



USAP News

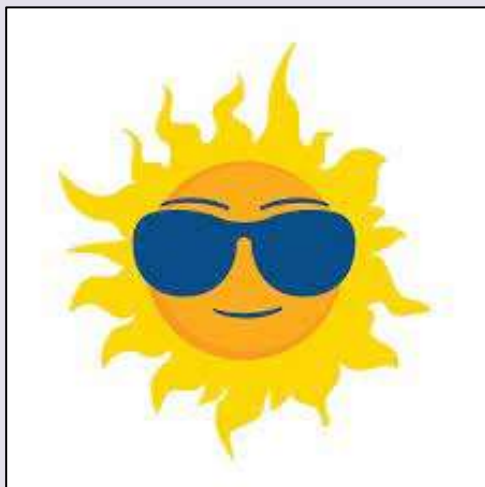
United Seniors Association of Pittsburgh

www.usaofpittsburgh.org

Volume 6 Issue 3

SUMMER ISSUE

July 2024



We got what we all have wished for in Winter. Yes, Summer is here! Just as summer is abuzz with travel plans, parties, and fun, USAP has been busy with many activities.

Many just returned from the weekend retreat from Hocking Hills State Park in Ohio. And they have so much to show and tell in the pages to follow.

The Kavya Goshti and Shayari, the Ask the Doctor Q&A session with a panel of Medical Experts, Senior Eyes and their diseases, the Chrysanthemum project by the Garden Club, discussion on how to Improve Your Happiness and Health, dance lessons for seniors, card party, are just a few more activities to name in recent

months. Delicious lunches that follow all programs provide much needed social support.

With all this, USAP has earned the greatest support from its members. In a short seven years of its existence, the seniors' organization has grown with over 400 members. Life members exceed the four-year members. Membership dues are minimal and the only source of income for USAP, while the food expense remains the highest expense item. We occasionally receive donations from some speakers who help underwrite the food expense.

USAP is registered as a 501 c (3) tax-exempt charitable organization in the State of Pennsylvania and is open to receiving financial support from generous donors.

The primary mission of the organization is to provide humanitarian support in addition to the many educational and social activities. The Medical Advisory Council which is a list of physician specialists is updated in this issue and may be worth saving as it is a valuable resource when it is needed.

The list of volunteers who are willing to help provide car-pooling to local events, and which can be extended for other help too, is being updated for future issues.

Many of the Humanitarian Committee services are limited by financial resources, but with the continued support from the members, much more can be achieved.

USAP has helped organize the following travel plans for world travelers for the rest of the year:

- Tour of the Canadian Rockies & British Columbia in July
- Tour of Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam in November-December.

READERS WRITE

I was really glad to see the list of volunteers with their contact information published in the January 2024 issue of the USAP Newsletter. I am 91 and both I and my wife have health issues that limit us in physical activities in many ways. There are others like us who have limitations in their own way and would be happy to learn about the volunteer help that USAP is arranging. Congratulations to those who undertook this very difficult task and to all the volunteers. We would appreciate if you could go one step further and create a list of volunteers who could help in weekly grocery shopping and going to pharmacies for Rx drugs and OTC products. We also need help in going to nearby restaurants to get weekly prepared lunches and or dinners. There are over 30 Indian restaurants in the greater Pittsburgh.

This is not an easy task, and we are willing to pay a fee if USAP could arrange such help. Again, my regards to all those who spent time preparing the list and to all the volunteers.

Balwant Dixit, Ph.D

Another wonderful newsletter, another job well done! Thank you, team, for all your hard work. It shows in this very informative newsletter which was a joy to read.

Elisha Grover

Thank you for the fun-filled and informative newsletter. Great accomplishment by the team. In the light of a recent senior's incident, I suggest we have a seminar discussion about protecting seniors from scammers. In fact, it will be educational for all of us.

Amit Ghosh

After our fantastic retreat trip I am again out of town and away busy with family trip! But I wanted to thank hard working organizers for making this trip possible. Also must thank all 48 members who joined this trip! All of them enjoyed with smiling faces as if we know each other forever and coming from one family. If we took one way wrong turn! All will turn around and enjoyed more!

At the end of the trip I felt like hugging every one and let them know we will be soon together again soon.

Yes! Food is very important! Organized team is ready to feed us with great food and constant supply of chilled water, soda and beer!

At the end I must say I love you all ! Personnel thanks to Chetanbhai, Viharikaben and Kiranbhai! Can't wait for next year!

