

*The*  
**Best**  
OF AGING

Vol 1: Issue 1

November 2010

*Celebrating*  
*Ageless*  
ATTITUDE

**THIS MONTH'S FEATURES:**

**TIME WELL SPENT**

An Interview with The Manhattan Project's Dr. Edgar F. Westrum, Jr.

**PAGE: 10**

**CROSS GENERATION TRAVEL**

Travel Between Generations is on the Rise. Spurred in Part by Full Service Travel Agencies

**PAGE: 6**



# WHO DESERVES YOUR ATTENTION?



## STOP THROWING YOUR MONEY AWAY ON THE UNKNOWN MASSES.

The Best of Aging focuses on the mature audience. Did you know they control 70% of the wealth in the United States? Advertise with us and give your attention to those that can afford your products and services.

To Advertise, call **(734) 985-0363**  
or e-mail: **Advertise@TheBestOfAging.com**



*Celebrating Ageless Attitude*

## C O N T E N T S

FROM THE PUBLISHER.....	2
WHO ARE TODAY'S GRANDPARENTS, By Tait Trussell .....	3
MIND GAMES, By Greg Jagst.....	4
QUESTIONS FOR A NEW DOCTOR, By Sue Ann Carpenter .....	6
CROSS GENERATION TRAVEL, By Lee Thorsen .....	7
TIME WELL SPENT – Dr. Edgar F. Westrum, Jr., By Lee Thorsen.....	10
A COMMUNICATION CONUNDRUM, By Suzanne Handler.....	16
SERVING OTHERS WITH DIGNITY – Henry Johnson, By Lee Thorsen .....	18

### THE BEST OF AGING

Volume 1, Issue 1 – November, 2010  
Post Office Box 970572, Ypsilanti, MI 48197  
Telephone: (734) 985-0363  
Fax: (734) 274-6030  
Website: [www.TheBestOfAging.com](http://www.TheBestOfAging.com)

Published by Media Support Net, LLC

**Jeffrey L. Collison, PUBLISHER**

E-mail: [Publisher@TheBestOfAging.com](mailto:Publisher@TheBestOfAging.com)

**Lee Thorsen, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**

E-mail: [Editor@TheBestOfAging.com](mailto:Editor@TheBestOfAging.com)

**William Newhouse, CREATIVE DIRECTOR**

E-mail: [Creative@TheBestOfAging.com](mailto:Creative@TheBestOfAging.com)

**Brian Moore, ADVERTISING DIRECTOR**

E-mail: [Advertise@TheBestOfAging.com](mailto:Advertise@TheBestOfAging.com)

**Hannah Hollingsworth, CIRCULATION DIRECTOR**

E-mail: [Circulation@TheBestOfAging.com](mailto:Circulation@TheBestOfAging.com)

### CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Sue Ann Carpenter  
Suzanne Handler  
Greg Jagst  
Tait Trussell

### SUBSCRIPTIONS

\$36 for one year, \$60 for two years.

*Please send check or money order to:*  
The Best of Aging, Attn: Subscriptions  
Post Office Box 970572, Ypsilanti, MI 48197

*The Best of Aging is published  
twelve times per year.*

©2010 by Media Support Net, LLC. All Rights Reserved. No  
portion of The Best of Aging may be reprinted or reproduced  
without expressed written permission of the publisher.



## From the Publisher

Welcome to the premiere issue of *The Best of Aging*! We are a monthly magazine devoted to celebrating and promoting the mature audience. In other words, all of us who have lived at least four or five decades or more and have the scars to prove it. I realize that it is very unusual these days to launch a print publication. My friends and colleagues say, "Everything is on the Internet and you can get your news and opinions instantaneously. Why would you launch a print magazine?"

I say that it is because of the Internet and the instantaneous nature of information that I have launched *The Best of Aging*. Everything is just a little too fast for my taste. There seems to be no time for actual contemplation or reflection from either the writer's perspective or the reader's perspective and when it does happen, it is gone just as quickly and replaced with some nonsense about what the other person ate for dinner last night. Remember what your mom told you when making a decision or trying to solve a problem, "Sleep on it and you'll see more clearly in the morning." She was right.

*The Best of Aging* is an ageless attitude about having, or on the path to achieving, a good lifestyle as you travel through the aging process. As my kids were growing up, I used to tell them, "I don't want you to be happy. I want you to be good." Happiness is sort of like the Internet

where you can do anything – be rude, hurtful, or self-absorbed – and suffer no consequences under the cloak of anonymity. Goodness involves making a stand against what is wrong or just standing up to your values and oftentimes it won't make you happy. One day, I discovered that my daughter learned that lesson at the age of eight when a knock was heard at our front door. I answered it and there was a little girl about the same age as my daughter asking if she could talk to her. Not wanting to be the overbearing father, I stepped away but kept within distance to hear the conversation. "I'm going around to everyone who was invited to my birthday party next week to make sure that they dress the same and have the same hairstyle for it," said the little girl. Without hesitating, my daughter said, "I'm sorry, but I won't be going to your party. I am happy with who I am and I do not want to change to just fit in" and politely closed the door.

There is more to life than just instantaneous happiness. Each month we will bring you local features and articles about fascinating people, places, and businesses that you never even knew existed even though they may be your next-door neighbors or you have traveled past them for years. I welcome your contributions and feedback and I hope you enjoy and achieve *The Best of Aging* in your life.

*Jeff Collison*  
Publisher, *The Best of Aging*

# Who Are Today's Grandparents?

By Tait Trussell

*Three out of every 10 adults are grandparents. That's an all-time high, according to a new, large study of grandparents in America.*

Grandparents head up 44 million households nationwide. The population of grandpas and grandmas is so big it is now larger than that of either the Hispanic or the African American population.

"The Grandparent Economy" is a study of the population, spending and economic impact of U.S. grandparents. It was written by Peter Francese, founder of American Demographics, a magazine of information on human populations. The study was commissioned by Grandparents.com, a website with information on things to do with your grandchildren.

The approximate total of 70 million grandparents in the country is rising at more than double the rate of the overall national population. Their average income is going up faster than any other consumer segment, says the study. The "grands" buy about "\$2 trillion worth of goods and services annually." Remarkably, "grandparents control the majority of financial assets in the United States today."

The nature of being a grandparent has changed dramatically, the study indicates. Not only is the group larger and faster growing, it is "better

educated, more affluent, and more economically active than any previous generation of grandparents.

Today one in every three households is headed by a grandparent, and "their number is increasing at twice the average annual rate of U.S. households overall," the study reports. It adds "by 2015, more than 50 million households are likely to be headed by a grandparent."

Many grandparents and grandchildren live in the same home. According to the Census Bureau, there were 6.2 million grandparents living with one or more of their grandchildren in 2007. Only a small percentage of grandparents were living with grandchildren in a home other than their own. "Notably," said the report, "there is a grandchild living in about one in every 10 grandparent-headed households."

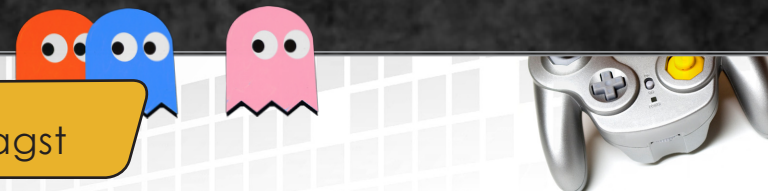
Grandparents have fared better in the recession than have younger families. They tend to have smaller mortgages and better employment situations than many younger people, who are struggling to keep their jobs in the risky workplace. Like it or not, the role of the grandparents has shifted dramatically, so you'd better be nice to them from now on.

### YOUNGER GRANDPARENTS

More than half of the grandparents, nearly 38 million, are younger than age 65. In 2010, more than half the population of grandparents are baby boomers. And they seem to keep getting younger. Whereas in 1985, most grandparents were 65 or older, now it is estimated 8 percent of men and 13 percent of women grandparents are between the ages of 40 and 44. Still, however, 78 percent of men and 80 percent of women age 75-plus are grandparents.

