

Family Living Focus
by
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Hugs for Grandparents
September 7 is the 25th anniversary of National Grandparents Day.

Today there are more than 40 million grandparents in the United States. The image of grandparents has changed over the years.

We no longer have the perception of frail, aged grandparents sitting in rocking chairs. Those persons are very likely to be our great-grandparents. Most grandparents are living longer. They enjoy good health and are active well into their retirement years.

Grandparents Day started in the state of West Virginia. It was founded by a housewife by the name of Marian McQuade. Marian's original cause was to spark visitation with lonely elderly people in nursing homes. She recognized the value of passing down the heritage and wisdom of grandparents to their grandchildren.

In 1978, President Jimmy Carter proclaimed National Grandparent's Day to be celebrated annually in September on the first

Sunday after Labor Day. The purpose of the day is to honor grandparents, for grandparents to show love for their grandchildren, and for grandchildren to become aware of the strength, wisdom and guidance older people can offer. I decided to interview some young persons to find out how they celebrate National Grandparents Day, to ask them to describe their relationships with their grandparents, and to learn what that relationship means to them.

The first two persons I interviewed were women in their mid-twenties. Both were working moms with children. The grandparents are the caregivers for the children while the mothers work. Both women say they can't put into words the appreciation they feel for what their parents are doing for them. The parents feel secure and comfortable having the grandparents caring for the grandchildren.

One woman said, "I just can't imagine what our lives would be without them. They do so much to help us."

The second woman talked lengthily about the strong, loving relationship that exists between the grandparents and her child. Neither of the women had been previously aware of National Grandparents Day, which is one of our less commercialized national holidays. However, both of them wrote down the date and say they are going to start celebrating it this year.

Another person I interviewed was a young man in his thirties. He described the close bond between his grandparents and him and his siblings. When the grandchildren were growing up, the grandparents had lived in a neighboring community. There were frequent family dinners, games, and walks on Sundays. The grandparents took the grandchildren on day trips and participated in some family vacations. The young man fondly described the guidance he received from his grandfather with his blue ribbon 4-H projects. He identified his grandparents as the persons the grandchildren could talk with when they had a problem.

Then he shared this story. "My siblings and I recently received cards in the mail from my grandmother. We all have birthdays in the same month, and had already received our birthday cards just a couple months ago. When we opened our cards, there was a check for \$100 and a note that read, "Old people don't need money, young people do."

Our grandmother still is interested in what is happening in our lives. My grandfather was, too, until he died last year. As for me, my grandmother knows I'm starting back to school

this month and she is excited for me."

These testimonies demonstrate the powerful bonds that can develop between grandchildren and grandparents. All that is needed is for each generation to spend time nurturing that relationship.

At the Website for National Grandparents Day, www.grandparents-day.com, you can find information about contests and links to other sites for activity suggestions.

For more information, visit the Penn State Cooperative Extension Intergenerational Website www.intergenerational.cas.psu.edu. Some examples of intergenerational games and activities that can be found at this site include the Stump Your Relative Game, The M&M Game, and The Age Line.

Finally, while doing the research for this article I learned that Marion McQuade, the founder of National Grandparents Day, is currently in hospice care at 128 Oak Hill Avenue, Oak Hill, WV 25901. How about starting your Grandparents Day celebration by sending a card or letter to Marian expressing your appreciation for the work she did toward recognizing the value of grandparent/grandchild relationships?

Senior Expo Is Sept. 12

ELIZABETHTOWN (Lancaster Co.) — Rep. Dave Hickernell (R-98) will host his first Senior Expo on Friday, Sept. 12 from 8 a.m. to noon in the Freemason Cultural Center at Masonic Homes in Elizabethtown.

The Expo is designed to be a one-stop information center for senior citizens and their families and caregivers. Exhibitors will be on hand to provide advice and information on a variety of topics that are important to older Pennsylvanians. Admission is free and breakfast will be served.

Government agencies that will be represented at the Expo include the Pennsylvania Department of Aging, the Lancaster County Office of Aging, the Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection, the Pennsylvania Healthcare Containment Council, PENNDOT, and the state Treasury Department.

Also on hand will be representatives from Community Hospital of Lancaster, Hospice of Lancaster County, the American Cancer Society, ManorCare Health Services, Nurses Direct, and other health care and assisted living organizations.

For more information call either of Hickernell's district offices, located in Elizabethtown (717-367-5525) and in Columbia (717-684-5525).

Quick Snack Facts

The case is closed and the question — cheese or chips? — has been answered: America says Cheddar is better when it comes to snacking. A new consumer survey conducted by Phil Lempert, Today Show food trends editor and host of SupermarketGuru.com, reveals the latest stats on America's favorite snacks.

America's Favorite Snack: Cheese

- Forty-five percent of Americans say cheese tops their list of favorite snacks, beating out chips (12 percent), cookies (11 percent) and even chocolate (3 percent).
 - Approximately three out of four people (74 percent) say they always or often snack on items that contain cheese.
 - Snackers selected "taste" as their number one reason for snacking on cheese, followed by "satisfies my hunger" and "ease of preparation/convenience."
 - Seven out of 10 people prefer savory snacks to sweet ones.
- Sliced, Cubed or Straight Up: How We Eat It**
- Nearly half of Americans (47 percent) snack on cheese cut straight from the block.

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DINNER
Mon. (4 p.m.-8 p.m.) T-Bone Steak in Addition to Our Reg. Steaks Served.
TUES. Our Reg. Seafood Nite WED. Our Reg. Prime Rib Nite
THURS.-FRI.-SAT. (4 P.M.-8 P.M.) Beef Steaks Served at the Grill

SERVED LUNCH/DINNER, Mon.-Sat. (11 A.M.-8 P.M.)
Broasted Chicken Wings w/Ranch or BBQ Dip, Lightly Seasoned Fries, Fresh Red Skinned Mashed Potatoes, Our Very Own Homemade Chow Chow & Cucumber Salad. Carrot Cake w/Cream Cheese Frosting and Our Very Own Fresh Made Peach Danish
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- Crackers lead the list of favorite cheese pairings (65 percent), followed by fruit (14 percent) and bread (10 percent).
- When it comes to cheese and cracker combos, Cheddar and wheat win (46 percent), with Swiss and rye and Monterey Jack and onion tied for second with 10 percent each.

A Snacking Society

- Nearly half of Americans (49 percent) describe their typical eating pattern as a combination of mini meals and snacks or grazing throughout the day.
- Thirty-two percent of people snack most often at work.
- Nearly one-third of Americans say they're snacking more now than they did one year ago.