Vasanti Majmudar

My mums are planted partly in pots and partly in ground, and they are coming along well. But some of those in the ground have been partly eaten away by the deer. Not sure what to do without putting a cage around them. Did anyone have personal experience to ward off the deer either with some home-made remedy or a commercial product? Need help.

Subash Ahuja

If you have something of interest that is worth sharing, a comment or criticism on any topic published in the USAP News or any activity that USAP has undertaken, or you would like USAP to undertake, please write to us and we would like to publish them in the Readers Write columns.

Editorial Committee

Please keep writing. Your feedback is important to us.

USAP TOTAL MEMBERSHIP
(AS OF JUNE 30, 2024)

TOTAL Members : 401

Charter Members : 212

4 Year Members : 188

Annual Members : 1

**WELCOME TO NEW
CHARTER (LIFE) MEMBERS**

Pranay & Jyoti Amin
Veena Bhide
Vasanth Guntur
Surendra Pancholi
Jethalal & Alka Rambhia
Ashok & Alka Shah
Prabhanand & Ramani Yedla

**WELCOMETO NEW/RENEWAL
4-YEARS MEMBERS**

Surendra & Prabha Bansal
Arun & Lata Dave
Jayesh & Jagruti Desai
Sunil Desai
Satish & Madhu Duggal
Arathi Gowda
Mohinder & Anita Gupta
Yogesh & Alka Jhaveri
Anil Manocha
Lalji & Chandrawati Mishra
Mehul Mody
Ratnakar Mujumdar
Hasmukh & Saroj Patel
Sampath & Santhi Ramanavarapu
Milind & Madhura Ranade
Datar Singh
Shailesh & Kalpana Vora
Shiban & Nanna Warikoo

HAPPY BIRTHDAYS TO SPECIAL USAP MEMBERS

July: Vasu Malepati, Arun Mittal, Mina Patel, Nitin Merchant,
Aruna Parikh, Niru Kamdar, Lata Dave, Vinod Goyal,
Chhaya Bole, Kanwal Mahajan, Arundhati Mandava,
Bakulesh Parikh, Mukesh Rustagi, Niranjana Shah

August: Ravi Kolli, Bina Monpara, Yogini Mehta, Farhad Cama,
Vasanti Majmudar, Usha Joshi, Girish Thakar, Bina Goel,
Sandhya Jain, Bhalchandra & Damayanti Mehta, Harshad
Mehta, Pramila Ragoowansi, Shailesh Bhende, Shailesh
Surti, Shobha Jatkar, Jayanthi Nama, Shahnaaz Cama,
Manju Chablani, Kalpana Desai, Smita Gosai, Jagannath Karambelkar, Girish
Patel, Harsha Pujara

September: Prakash Patel, Amita Mehta, Vinod Patel, Neelam Brahmbhatt, Devayani
Pandit, Bharati Parikh, Ved Kaushik, Raman Patel, Raj Lall, Chetan Patel,
Mehendra Shah, Jayna Desai, Prabha Bansal, Jayant Mirani, Kishor Patel,
Shobha Mittal, Jashwant Modi, Gautam Patel, Sudhir Patel, Shashi Gupta,
Lalita Jaspal, Kavita Thakkar, Surinder Ajmani, Manohar Badlani, Pramila Batra
Madan Batra, Seema Batra, Subhas Bole, Kamlesh Gosai, Shanti Swarup



NATURE LOVER's RETREAT AT HOCKING HILLS STATE PARK, OHIO

By Kiran Bakshi

Our USAP Annual Weekend Retreat was organized from June 28-June 30, Friday through Sunday at a very beautiful location Hocking Hills State Park in Ohio, located about 3 hours' drive from Pittsburgh.

All the 48 USAP participants had a very memorable weekend, full of excitement, food, fun and frolic and got energized with making new friends, socializing with old friends and



cherishing the serene Natural Beauty that this magnificent and very popular Ohio State Park has to offer.



We all drove to Athens, Ohio where USAP had arranged for a hotel accommodation along with meeting room amenities which we used on Friday and Saturday evenings for delicious dinners and group entertainment activities. Also, both Saturday and Sunday mornings we had Yoga sessions before breakfast.

The highlight was the visit on Saturday to the Hocking Hills State Park which offered several trails for easy to moderate hiking, enjoying waterfall, rock formations, caves and gorgeous gorges. In all, many of us took three trails: Old Man's Cave, Ash Cave and the Rock House. Of course, to provide the energy and refreshments for





these trails, USAP had arranged a sumptuous lunch served in a private shelter reserved for us.