### SPENDING POWER

Grandparents also like to eat out. The study said they spend more than \$97 billion a year at restaurants. They also spend over \$77 billion on travel-related costs, including airline and train tickets, lodging and meals while traveling and on vacations in second homes.



## MIND GAMES – By Greg Jagst

You've probably heard that phrase "use it or lose it." As it turns out, it's more than just a cliché. Research confirms that it's true.

A study last year in Psychological Medicine found that **individuals with high "brain reserve" have a 46-percent decreased risk of dementia as compared to those with low brain reserve.** What is brain reserve, you ask? Well, it looks at how mentally stimulating pursuits can prevent cognitive decline. And more good news: the study pointed out that even a late-life surge in mental activity could ward off the effects of dementia.

Here's information from another study of interest, this is from the 2003 New England Journal of Medicine: **those who participated in activities such as board games, reading, playing a musical instrument or working a crossword puzzle were less likely to develop dementia than were people who said they engaged in those activities rarely or not at all.**

So what are today's older adults doing to keep mentally fit? Many have said goodbye to traditional games such as

bingo. They're gravitating more to group activities such as Scrabble® and bridge tournaments. According to the latest studies, it all helps.

And many older adults are getting into the video age – playing computer games. Here's an interesting side note: the second-annual "Evercare 100@100 Survey," sponsored by the company Evercare, polled one hundred Americans turning 100 and older this year. They found that **one in seven played video games.**

For instance, Nintendo's Brain Age™: Train Your Brain in Minutes a Day features simple math and other activities. Its received high marks from both older adults and researchers. And the company's Wii™ home video game system – which allows players to interactively compete in sports such as bowling and golf – is flying off the shelves. Older adults comprise a significant consumer market for this video game; independent living communities around the country are even hosting Wii tournaments.



## Questions for a New Doctor

By Sue Ann Carpenter

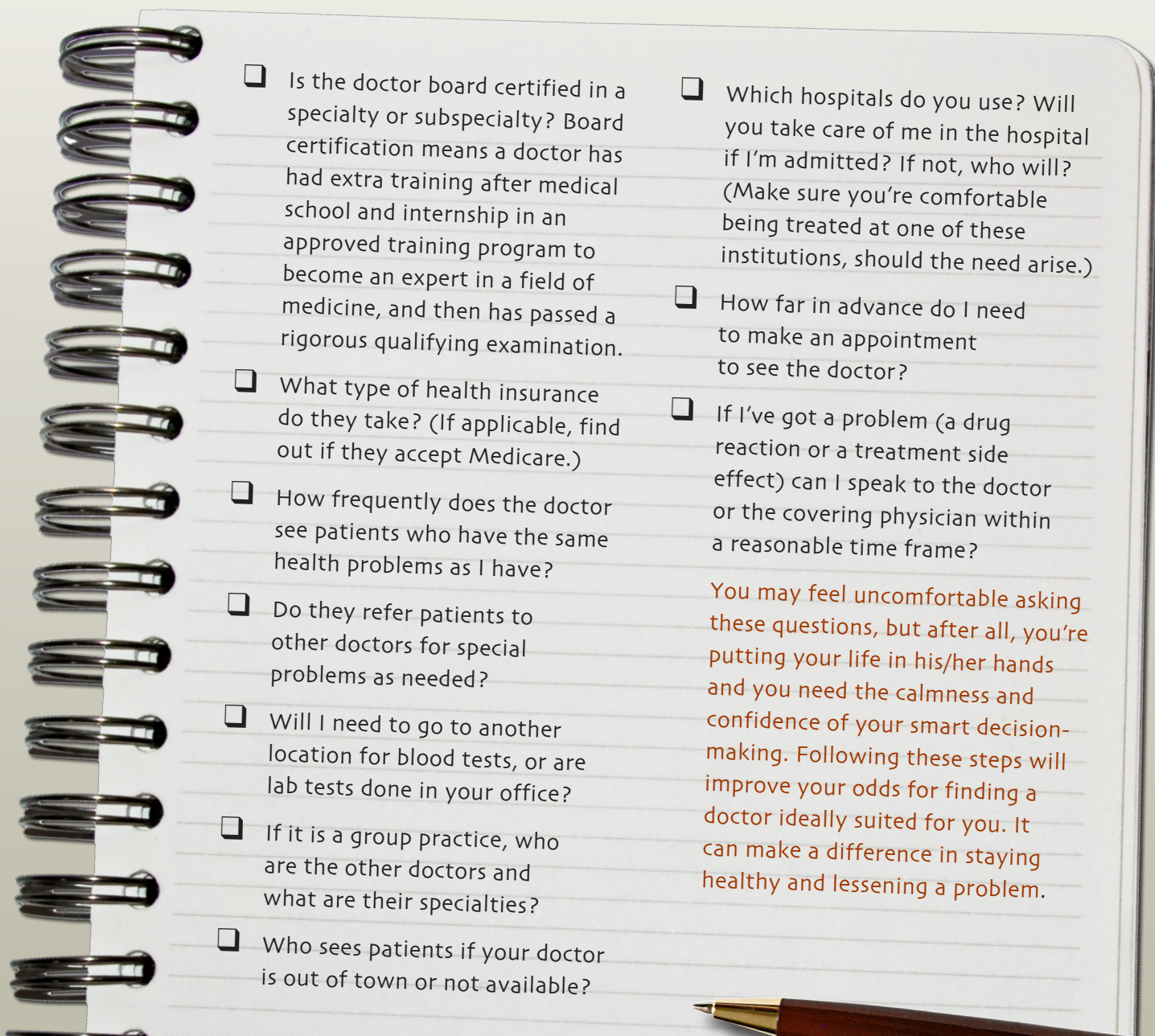
Whether you want to or not, sooner or later, you may have to go to a doctor. Hopefully it will be one you like and trust who is geographically convenient.

If you're searching for a new doctor, ask around to get others' opinions. Nurses are a great resource, since they work with them and see how they interact with patients. Also ask friends, family, co-workers, etc. Another source is the American Medical Association website ([www.ama-assn.org](http://www.ama-assn.org)) with its DoctorFinder link. It gives basic professional information on almost all licensed physician in

the U.S. However, if you belong to a managed health-care plan, your choices are limited to doctors who are part of that plan.

Most important is that your doctor should treat you with respect and not sugarcoat responses or information. Good communication is a must, since you'll be relating intimate details of your life.

Here are some important questions that can be answered by a preliminary phone call to a doctor's office that will aid in your decision:



- Is the doctor board certified in a specialty or subspecialty? Board certification means a doctor has had extra training after medical school and internship in an approved training program to become an expert in a field of medicine, and then has passed a rigorous qualifying examination.
- Which hospitals do you use? Will you take care of me in the hospital if I'm admitted? If not, who will? (Make sure you're comfortable being treated at one of these institutions, should the need arise.)
- How far in advance do I need to make an appointment to see the doctor?
- If I've got a problem (a drug reaction or a treatment side effect) can I speak to the doctor or the covering physician within a reasonable time frame?
- What type of health insurance do they take? (If applicable, find out if they accept Medicare.)
- How frequently does the doctor see patients who have the same health problems as I have?
- Do they refer patients to other doctors for special problems as needed?
- Will I need to go to another location for blood tests, or are lab tests done in your office?
- If it is a group practice, who are the other doctors and what are their specialties?
- Who sees patients if your doctor is out of town or not available?

You may feel uncomfortable asking these questions, but after all, you're putting your life in his/her hands and you need the calmness and confidence of your smart decision-making. Following these steps will improve your odds for finding a doctor ideally suited for you. It can make a difference in staying healthy and lessening a problem.

## Trusted Care for the Senior You Care for.



Call for a free, no-obligation appointment:

Ann Arbor  
734.971.9023



Each Home Instead Senior Care franchise office is independently owned and operated.

