods that require refrigeration to sit at room temperature for more than two hours (one hour if the air temperature is above 90 degrees).

To slow bacteria growth, keep your fridge at 40 degrees F (4C) and your freezer at 0 degrees F (-17.8 C).



“If the foods are refrigerated at lower temperatures than the standard home refrigerator (upper 30s to 40 degrees), this could add a bit more shelf life,” said Archie Magoulas, a food safety specialist at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

But the lower temperature might only stretch the freshness for a day or so, Magoulas explained, and it depends on what type of food you have in your fridge.

Some foodborne bacteria are unavoidable.

Unfortunately, sometimes your senses alone aren't enough to gauge whether a food is safe to eat or not. Listeria, which causes more than 200 food poisoning deaths in the United States each year, is a bacterium that you can't smell or taste.

(<https://www.verywellhealth.com>)



Knock, Knock, Who's there? A broken pencil. A broken pencil who? Never mind, it's pointless.

Knock, Knock, Who's there? Nobel. Nobel who? No bell, that's why I knocked.

Knock, Knock. Who's there? Hatch. Hatch who? Bless you.

Knock. Knock. Who's there? Honeydew. Honeydew who? Honey dew you wanna dance?

Knock. Knock. Who's there? KGB. KGB who? We will ask the questions!

### MY LIFE AT THE ABODE

There is a place in upstate New York called The Abode where I once lived – off and on - for about 8 years. It's a Sufi spiritual community located in the Taconic Mountains in New Lebanon, New York. There are 7 buildings on the premises, which include a meditation hall and two large barns. It occupies approximately 320 acres of forest that spans the border between New York State and Massachusetts.

The Abode includes historic Shaker buildings built between 1834 and 1870. The Shakers were a religious group who got their name because their ceremonies included trembling and shaking which often led to ecstatic states. They became excellent craftspeople known for producing high-quality furniture, food, and household goods.

The Abode came to being in 1975 – it was established by Sufi leader Pir Villayat Khan. Sufism being the esoteric aspect of Islam which accepts all religions and belief systems and inspires people to be compassionate towards their fellow human beings. I respected the teachings of Sufism, but pretty much did my own thing - which was okay

so long as you fitted in with the general lifestyle.

People were able to come and go as in any other living establishment. There were no harsh laws or restrictions. Just some logical rules to live by. Several people had jobs outside the community - the ones (like me) who worked in the community were either paid modest salaries or did work exchange for room and board. For these reasons, the Abode quickly became a popular place for people of a philosophical or spiritual bend and who were also seeking an alternative lifestyle. It was a mixed bag of people – various ethnic backgrounds - young & older - at first from different parts of the U.S. - and eventually attracting folks from Canada and Europe.



A wintry view of The Abode

I first came to the Abode in 1978 as an apprentice in the herb garden programme - an in-depth program that lasted for two weeks. We learned about the properties of herbs, how and when to cut them for harvesting, hanging them up to dry in the barn and processing them into tinctures for healing, or preparing

them for various kinds of teas and seasonings.



Working in the herb garden

At the end of the two weeks, I was totally enraptured with the community and decided to move here permanently – or at least until it was time to move on, given my gypsy-like lifestyle. I made a quick trip back to Toronto to quit my job, pack up my belongings and begin my new life.

By the time of my arrival, the Abode was already a thriving community with its own bakery, a large farm, an herb garden, a school for children, a maintenance department and a budding program called Omega Institute for Holistic Studies, which presented courses for spirituality studies, health & healing – (including meditation and yoga). There were also retreat huts scattered around the hillside behind the community for folks who wanted to do solitary retreats. These personal retreats were usually done for a few days or even a week - food was brought to them by retreat guides.

A communal gathering:





**Meditation Hall:**



Everyone who lived at the Abode was required to take part in one of the various work concentrations – except for those who had an outside job. Once a month we had a Work Saturday, from 8am to 1pm, when the entire community got together for an intensified work period in each area that needed support. It was always a very enjoyable event which ended in a nutritious lunch prepared by the kitchen workers.

**Farming in the early days of The Abode (it didn't last long until we purchased a tractor):**



A huge chore was cutting trees and chopping them to suitable sizes for all the wood stoves in the buildings during the cold months. We formed wood chains in front of each house and passed the logs along from one person to the next, to stock up their wood supply. The wood chains made the task of distribution easier and was great fun to do. Afterwards, we enjoyed the hot cocoa and muffins provided by the kitchen staff. (FYI – new trees were frequently planted).