Although we share here some of the photo captures and memories from our retreat, it is impossible to capture the fun, socializing and great refreshing memories that each participant took back from this retreat.



USAP TOUR OF THE CANADIAN ROCKIES & BRITISH COLUMBIA

July 18 – 27, 2024

USAP continues to organize exquisite international tours every year for the benefit and enjoyment of our members. We are indeed very excited about a recently announced tour of the Magnificent Canadian Rockies and British Columbia.

The all-inclusive 9 nights/10 day tour starts from Calgary and includes Banff National Park, Lake Louise, Columbia Icefield, Jasper National Park, Mt. Robson, Kamloops, Mt. Whistler, Vancouver and Victoria.



One group is scheduled, starting July 18-27, 2024. This is a Nature's Highlight Tour that includes snowcapped Glacier Mountains Peaks, deep blue lakes (including boat cruise) and the magnificent sites of Vancouver and Victoria's Butchart Gardens. Total of 30 USAP Members are indeed ready for a treat !!



USAP TOUR OF THE THAILAND, COMBODIA & VIETNAM

November - December, 2024

USAP is organizing another exciting tour to Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam **for 16nights/17 days during November – December 2024** in two groups. The tour will start from Bangkok and end at Hanoi. The best part of joining this tour is that you will get an opportunity to visit our home country India. You can directly fly from Hanoi to India, celebrate Christmas, New Year, Kite flying in India before coming back to USA.

Group 1: Starting from Bangkok on 21st November – 7th December

Group 2: Starting from Bangkok on 25th November – 11th December

Tour land cost: \$4,200 per person

Destination	Duration of Stay	Group – 1	Group – 2	Hotels
Bangkok	3 nights	21-24 November	25-28 November	Marriot Marquis (Deluxe)
Phnom Penh	1 night	24-25 November	28-29 November	The Palace Gate (Deluxe)
Siem Reap	2 nights	25-27 November	29 Nov– 01 December	Sokha Angkor (Deluxe City)
Ho Chi Minh	2 nights	27-29 November	01-03 December	New World (Deluxe)
Hoi An	2 nights	29 Nov– 01 December	03-05 December	Palm Garden Resort (Sup Garden)
Hue	2 nights	01-03 December	05-07 December	Silk Path Hue (standard)
Ha Noi	2 nights	03-05 December	07-09 December	Pan Pacific (Deluxe)
Ha Long Bay	1 night	05-06 December	09-10 December	Indochine Lan Ha Cruise
Ha Noi	1 night	06-07 December	10-11 December	Pan Pacific (Deluxe)

We will be **staying in all five stars hotels.**

The group2 is already sold out. We have few seats available in group1 starting on November 21st. If you are interested to join group1, please call Chetan Patel (412-908-1711) or Kiran Bakshi (412-841-2718) as early as possible.

Places to be visited:

THAILAND

- Bangkok

CAMBODIA

- Phnom Penh, Siem Reap,

VIETNAM

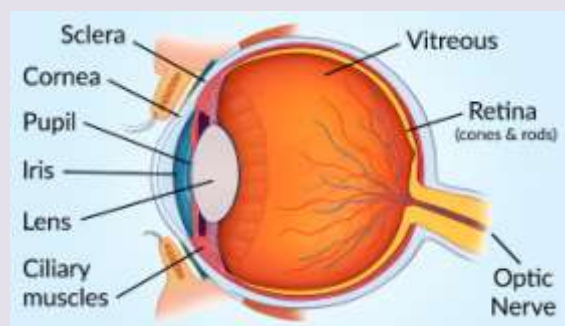
- Saigon (Ho Chi Minh), My Tho, Hoi An, Danang, Hue, Hanoi, Ha Long Bay

COMMON EYE PROBLEMS IN SENIOR YEARS

By Juginder Luthra, MD, Ophthalmologist

Before we can learn about what can go wrong with the eyes, let's first learn how the system works. Our visual system is like a movie camera connected to a live TV. Each eye is a digital camera which captures images of the outer world and transmits them to the back part of our brain, the occipital cortex where the images are reconstructed. And bingo, we see the world.

NORMAL ANATOMY OF AN EYE



Referring the picture on the left, the cornea allows the light, the pupil regulates the amount of light entering, the lens and the iris focus the light, the retina, like the film in a camera, takes the pictures and the optic nerve, like a cable, takes images to the back of the brain.