- *Companionship*
- *Meal Preparation*
- *Medication Reminders*
- *Light Housekeeping*
- *Shopping & Errands*

[homeinstead.com / michigan](http://homeinstead.com/michigan)

# Cross Generation Travel

By Lee Thorsen

*Travel between grandparents and grandchildren has been on the rise and has been spurred, in large part, by innovative full service travel agencies who offer everything from simple travel coordination to fully guided tours to once-in-a-lifetime destinations.*

The year was 1985 and it was the era of Ronald Reagan, Michael Jackson, and the Cosby show. I had an opportunity presented to me to travel to Denmark with my Great Uncle Aage (pronounced awe-gie) Thorsen and serve as a guide and helper. Uncle Aage, as everyone called him, was my grandmother's brother and the only uncle I really ever knew. The initial thought of traveling with a senior citizen in his 70's was, as you would expect, fraught with hesitation and anxiety. After all, I was in my early 20's, thought I knew everything, and it certainly wasn't a great image builder to be in the company of anyone over the age of fifty. However, I was in a unique position to travel with Uncle Aage because the previous

year I had traveled alone to Denmark and spent many weeks with distant relatives renewing ties that had broken back in the early 1900's.

The whole fascination with Denmark began three years prior when my mother received a large document from a legal firm in Denmark explaining that her Grand Aunt Frida (whom she had never even known existed) had passed away. As part of her last Will and Testament, she stipulated that the government lawyers trace her roots in order to distribute the small remains of her estate to all of her relatives. In the early 1900's, six of sixteen siblings left Denmark for the USA. Over the years, connections were lost. Grand Aunt Frida was one of those remaining ten siblings in Denmark and must have vowed to herself to set things straight and connect the family again. Shortly following the arrival of the document came the calls, letters, and visits from both sides of the ocean. I was one of the ambassadors from the American side.

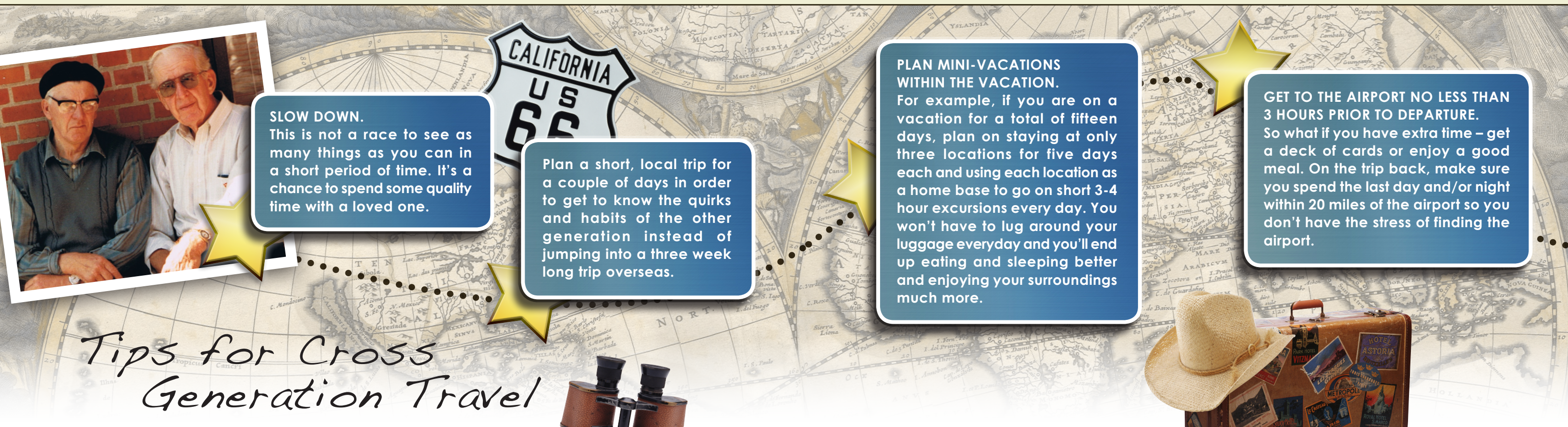
Uncle Aage had never traveled to his ancestral home. He was a hardworking, honest man who always put others first, raised a family in good times and bad times, and had an incredible demeanor of tolerance, curiosity, and grace. Every time I saw him, he was always interested in seeing my pictures and hearing my travel stories of Denmark, so that one day I said in almost half jest "You and I should go to Denmark," never realizing that he would jump on it. This was the start of a journey that would stay with me for the rest of my life. We traveled to Denmark for several weeks and learned from each other – partly by observation and partly by close proximity. Kind of the way you study the life of a zoo animal, such as a tiger or elephant, through the bars of a cage. We were two generations apart and had no concept of each other. Yet, we still learned even if it took decades to fully understand.

One such learning event came when I was driving the rental car and he noticed that the fuel level was a little under an eighth of a tank. Instead of yelling at me to fill the car up before we ran out of gas in a foreign country, he simply

said, "When I started driving during the Great Depression, I always made sure that the gas tank never went below half a tank and I never gave up that habit." Of course, I didn't listen at the time and thought that was a ridiculous thing until I nearly ran out of gas trying to find a gas station a couple of hours later.

He didn't judge or condemn me, even when I did stupid things like put my earphones on and listen to music (Walkman's were the popular choice of electronics back then) while in the company of others. From his example, I learned the gift of tolerance, the love of curiosity, and hopefully one day the art of grace during good times and bad times. Uncle Aage passed away many years ago but still lives with me as an example to live by and a lesson for my children as they grow into adulthood.

After 25 years, I still regard this trip as one of the best things that I've ever done for another person. There are many stories like mine and, in my opinion, the best way to achieve a well-planned trip with another generation is through a full service travel



**SLOW DOWN.**  
This is not a race to see as many things as you can in a short period of time. It's a chance to spend some quality time with a loved one.

Plan a short, local trip for a couple of days in order to get to know the quirks and habits of the other generation instead of jumping into a three week long trip overseas.

**PLAN MINI-VACATIONS WITHIN THE VACATION.**  
For example, if you are on a vacation for a total of fifteen days, plan on staying at only three locations for five days each and using each location as a home base to go on short 3-4 hour excursions every day. You won't have to lug around your luggage everyday and you'll end up eating and sleeping better and enjoying your surroundings much more.

**GET TO THE AIRPORT NO LESS THAN 3 HOURS PRIOR TO DEPARTURE.**  
So what if you have extra time – get a deck of cards or enjoy a good meal. On the trip back, make sure you spend the last day and/or night within 20 miles of the airport so you don't have the stress of finding the airport.

*Tips for Cross Generation Travel*

Make a list of where the pharmacies and medical facilities are in the locations that you will be traveling. Call ahead to understand the policies and procedures for acquiring needed medications and treatment in case of an emergency.

A LITTLE TOLERANCE GOES A LONG WAY. This trip is a shared adventure and is not a place to bring up issues and problems back at home. The problems will still be there when you get back. So enjoy yourself.

agency. There are many good travel agencies in Washtenaw County that specialize in Cross Generation and Multi-generation travel.

"It is the experienced traveler that generally use our services," says Kirsten Kulik, marketing director for Journeys International, "because they see the value in having all of the arrangements, local guides, and most of all, peace of mind when they travel with their favorite niece or grandchild." During the 1990's, the Internet had taken away a big portion of the airline and hotel booking business from the full service travel industry much the same way it had taken classified advertising away from the newspapers. "Pretty much all that we offer is guided trips that are educational and interactive since we opened our doors in the 1970's, so the Internet hasn't really affected our business," explains Ms. Kulik. While there will always be a place for the Internet traveler, full service travel agencies have enjoyed a steady increase in business in recent years.

Chris Conlin, president of Conlin Travel, agrees and adds, "Multi-generation travel has been on the rise using full service travel agencies since 9-11 because the older generation wants to connect with the

younger generation in a meaningful way as well as being able to be better protected with experienced local agents on the ground. You just can't get that from the Internet."

Rashmi Popat, manager at Boersma Travel's Nickels Arcade location adds, "We find that once a client has taken a trip with a full service agency, the client usually returns year-after-year to try different adventures. So, in effect, we give them the best gift possible...the love of travel." Ms. Popat goes on to say, "When a client does run into a problem, they are extremely thankful that they can call us at any time, day or night, to quickly solve the problem."