From the start, I was a very active member of the community. My first job was in the bakery. We made various kinds of bread (all healthy of course), apple squares, oatmeal & peanut butter cookies and granola. The bakery soon expanded to sell their products to various towns in the area. We eventually had accounts in places like Boston, Amherst, Albany and even the NY University in New York City.

As mentioned, The Abode was a very popular place, and it didn't take long before it was filled to capacity. Soon all the available rooms were occupied with family groups or shared between two or three members. There were two large dorms which were always filled as well. A couple of guys even slept in a hall closet. But no one complained - and for many of us, it was a veritable Shangri-La.

Not that there weren't problems or disagreements - we were human after all - but mostly they were handled peacefully. We did attract a small percentage of folks who were eventually evicted. Some with

psychological problems that we weren't equipped to handle, others were just there for a free ride or else didn't fit in.

Nevertheless, the community continued to thrive, and some folks even started up their own businesses to support themselves. There were several women who designed and made jewellery or tote bags to sell in shops or local fairs. One young man developed beautiful lamps. He fashioned and polished the wooden bases and provided beautiful pink shades made from a thick heat resistant material. The lamps sold very well at fairs.

There was a large pond on the Abode property with a tiny beach area where folks gathered to swim and picnic. The children especially loved to play there – but there were strict rules that they were always to be accompanied by an adult. The pond was a very popular spot in the summer.

I enjoyed working at the bakery, but after a year I wanted to expand my horizons, so I joined the Omega Institute as a writer and programmer. A 'Mountain Camp' was developed on the property to host large group events. It comprised dining pavilions and meeting spaces, along with shared bathroom and shower facilities. Meals were prepared in the octagonal kitchen building. Housing was provided by two shared cabins that held a total of 22 people. There were 16 rustic retreat huts, and extensive space for tenting along the mountain's walking paths. Our

excellent cook, Mirabai, prepared wholesome and creative meals, which, for some, was the highlight of their stay!



Omega soon outgrew the Abode space and after a few years we rented a section of the Bennington University campus in Vermont to present our programmes. The Mountain Camp at The Abode space was then used strictly for retreats and smaller seminars throughout the year.

Soon after our initial summer at Bennington, the founders of Omega decided it was in our best interest to buy a permanent space to present our programmes. That's how we ended up with the wonderful campus in Rhinebeck, New York. Omega had expanded their programs to include creative expression, relationships and family and sustainable living through climate initiative. And the rest is history. In the ensuing years Omega became wildly successful and is still going strong – celebrities, such as Al Gore, Jane Fonda, Deepak Chopra & Gloria Steinem, among others, have given workshops there.

After Omega relocated, The Abode established another seminar centre



on the premises called Aegis, for which I continued to write and book events. Aegis was on a smaller scale than Omega, but it did reasonably well for many years. I spent a year working there and then changed my course again to take over the daycare centre for 3- & 4-year-olds. They were mostly Abode children, but we also had kids from the surrounding area. I mostly worked alone and usually had about 6 or 7 children at a time. But I loved doing it – the kids were adorable, and I was able to explore the world again through their eyes. They especially enjoyed story-time and one of their favorites was Dr. Seuss's 'Green Eggs and Ham' - they would all shout out loud the lines they liked best. Their abundant playfulness and innocence were very therapeutic for me.

In times of good weather, we would take walks to a nearby farm which had sheep and horses. They loved watching the farm dog herding the sheep together. But one day the sheep broke rank and ran out through an opening in the fence - then proceeded to run circles around us. The children commenced to scream, and they all huddled around me. Thankfully, the dog quickly scattered the sheep, herding them back to the farmyard before any damage could be done. Once the fright had subsided, the children were thrilled with the incident and couldn't stop talking about it. The parents, of course, expressed some concern, but were relieved that no one was harmed.

The next job I took was the role of substitute teacher at the Abode's 'Mountain Road School'. I was not a

qualified teacher, but we sometimes bent the rules a bit at The Abode – and no one was the wiser. Of course, we were required to follow the New York State curriculum for public schools. Our school extended from Grades 1 to 7 – after that the children had to complete Grade 8 in a public school to prepare them for high school. Because we had a smaller number of children, we could extend the curriculum and our kids were usually well ahead of the regular grade 8'ers.

My assignment was to teach history to the 1st grade. I first began with the American Revolution, but that didn't seem to garner much interest. So, I changed course and decided to describe my three years in South Dakota. How I spent 9 months living in a teepee in the Black Hills National Forest with a bunch of Lakota Natives. The Lakota were previously known as the Sioux – which means 'little snakes' - a name given to them by the Ojibwe, their longtime foe. This subject excited them and immediately got their attention. They wanted to know everything about the Lakota and living in a teepee. So, I spent the remainder of my teaching term talking about the lifestyle and adventures of the Lakota people and other tribes. We fashioned cardboard headdresses (war bonnets) which the kids were thrilled with, and we all posed for a picture with them wearing their colourful headdresses.