COMMON EYE DISEASES IN SENIORS

Cataract (clouding of our clear lens) is the commonest cause of decreased vision. Symptoms include blurred vision, difficulty in reading, driving, etc. When symptoms affect our lifestyle, it is best to remove the cloudy lens, and replace it with an implant. In over 99% of patients, it improves the eyesight.

Glaucoma affects the optic nerve. In the early stages, it causes no symptoms. Early diagnosis is the key to prevent vision loss. A regular annual checkup by an eye doctor is recommended. Treatment can include the use of eye drops, laser surgery to lower the pressure inside the eyeball.

Macular Degeneration damages the central part of retina. The **dry type** is treated by a diet rich in greens and colored fruits plus vitamins. The **wet type** is treated by giving injections, a relatively safe procedure, into the eyeball.

Diabetic retinopathy is caused by long standing and commonly poorly controlled diabetes. Annual eye exam is recommended to pick up early changes. Treatment with lasers and injections helps preserve vision.

Dry eyes is caused by decrease in tear production or increase in their evaporation.

Vitreous detachment means shrinkage of the filler gel in the back part of eye. Symptoms include flashes and floaters. Urgent eye exam is needed to detect a retinal hole or tear.

Other diseases like **carotid artery disease, thyroid disorders, brain tumors, high blood pressure** can affect eyes or get detected by eye examination.

EYE SYMPTOMS WHICH MAY REQUIRE URGENT CHECK UP: :

- Transient loss of vision for 2–5 minutes may indicate a stroke.
- Sudden onset of seeing flashes of light and multiple floaters indicates retinal detachment.
- Sudden change in vision, painless or associated with pain may come from multiple reasons and must be addressed right away.
- Sudden onset of double vision may be caused by an aneurysm inside the skull.

For more information and guidance, Dr. Luthra can be contacted at 304-794-5336.

COLORECTAL CANCER

Screening is the Best Prevention

By Ved Kausik, MD, Colorectal Surgeon; Associate Professor, UPMC

Colorectal Cancer is common among senior years and many of us know of someone in the family or among friends who have experienced this devastating malignancy. This article throws light on the subject and what we can do to prevent it.

COMMON SYMPTOMS

Changes in bowel habits that may include persistent diarrhea or constipation, as well as a feeling of incomplete bowel movements, and blood in the stool (rectal bleeding) are among the early symptoms not to ignore. Other symptoms may include abdominal pain, cramping, or discomfort, as well as unexplained weight loss and fatigue. While not all symptoms are caused by cancer, if these symptoms persist or worsen over time, it is important to consult a healthcare professional for proper evaluation and diagnosis.

Colorectal cancer often begin with small growths called polyps in the lining of the bowel. These polyps can develop into cancer over time. While not all polyps are cancerous, it is important to identify and remove them early to prevent the development of cancer.

Early detection of colon and rectal cancer greatly increases the chances of successful treatment and improved outcomes. Screening tests are available to detect cancer or pre-cancerous polyps early in individuals who do not exhibit any symptoms.

COMMON SCREENING METHODS

1. **Colonoscopy:** This procedure involves the insertion of a flexible tube with a camera into the rectum and colon to examine the entire length of the colon. It allows for the detection and removal of polyps or the collection of tissue samples for further examination.
2. **Fecal occult blood test (FOBT):** This test detects the presence of blood in the stool, which can be an indication of colon or rectal cancer. It is a non-invasive test that can be done at home using a kit provided by a healthcare professional.

- 3 **Virtual colonoscopy:** This imaging test uses CT scans to create detailed images of the colon and rectum. It is a non-invasive alternative to traditional colonoscopy but may still require the preparation of the colon.

The recommended age to begin regular screening for colon and rectal cancer is typically around 50 years old. However, individuals with a family history of colon or rectal cancer or certain genetic conditions may need to start screening earlier.



*For additional information and guidance, **Dr. Kaushik can be reached at 724-816-9818***

USAP MEDICAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Please save the following reference list of physician specialists who have offered to provide advice and guidance to USAP members. Please know that such help is advisory only and should not be construed as treatment. The physician shall not be held liable in any manner whatsoever for offering such guidance.