Full service travel agencies such as Journeys International, Conlin Travel, and Boersma Travel (as well as many other fine travel agencies in the county) handles all of the details and allows families to enjoy themselves with very few surprises – and when the mishaps do occur, there is always a real person on the other end of the phone to help. "The Internet allows you to book a hotel with a pool, we know if the pool is broken," says Mr. Conlin, "that's the difference between a good vacation and a great vacation."

*I deserve the very best...*



I was lonely, depressed and stuck in the house all day. I was tired of being a burden on my family and overwhelmed with coordinating the household maintenance after my husband passed away.

**Homemade Senior Care** transformed my life and those around me by creating & managing a customized plan of care for me. They listen to me and treat me with respect and dignity. It is great to be independent again and to truly enjoy the company of my friends and family.

Homemade Senior Care is also my **Patient Pal**. They take me to all of my medical appointments, take notes, and make sure that I am heard and that all of the doctors have the correct information about my medical needs.

*...that's why I chose  
Homemade Senior Care!*

*"You are really, really good at what you do. You have a real gift for caring for others and making them laugh. What you have done for my mom is a gift beyond measure!"*

*—Kris from Ann Arbor, Michigan*



**Homemade**  
SENIOR CARE

Call us at **734-985-0036**

or visit us at **www.HomemadeSeniorCare.com**  
to schedule a free in-home, non-medical consultation.

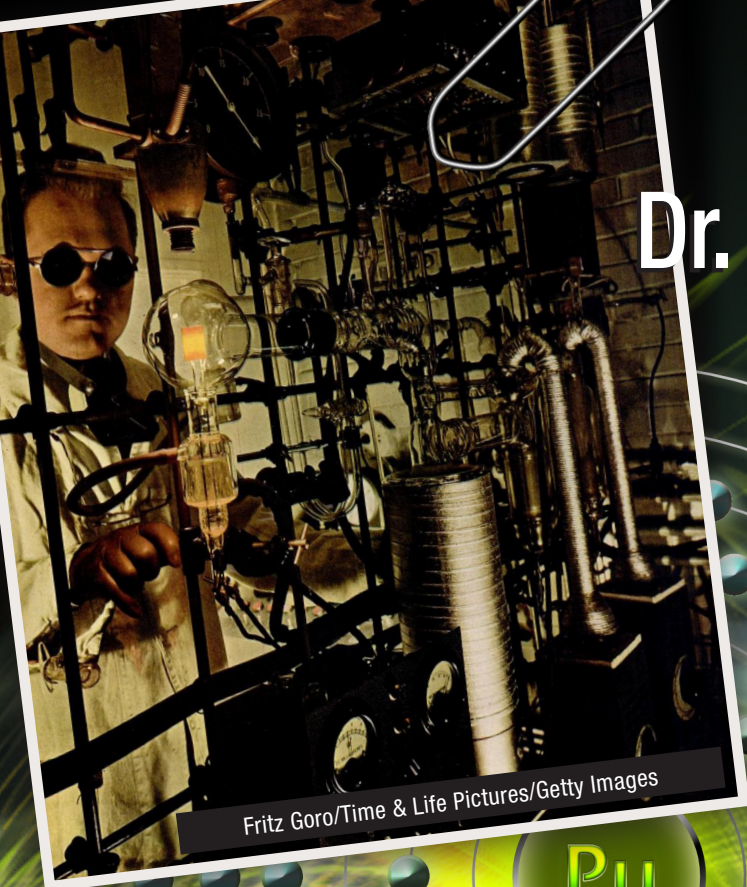
For a limited time, receive your first week free when you sign up for three months of service. Please mention that you saw this ad in The Best of Aging to receive this offer. Offer ends 12/31/2010.

**Compassionate & Professional Home Care Management**

# TIME WELL SPENT

## Dr. Edgar F. Westrum, Jr.

BY LEE THORSEN

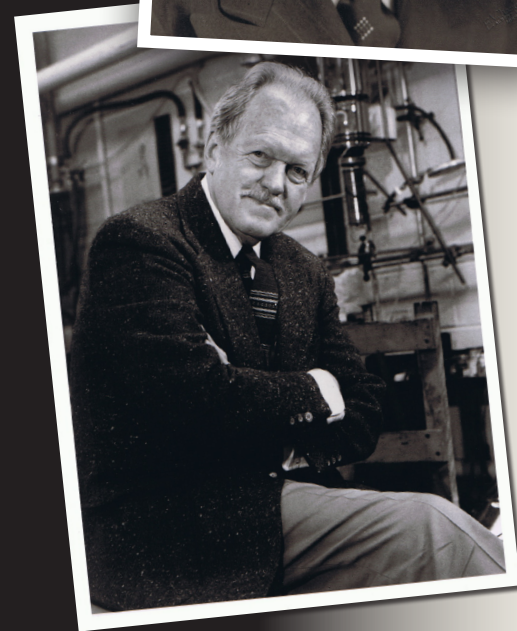


Fritz Goro/Time & Life Pictures/Getty Images

**FAR LEFT:**  
Dr. Westrum at the Metallurgical Lab in Chicago in 1946.

**RIGHT:**  
Dr. Westrum, circa 1940.

**LOWER RIGHT:**  
Dr. Westrum at the U-M lab in 1988.



Local Ann Arbor man has led multiple lifetimes within his span of 91 years. From working with Drs. J. Robert Oppenheimer and Glenn T. Seaborg on the secret Manhattan Project in the 40's, to his long career at the University of Michigan, to his hundreds of international journeys and journalistic endeavors all over the world in pursuit of scientific cooperation in a nuclear age, Dr. Edgar F. Westrum, Jr. is worthy of this edition's Time Well Spent profile. If you know of a person that has a fascinating story to tell, please let us know.

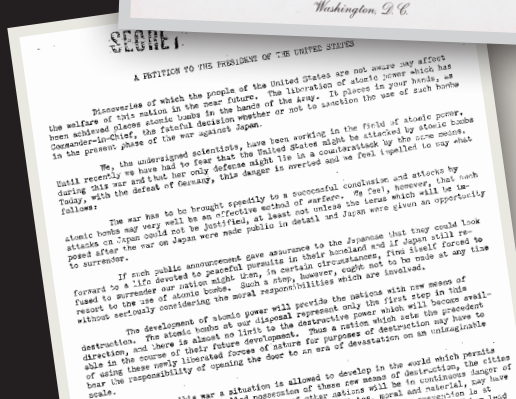
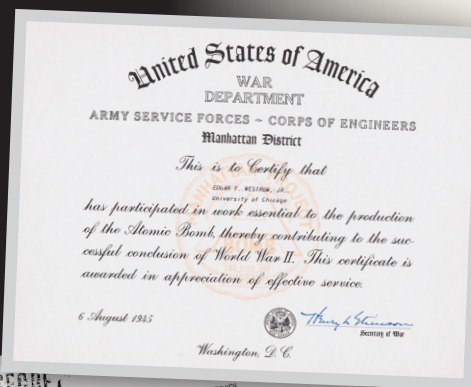
Ask him about the weather and he'll kindly change the subject with a question like, "Do you think that the Chinese have a better math program than the United States?" You see, at 91-years old, Dr. Edgar F. Westrum, Jr. is never interested in small talk. His curiosity and determination has helped him to experience more in his lifetime than most of us and has kept his mind sharper than the brightest college graduates.

He spent his teenage years growing up in Minnesota during the heart of the Great Depression. "There wasn't much money and everyone had to chip in to make things work," said Dr. Westrum. His grandmother lived with them and he has a vivid recollection of their only safety net when things got really tough. "It was an old Butternut coffee can on my grandmother's shelf and it contained a few dollar bills." As the oldest of six children, after school he often helped his father in the evening run an insurance office while his father spent the evening trying to sell life insurance policies. He picked up as many odd jobs as he could from building roll top cabinets to helping out in a local accounting firm.