My stint as a barefoot teacher:



Christmas, Thanksgiving and Hanukkah were big events at the Abode. There were many Jewish folks in residence, and we all took part in their Hanukkah celebration. They in turn enjoyed taking part in the Christmas activities, especially the elaborate Christmas meal.

Our cook, Mirabai, prepared a classic dinner of roast turkey with sage and chestnut stuffing for the carnivores and a tasty tofu substitute for the vegetarians. It was an elaborate meal consisting of soup & salad, a choice of mashed

potatoes or yams, herbal dinner rolls, brussel sprouts, sauteed string

beans and a delicious Christmas pudding at the end. We usually had some outdoor sport for the kids



afterwards – such as tobogganing or ice skating on The Abode Pond.

My final two years at The Abode were from 1996 to 1998. I had just returned from a trip to India and decided to acclimatize myself there before resuming my life in Toronto. I spent the two years working in the kitchen, assisting my friend Ingrid in preparing three meals a day. Thankfully, we didn't have to do the clean-up – that was done by the work exchange people. I really enjoyed working in the kitchen and had a specialty that was quite popular with Abodians. I called it my 'South Dakota chili' which was made with tomato soup, ground tofu burger, aduki beans, potatoes, mushrooms, and corn – it was moderately spicy to accommodate everyone's taste.

After two years were up, I made my way back to Toronto. I found a place to live in the High Park area and got a job at Mount Sinai Hospital. In 2004 I moved to City Park – it was a fortunate move on my part, and I am

very much enjoying my life here. There are actually some

similarities to my life at The Abode. We had Family Meetings at the Abode and at City Park we have Members Meetings. There were



various activities and committees in which Abode residents participated – the same is true here. City Park has been, in many ways, a continuation of my life at The Abode and an altogether agreeable place in which to live.

(Last picture above: The Abode Family group in the 1980's).

Ursula Carter ~ 51 Alexander

**STILL**

There is still  
some precious time  
left  
hopefully

To be with family  
and dear friends

To walk in Nature  
slowly

To gaze at the sky  
and the clouds  
endlessly

To help  
and to serve  
always

To wonder  
and wander  
aimlessly

To relish in friendship  
and in solitude  
freely

To enjoy music  
and silence

deeply

To enjoy activity  
and stillness  
daily

There is still  
some precious time  
left

still

John Pollard ~ 31 Alexander



Artificial  
Intelligence usually  
beats real stupidity.

Boycott shampoo!  
Demand the real poo!

A bartender is just a pharmacist with  
a limited inventory.

Why do we drive on parkways and  
park in driveways?

If the police arrest a mime, do they  
still tell him he has the right to  
remain silent?

Two peanuts were walking in the  
park. One was a salted.

Warning: dates in calendars are  
much closer than they appear.

When a clock is hungry, it goes back  
4 seconds.

A boiled egg is hard to beat.

How come the time of day with the slowest traffic is called Rush Hour?

Inside every senior citizen is a younger person wondering, 'What the hell happened?'



Why did Captain Kirk pee on the ceiling? He wanted to go where no man had gone before.

What do anniversaries and toilets have in common? Men always miss them.

What was the best thing before sliced bread?

Is it possible to be totally partial?

Don't take life too seriously. You won't get out alive.

Make it idiot-proof and someone will design a better idiot!

Everyone lies... but it doesn't matter because nobody listens.

What do you call a song sung in a car? A cartoon.

Dolphins are so smart that within 2 weeks of captivity, they've trained

people to stand at the edge of the pool and throw them fish.

Women will never be equal to men until they can walk down the street with a beer gut and a bald head, and still think they're sexy.

And finally,

A conclusion is the place where you got tired of thinking.

All Members are encouraged to submit material of interest to the Membership for consideration in LINK. All submissions must include your full name, building and apartment number. Kindly attach original unformatted documents to your email or type your article within the body of an email and send to:

[CityParkLINK@gmail.com](mailto:CityParkLINK@gmail.com)



for reading this issue of LINK.

**BIG THANKS** to all those who promptly get their vaccines and

wear a mask properly, when necessary, inside the common areas, hallways, Laundry Rooms, and elevators, keeping our neighbours safe from the flu, RSV (Respiratory syncytial virus) and the Covid-19 mutations.