ALLERGIST

ADI TAMBOLI, MD.
412-997-7007

CARDIOLOGISTS:

BRAHMA SHARMA, MD
412-708-9128
CHETAN LADANI, MD
412-519-9024

COLORECTAL SURGEON:

VED KAUSHIK, MD
724-816-9818

ENT SURGEON:

VASU MALEPATI, MD
724-344-3301

INFECTIOUS DISEASES:

USHA KARUMUDI, MD

412-874-2423

NEUROLOGIST:

KIRAN PATIL, MD
914-316-0643

OB GYN:

RAJNIKANT POPAT, MD
724-366-0867

OPHTHALMOLOGIST:

JUGINDER LUTHRA, MD
304-794-6336
MANOJ PATEL, MD
412-716-4565

PSYCHIATRIST:

RAVI KOLLI, MD
412-498-5098

United Seniors Association of Pittsburgh

is a tax-exempt charitable organization. Your support goes a long way in supporting free lunches and expanding our services to the senior citizens.

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USAP News is published quarterly by United Seniors Association of Pittsburgh to keep its members and subscribers informed and connected. Your comments and suggestions are welcome to improve the dialogue.

Editors:

Subash Ahuja, Chetan Patel

MAHILA KAVYA MANCH OF PITTSBURGH AND USAP PRESENTS

EVENING OF POETRY - KAVYA GOSHTI & SHAYARI

SUNDAY, AUGUST 4, 2024 AT 4:30 pm

Indian Community Center, 205 Mary St, Carnegie, PA

Admission: Free RSVP: By Friday, Aug 2, 2024

**Program starts with Masala Tea & Light Snacks
and completes with delicious dinner**



We Offer

- Medicare Advantage Plans
- Medicare Supplement Plans
- Part D Rx Plans
- Review Donut Hole/Coverage Gap
- Individual (ACA-Affordable Care Act) Plans
- Travel medical insurance for international trips

We can help with

- Making sure your doctors are covered
- Verifying your prescriptions are covered
- Reviewing your group/employer coverage vs. getting your own plan
- Helping with PA Health Exchange (Pennie)
- Seeing if you qualify for premium credits (lower premiums)
- Explaining access to doctors (Network Options)

Scott partners with Nayan Shah to help USAP members



Protect Your Family - Make A Plan Today



HEALTH INSURANCE ADVISORS

Scott R. Lindstrom helps people obtain the lowest insurance. He is an independent broker working with many different insurance companies.

He offers a variety of quality life options for you to choose from!

Contact Us For Your Life Insurance Needs:

Scott R. Lindstrom, CLU, ChFC
Halley-Dodson Insurance Advisors
123 Shafer Road Moon Township, PA 15108
Phone: 412-390-7576
Fax: 412-269-9444
E-mail: slindstrom@halley-dodson.com

HELPS FIND THE LOWEST COST INSURANCE

USAP Grand Annual Gala Diwali Dinner Live Musical Concert

ON
Saturday, October 26th at
Indian Community Center (ICC)

MARK YOUR DATE
More information to follow

5:00 – 6:45 pm : Social hour & Mouth watering Appetizers

6:45 pm - Midnight : Musical Concert & delicious Dinner

DRIP IRRIGATION SYSTEM FOR HOUSE PLANTS

By Rajnikant Popat, Chairman, Garden Club



Members of the Mums group would be enjoying their mums grow. Important ingredients in making the plants grow successfully are regular watering, sunlight and proper nutrition. You may consider automated Drip Irrigation System triggered by a timer instead of the traditional watering system with a hose to make your life easier. This is relatively easy to install as I have come to realize from personal experience.

Such watering contraption has several advantages:

- Enables early watering of plants, e.g. 5 am when temperatures are lower, and water evaporation is minimum.
- Delivers water directly to plant's roots.
- Reduces water and fertilizer wastage by up to 80%.

You can search “Drip irrigation System” on YouTube and be able to review several suppliers of such drip irrigation systems. They come in complete packages with all needed components and an instruction sheet describing how to put all components together. Basically, the system components include

- Timer which can be programmed to trigger watering at a particular time and desired duration time.
- Check-valve which prevents backflow water or fertilizer into your house water supply.
- Side spout that enables one to draw fertilizer into the water.
- Pressure regulator which lowers water pressure from city water pressure of 60 psi to 30 psi in the line going towards the garden plants.
- 1/2” Main line PVC tubing that transfers water to the garden.
- Connectors enabling one to insert 1/4” tube into 1/2” Main line and delivering water to the plant root zone.
- Sprayers and emitters for attachment to root end of 1/4” tubing.
- End caps to shut outflow of water from the end of 1/2” supply PVC tubing.

Several manufacturers supply them thru Amazon.com. I installed my system two years ago. It worked well last year, and I am ready to replace some parts this year.

I will be happy to demonstrate my system to anyone interested. I can arrange the day and time to show the system when it is working.