After graduating in 1941 from the University of Minnesota in Physical Chemistry, he pursued his doctoral degree at the University of California-Berkeley, where he fell right into the center of atomic research. He had weekly interactions with

**RIGHT:**  
Award from the War Department for Dr. Westrum's participation in the Manhattan Project.

**LOWER RIGHT:**  
The Szilard Petition that Dr. Westrum signed in 1946.



Group	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100	101	102	103																																																																																					
1	H	He																	Li	Be											B	C	N	O	F	Ne											Na	Mg											Al	Si	P	S	Cl	Ar											K	Ca	Sc	Ti	V	Cr	Mn	Fe	Co	Ni	Cu	Zn	Ga	Ge	As	Se	Br	Kr											Rb	Sr	Y	Zr	Nb	Mo	Tc	Ru	Rh	Pd	Ag	Cd	In	Sn	Sb	Te	I	Xe											Cs	Ba			Hf	Ta	W	Re	Os	Ir	Pt	Au	Hg	Tl	Pb	Bi	Po	At	Rn											Fr	Ra			Rf	Db	Sg	Bh	Hs	Mt	Ds	Rg	Cn	Uut	Uuq	Uup	Uuh	Uus	Uuo										
		* Lanthanoids		La	Ce	Pr	Nd	Pm	Sm	Eu	Gd	Tb	Dy	Ho	Er	Tm	Yb	Lu											** Actinoids		Ac	Th	Pa	U	Np	Pu	Am	Cm	Bk	Cf	Es	Fm	Md	No	Lr																																																																																																																																															

PLUTONIUM

many notable scientific leaders such as physicist Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer, who later was appointed the scientific director of the Manhattan Project, and Dr. Glenn T. Seaborg, who co-discovered plutonium with Dr. Edwin McMillan in 1940. Dr. Seaborg would soon be in charge of the Manhattan Project's Metallurgical Lab at the University of Chicago. The Metallurgical Lab had the responsibility of charting the chemical properties of plutonium and developing a process for large-scale plutonium production, which resulted in the Alamogordo and Nagasaki atomic bombs. The development of this chemical process was an enormous stride toward the making of the atomic bomb.

Upon receiving his doctorial degree in Thermodynamics at the University of California-Berkeley in 1944, Dr. Westrum was given a job at the secret Metallurgical Lab at the University of Chicago. "I had arrived early on a Saturday morning and was told to wait in the reception area where I quickly fell asleep in the chair. I was awakened by Dr. Seaborg who asked me why I was there," recounts Dr. Westrum, "I quickly responded that another professor had hired me for their department". Upon hearing that, Dr. Seaborg said, "I make all the decisions around here. You're with me." Dr. Seaborg, decades later, would write about Dr. Westrum "He was the most effective and productive chemist in this group and was able to obtain useful results. He displayed an ability in the laboratory that I have seldom seen equaled. I would rate him as the best chemist in the group at that time."

"It was a time of anxiety and it was a scientific race against Germany and Japan, who each had its own version of the Manhattan Project underway, to be the first to develop and control the atomic bomb," said Dr. Westrum, "and it was quickly determined that it was not easy to extract enough U-235, a rare and powerful form of uranium used to make bombs and is mixed with the more common U-238, so we had to find another way. We reasoned that we could create plutonium in uranium ore and then separate the plutonium through a chemical process." Dr. Westrum goes on to say, "Generally, there was a six-day a week work schedule. Every morning a meeting took place between the chemists on one side of the table, and the Nobel prize winners on the other, where we reported our findings during the previous 24 hours."



It was thought at the time that plutonium was only a man-made element. In fact in an article in the July 8, 1946 issue of Life Magazine, Dr. Westrum is featured in several photographs describing the "man-made" element of plutonium. It was discovered later that plutonium exists in nature, but usually in such small quantities that plutonium is still considered man-made for all practical purposes. Plutonium is highly poisonous because its radiation accumulates in the bone marrow, where it destroys the mechanism that makes blood cells. If disease-fighting white blood cells are suppressed, an infection from a simple scratch could be fatal. "The safety of the lab was remarkable," recalled Dr. Westrum, "so much so, that the only accident that I know of occurred when a secretary pulled a pop bottle out of a machine, noticed that a baby mouse was lodged in the bottom, screamed, threw the bottle, and hurt herself from the shattered glass."

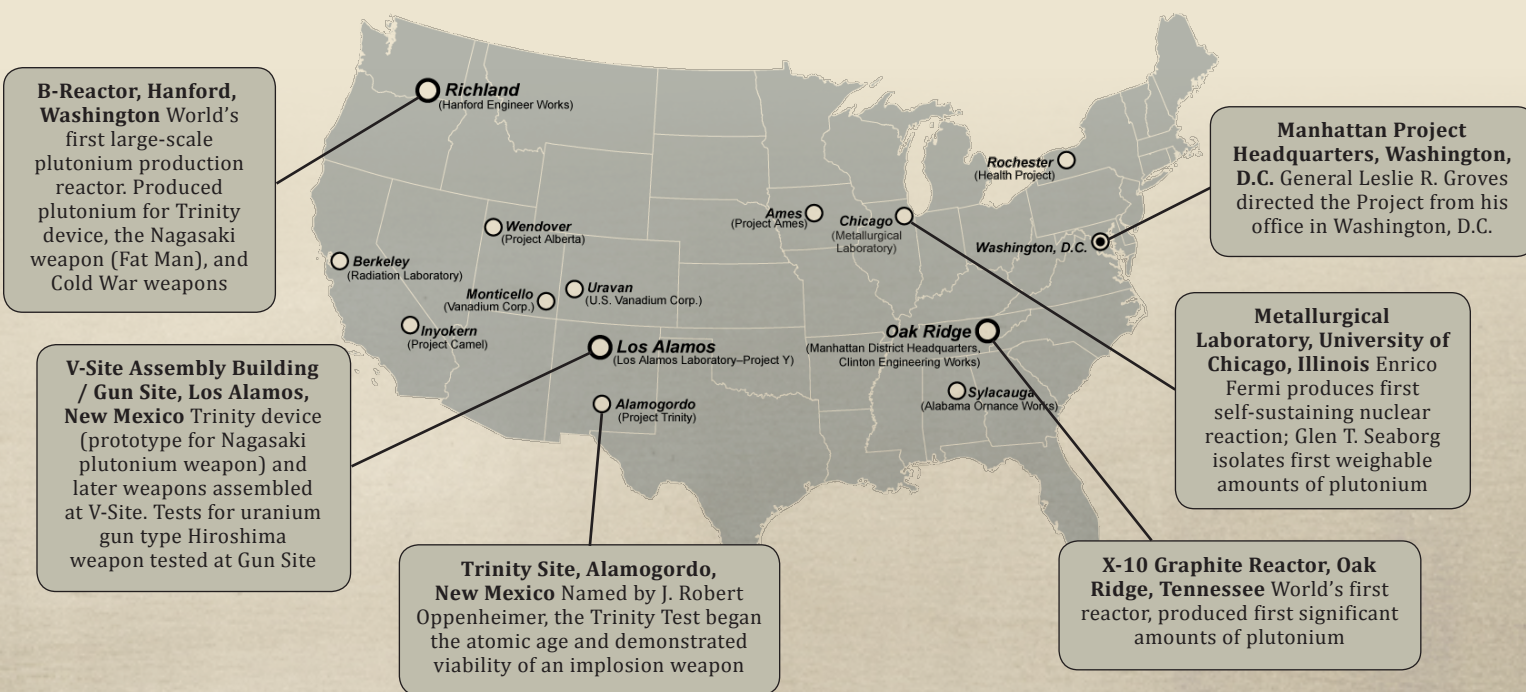
"I, as well as many others, had very real concerns about the use of the atomic bomb – including the initial fear that it could ignite the atmosphere as well as the death and devastation that it could

inflict on humanity," reflects Dr. Westrum, "but we were involved in a world war and knew that Germany or Japan would use it against us if given the opportunity." Dr. Westrum went on to sign the Szilard Petition in 1946, along with 69 other scientists from the Metallurgical Lab in Chicago after the defeat of Germany, urging President Harry S. Truman to reconsider dropping the bomb on Japan. In 1939, Dr. Leo Szilard who is considered to be the father of the nuclear age after having conceived of the nuclear chain reaction in 1933, along with Albert Einstein, sent a letter to President Franklin D. Roosevelt advising him that Germany might be researching the use of nuclear fission to create atomic bombs and suggested that the United States should begin its own research. This letter, ironically, has often been seen as a catalyst for the Manhattan Project.

After the Manhattan Project was decommissioned in 1946, Dr. Westrum was appointed an Assistant Professor at the University of Michigan but because of his versatility and unique experimental ability Dr. Seaborg asked him to return to Berkeley to continue his work at the University of California-Berkeley

### The Manhattan Project at a Glance

The Manhattan Project was a secret program from 1942-1946 designed to develop the first atomic bombs. The project took place at more than 30 sites with the primary sites being located in Washington, DC; Chicago, IL; Oak Ridge, TN; Los Alamos, NM; and Hanford, WA. It employed more than 130,000 people and cost approximately \$2 billion dollars (\$22 billion in today's dollars).





during several successive summers and vacation periods. “We had a lot of chemistry to work out, not only on plutonium, but on the original chemistry that had been done with uranium,” said Dr. Westrum.



Giant 184-inch magnet, used at Ernest O. Lawrence's Radiation Laboratory in Berkeley during the Manhattan Project for extracting uranium-235 from natural uranium. Dr. Westrum is pictured in the center as indicated.

first American scientists allowed into Russia. “I was taken aside upon entering Russia and specifically told to mind my manners because if I messed up, no more foreign scientists would be allowed in,” said Dr. Westrum, “and I must have done a good job over the many trips that I made because the Russian Academy celebrated my birthday for many years as a display of honor.”

His travels to Japan were a remarkable experience for him as they came during a critical time of reconciliation and reconstruction of the entire Japanese society. It was a time of great investment and economic growth that differed from that of Germany and Dr. Westrum was given an opportunity to serve as a scientific consultant for the government of Japan as well as many large commercial organizations. “At first,” explained Dr. Westrum, “the US government said absolutely no way will Japan be allowed to use nuclear power to produce its energy. Ten days later, for some unknown reason, that decision was reversed and scientists were allowed to enter into Japan.” During his time in Japan, Dr. Westrum realized that the Japanese people he met were not bitter or angry and always treated him with great kindness and respect.

As his passport continued to fill up and be reissued because his travels exceeded the available entry and exit stamp space, Dr. Westrum joined the International Council for Science (ICSU) organization where he went on to help establish the Committee on Data for Science and Technology (CODATA) for ICSU in 1966. CODATA's mission is to promote throughout the world the evaluation, compilation and dissemination of data for science and technology and to foster international collaboration in this field. CODATA, headquartered in Paris, France, held its first meeting in June 1966 and Dr. Westrum was named its first Secretary-General for the first nine years. “CODATA is a non-governmental organization made up mostly of governmental people” chuckled Dr. Westrum, “yet it was a very important international scientific union for sharing information and accelerating scientific discoveries.” On behalf of CODATA and requests from industry and governments, Dr. Westrum continued his travels around the world and came to learn several languages including German, French, Chinese, and Hebrew.

At the University of Michigan, Dr. Westrum established a thermophysics laboratory in 1955 and soon became a Professor of Chemistry. “In the early days, liquid helium was not available so I had to drive to Chicago's Metallurgical Lab every weekend in my station wagon to stock the laboratory. I had a large thermos container in the back of the station wagon that held the liquid helium,” mentions Dr. Westrum with a smile.

While at the University of Michigan, Dr. Westrum led another life during the summers and vacation periods. Beginning in the early 1950's, he started an extensive career as both a national and an internationally respected figure. He was involved with dozens of scientific unions and societies and he published well over 500 hundred articles, magazines, and books related to nuclear physics and chemistry, data management, and the application of chemical and thermophysical reaction calorimeters (an apparatus for measuring the amount of heat given out or taken in during a process).

Life in the international spotlight started in the early 50's with travels to Russia, Japan, and many European countries. Dr. Westrum was one of the

Dr. Westrum's career in publishing would be the envy of any seasoned publisher. In addition to the hundreds of contributions that he made editorially, he co-launched or was the editor of several Journals that included the prestigious Journal of Chemical Thermodynamics published by Academic Press, where he co-founded the publication and was the co-editor for the first eight years, and The Bulletin of Thermodynamics and Thermochemistry where he served as the editor for over a decade.

“I could not have done these other endeavors without the support of the University of Michigan and its recognition that these were important missions to exchange scientific information around the world,” said Dr. Westrum.

Although Dr. Edgar F. Westrum, Jr.'s career has had immense impact on the national and international scientific community, this fact should not be allowed to distort the whole picture. He participated fully in the teaching program of the Chemistry Department at the University of Michigan for over 43 years. His teaching duties included beginning courses in general chemistry, intermediate level courses in physical chemistry at the junior/senior stage, beginning graduate courses, and specialty courses in thermodynamics. In 1988 Dr. Westrum was awarded the Distinguished Achievement Award for Chemistry from the University of Michigan's College of Literature, Science, and the Arts (LSA). This award honors senior faculty who have consistently demonstrated outstanding achievements in the areas of scholarly research and/or creative endeavors, teaching and mentoring of students and junior faculty, service and a variety of other activities which have brought distinction to themselves and to the University of Michigan. Upon retiring from the University of Michigan in 1989, Dr. Westrum was granted a Professor Emeritus title by the Board of Regents of the University of Michigan and is typically awarded after long and distinguished service.

Don't think for a minute that Dr. Westrum has been all about work with no play over the years. He has led and continues to lead a very active personal life that focuses on his family and friends and has included a wide-variety of activities such as extensive vacations, the love of the outdoors, sailing,

and gourmet cooking. At 91-years old, he still has a very bright spark in his eye and enjoys spending time with his family and working on a myriad of projects ranging from woodwork to computers and will soon publish another book. Now I understand why he hasn't had any time for small talk.



Dr. Edgar F. Westrum, Jr. Today At His Home In Ann Arbor Michigan.

# A Communication Conundrum

By Suzanne Handler

*My mother was a stickler for displaying proper manners in public places. She lived in a different era - well before twittering, texting and Facebook became the social networking preference du jour. She would be horrified by the excessive misuse of these newer forms of communication and no doubt would declare that our society had lost its collective mind along with its social graces.*

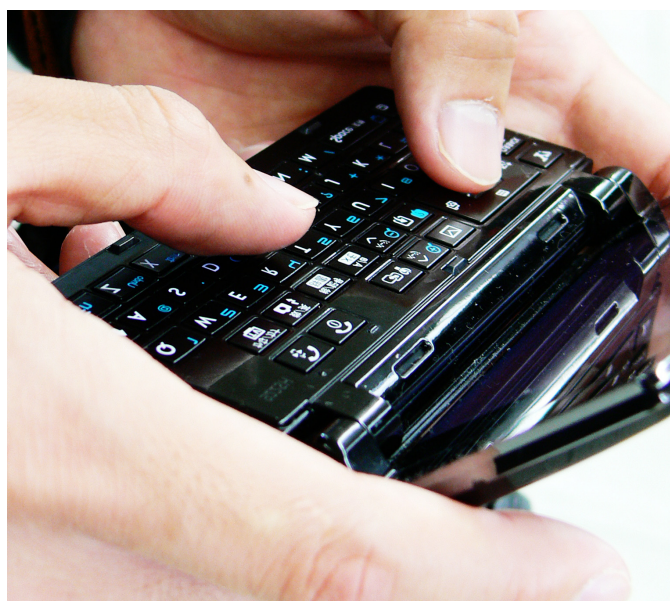
Growing up, my brother and I were frequently admonished to “mind your manners,” “always write a thank-you note for a gift of any size or value,” and “don’t speak if you don’t have anything nice or relevant to say.” I am confident that my mother would be horrified to know that America has become a nation of communication delinquents. Cell phones ring, chime, beep and sing out in houses of worship, in restaurants, theatres, and even in hospital quiet zones. Is there no place on the planet that is sacred? I even heard a cell phone play the opening bars of a college fight song at a recent funeral. My mother would definitely not be happy about this lack of proper telephone etiquette.

I have it on very good authority (my 12-year-old grandson) that kids today sit around in the same room and text each other for hours on end. The fact that texting has become so popular has not been lost on corporate America. In New York, in the spring of 2009, Kate Moore, a 15-year-old girl from Iowa, bested 20 other finalists to win the third annual LG U.S. National Texting Championship. Her prize: \$50,000 and a new phone. This contest was

sponsored by a corporate giant that battles it out with AT&T, Motorola and other phone makers for the hearts, minds and dollars of a population obsessed with staying in touch.

To win her coveted award, Ms. Moore logged over 14,000 text messages in a month, demonstrated her remarkable dexterity to text while blindfolded and even had the wherewithal to text during a moving obstacle challenge. According to news.yahoo.com, Kate gave the following advice to parents: “Let your kid text during dinner! Let your kid text during school! It pays off.”

Now, about twittering. Given the fact that twittering is how birds communicate, I would think humans would be embarrassed to even admit what they and the avian population have this distinguishing characteristic in common. I find it incomprehensible that any individual, especially any working adult, has the time to write about his or her every move or thought in a given day; I am equally



mystified why others would be interested in such minutia. Sorry, I just don’t get it. To all those twitters and twitterees I say, “Get a life!”

The Facebook phenomenon is yet another example of social networking. I have been “friended” by several people I haven’t laid eyes on in decades and hope I never will. How many “friends” does one person need, anyway? Do regular Facebook users vie to see who has the greatest number of “friends?” If this isn’t middle school behavior, then I don’t know what is. Besides, I believe that the overuse of the word “friend” has devalued the true meaning of friendship. I can’t help wondering if there is a Facebook-based reality show coming soon to the small screen? Stay tuned, it would seem that anything is possible.

Knowing that Americans, myself included, have no intention of giving up our cell phones, could we not legislate to use them as originally intended: to make or receive emergency phone calls? Texting, twittering or checking a Facebook page while driving is dangerous and in social settings it is just simply rude. Congratulations to Michigan, in July 2010, for passing a law (House Bills 4394/4370 and Senate Bill 468) that prohibits a person from driving while using an electronic wireless device to write, send or read a text-based communication. Under Michigan law, texting while driving is classified as a primary offense, which means you can be pulled over and ticketed based on a text messaging offense alone. Violators will face a fine of \$100 for a first offense and \$200 for subsequent offenses. Governor Jennifer Granholm signed this legislation on “The Oprah Winfrey Show” and Michigan was the 23rd state in the nation to put a ban on texting while driving. Currently Michigan does not have a law specifically prohibiting cell phone use in a vehicle. However, a driver who becomes distracted by using a cell phone, and commits a traffic violation could be charged with careless driving, or with the specific violation, such as improper lane use, if they are drifting in and out of their lane.

Believe it or not, my mother and TV mega-star Oprah Winfrey have a lot in common: the former often made us pledge to behave ourselves in all social situations, the latter ends her show each day by asking the audience to take her No Phone Zone Pledge not to make calls or engage in social networking shenanigans while driving. I applaud them both.



“I EVEN HEARD A CELL PHONE PLAY THE OPENING BARS OF A COLLEGE FIGHT SONG AT A RECENT FUNERAL. “



## Serving Others With Dignity Henry Johnson

By Lee Thorsen

*Serving Others With Dignity is a monthly column that puts a needed spotlight on the efforts of so many people who volunteer their time to help others. We hope that this column serves as an inspiration and motivation to help others to experience the joy of volunteering. If you know of a person that deserves to be recognized for their contributions, please let us know.*

*There are some people that you like the very moment that you meet them. You can't quite place your finger on the reason why you like them. Maybe it's their genuine nature or their ability to set you at ease with their quick smile and infectious laugh. Whatever it is, Henry Johnson is one of those people.*

Mr. Johnson is the Chairperson of the Presbyterian Villages of Michigan Board of Directors and the recipient of Michigan's 2010 Senior Citizens of the Year Award for Exemplary Leadership and Advocacy. The award is sponsored by the Michigan Commission and Office of Services to the Aging (OSA) and Consumers Energy to recognize the unpaid contributions made by persons, age 60 and older. *The Best of Aging* had an opportunity to spend some time with Mr. Johnson to learn about the man behind the award.

**Q** A study was conducted by UCLA researchers between 1988 and 1991 of over 1000 healthy adults between the age of 70-79 to determine if productive activities - specifically volunteering - prevent the onset of frailty. The study suggests that participating in volunteer activities may prevent frailty in older adults. What are your thoughts about this study and has volunteering had an affect on your life physically and mentally?

**A** I absolutely agree with the study. I am 73 and feel great. In fact, one of our board members for Presbyterian Villages of Michigan is in her late 80's and she is living evidence that if you stay active physically and mentally, then you will have better health and escape the onset of frailty. She says, "I have to stay active. I need to have one or two meetings to go to everyday to keep my mind and body active." One of the positive results by having healthy elders is that they are a blessing to society because they have wisdom and skills beyond

measure. Growing up, I shared a room with my grandfather and he would share all kinds of gems of wisdom from his life experiences with me. We would talk late into the night and I'd wake up the next morning sleepy, trying to go to school the next morning. It was all worth it.

**Q** How long have you been volunteering? What inspired you to volunteer?

**A** I just see volunteering as part of my D.N.A. and an integral part of my life. I grew up in a small town in northern Georgia where everyone knew each other and helped each other out. If someone needed clothes, you gave them clothes. If you needed a meal, someone was there to feed you. You got used to sharing and you not only shared your time and your talent, you shared your money. It became a part of your value system and volunteering has been ingrained in me so that it doesn't feel like a chore. I actually get more out of giving than receiving. At this stage in my life, I'm a full-time volunteer both with Presbyterian Villages of Michigan and within my personal life.

**Q** There is an old saying that the former poor should help the poor, the recovering addict should help the addicted, etc., because the former has walked in the shoes of the latter. Do you believe this holds true with seniors - should seniors help other seniors?

**A** Yes, I believe that there is no one better that understands the needs of the senior than other seniors. In fact, there is an explosion in the amount of seniors in our area and across the country and they are demanding better services and products in all parts of their lives. From churches to healthcare to restaurants and all things in-between, seniors are living longer and they have to help each other to educate businesses and government to help address their needs. Oftentimes, it's not about curing ailments or issues - because you can't cure old age - it's about finding the best solution to live with those ailments and issues. One of the prime motivators for helping other seniors stems from my wife. She directs the Area Office on Aging of Northwest Ohio and her professional career has always been in the field of aging. I

remember 30 years ago when she and I were engaged. Part of that process, prior to getting married, was getting vetted by her friends. They gave us a reception and I arrived and was wondering, "What was going on with all of these old people?" Well it turns out that my wife's best friends were older people because of her career and her affinity to that age group. From that point on I always have said, "When seniors vet you, you know you've been vetted because they've all been there, done that, and they have the t-shirts to prove it!"

**Q** There is no money in it, time away from your family, sometimes ungrateful individuals, expenses such as gas and car maintenance, and hundreds of other excuses as to why you should not volunteer. Why do you volunteer and why should others follow your lead?

**A** I can see the immediate and positive effects of what volunteering can achieve. Alexis De Tocqueville, a Frenchman who traveled to the United States and wrote the book "Democracy in America" in the 1830's, was fascinated with the phenomenon of volunteerism in America that was found nowhere else in the world. He thought it very strange at the time and still today many countries find it very strange. We live in a great country where individuals can gather together and make a difference in each



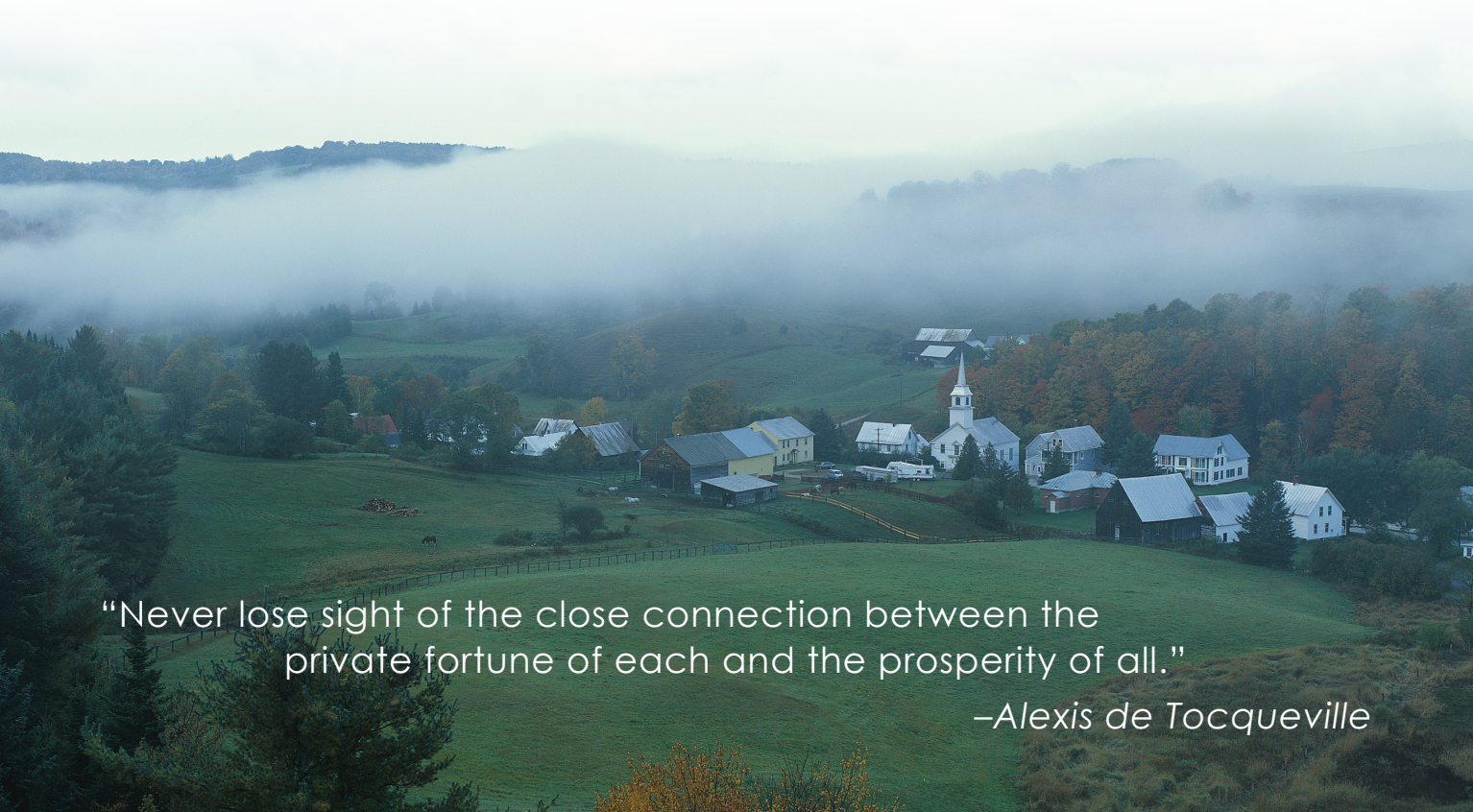


of, commitment to, and support of United Way's work: advancing the common good by creating opportunities for a better life for all. I believe that people who may be interested in volunteering can be inspired and motivated by the power that they have to make a real difference in their lives and the lives of others without having to rely on the government.

**Q** For those who are looking to volunteer their time and energy, where would you suggest they start and what obstacles would you advise them to avoid?

**A** I am a firm believer that you don't get into volunteering to the extent that you negate your responsibilities to your family. Having said that, most of us would be amazed at how much dead time we have in our lives. I would suggest that they start slow and start with activities that they are familiar with and enjoy such as cooking, caring for pets, cleaning, or pounding nails. There are tons of organizations like churches and other non-profit groups that need help and generally don't force you to become a member in order to contribute. They just need to make the call to get started, even if they don't know how much time they can contribute, to request information in order to make an informed decision.

other's lives and you don't have to be rich or politically connected to do this. Tocqueville's work inspired the United Way, an organization in which I've been involved in for decades, to create the United Way Tocqueville Society in 1984 to deepen individual understanding



"Never lose sight of the close connection between the private fortune of each and the prosperity of all."

–Alexis de Tocqueville

# AT PRESBYTERIAN VILLAGES OF MICHIGAN

## IT'S ALL ABOUT Choices!



With more than 65 years of experience, Presbyterian Villages of Michigan serves seniors of all faiths.

**We provide many residential options:**

- Independent Living  
(subsidized apartments also available)
- Assisted Living
- Alzheimer's/Memory Care
- Skilled Nursing Care
- Rehabilitation Services

*We serve over 3000 seniors in more than 24 communities throughout Michigan.*



**Presbyterian Villages**  
OF MICHIGAN  
SENIOR LIVING COMMUNITIES

### Senior Living Communities

<b>ALPENA</b> Alpena Village 989.356.3396	The Village of St. Martha's 248.281.2026	<b>KALAMAZOO</b> The Village of Sage Grove Opening 2011
<b>BATTLE CREEK</b> The Village of Mill Creek 269.962.0605	The Village of Woodbridge Manor 313.494.9000	<b>PONTIAC</b> The Village of Oakland Woods 248.334.4379
<b>BAY CITY</b> The Village of Hampton Meadows 989.892.1912	<b>FT. GRATIOT TWP.</b> The Village of Lake Huron Woods 810.385.9516	<b>REDFORD</b> The Village of Redford 313.531.6874
<b>CHESTERFIELD</b> The Village of East Harbor 586.725.6030	<b>GIBRALTAR</b> The Village of Gibraltar Manor 734.676.4802	<b>ROSEBUSH</b> The Village of Rosebush Manor 989.433.0150
<b>CLINTON TWP.</b> The Village of Peace Manor 586.790.4500	<b>HARBOR SPRINGS</b> The Village of Hillside 231.526.7108	<b>WARREN</b> The Village of Warren Glenn 586.751.5090
<b>DETROIT</b> The Village of Bethany Manor 313.894.0430	Perry Farm Village 231.526.1500	<b>WESTLAND</b> The Village of Our Saviour's Manor 734.595.4663
The Village of Brush Park Manor Paradise Valley 313.832.9922	<b>HOLLY</b> The Village of Holly Woodlands 248.634.0592	The Village of Westland 734.728.5222
The Village of Harmony Manor 313.934.4000	<b>JACKSON</b> The Village of Spring Meadows 517.788.6679	<b>TTY#</b> 800.649.3777
The Village of Oakman Manor 313.957.0210	The Village of Spring Meadows II 517.788.7502	



CALL A VILLAGE NEAR YOU TO SCHEDULE A TOUR! • [www.pvm.org](http://www.pvm.org)

Do you have an attic full of old photos?



Maybe it's time to get some of them out  
and share them with others in the family.

Remember that the stories that go with the pictures  
are more important than the pictures which are only  
the illustrations of the real thing.

Talk to Ivory Photo in Ann Arbor about what might  
be done with old pictures, especially if they are  
cracked, faded, chewed by mice etc...

These things are to remember, and to enjoy.

**IVORY PHOTO**

606 S. Main, Ann Arbor, MI 48104  
[www.ivoryphoto.com](http://www.ivoryphoto.com) | 734-668-8413

Hrs: 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. M-F Saturdays: Call First

**ivoryphoto**