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# Lifestyles!



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# Laconia Savings donates 10K to food bank

Laconia Savings Bank donated \$10,000 to the New Hampshire Food Bank as part of their Feeding NH Food Drive. "We are extremely grateful to Laconia Savings Bank for their generous donation that will give us a boost during our busy holiday season" stated Melanie Gosselin, Executive Director at the New Hampshire Food Bank. "The continued support that we receive proves that Laconia Savings Bank is dedicated to helping the communities in which they serve and beyond."

Laconia Savings Bank's 19 Community Offices accepted nearly 2,000 non-perishable food items and over \$1,200 in monetary donations. These donations were delivered to seventeen local food pantries throughout New Hampshire the week prior to Thanksgiving.

The New Hampshire Food Bank, a program of New Hampshire Catholic Charities, has been working to relieve hunger in the Granite State since 1984. Their mission is to feed hungry



**(L-R): Sara Anderson, Director of Development for the NH Food Bank; Mark Primeau, President & CEO for Laconia Savings Bank; Melanie Gosselin, Executive Director for the New Hampshire Food Bank.**

people by soliciting and effectively distributing grocery products, perishable foods, and services through a state-wide network of approved agencies; by advocating for systemic change; and by educating the public about the nature of, and solutions to, problems of hunger

in New Hampshire. Every year, the Food Bank distributes nearly 6 million pounds of donated, surplus food to 405 food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters, day care centers and senior citizen homes.

These registered agencies in turn provide the food to an estimated 127,200 different men, women and children throughout New Hampshire each year.

Laconia Savings Bank was founded in 1831 and provides deposit, lending and wealth management services throughout its network of 19 community offices located throughout the state. With assets exceeding \$1 billion, Laconia Savings Bank is the largest and one of the strongest locally owned New Hampshire banks.

Laconia Savings Bank helps businesses, consumers, not-for-profits and government entities achieve financial success. For further information, visit one of our local offices or log on to [www.laconiasavings.com](http://www.laconiasavings.com).

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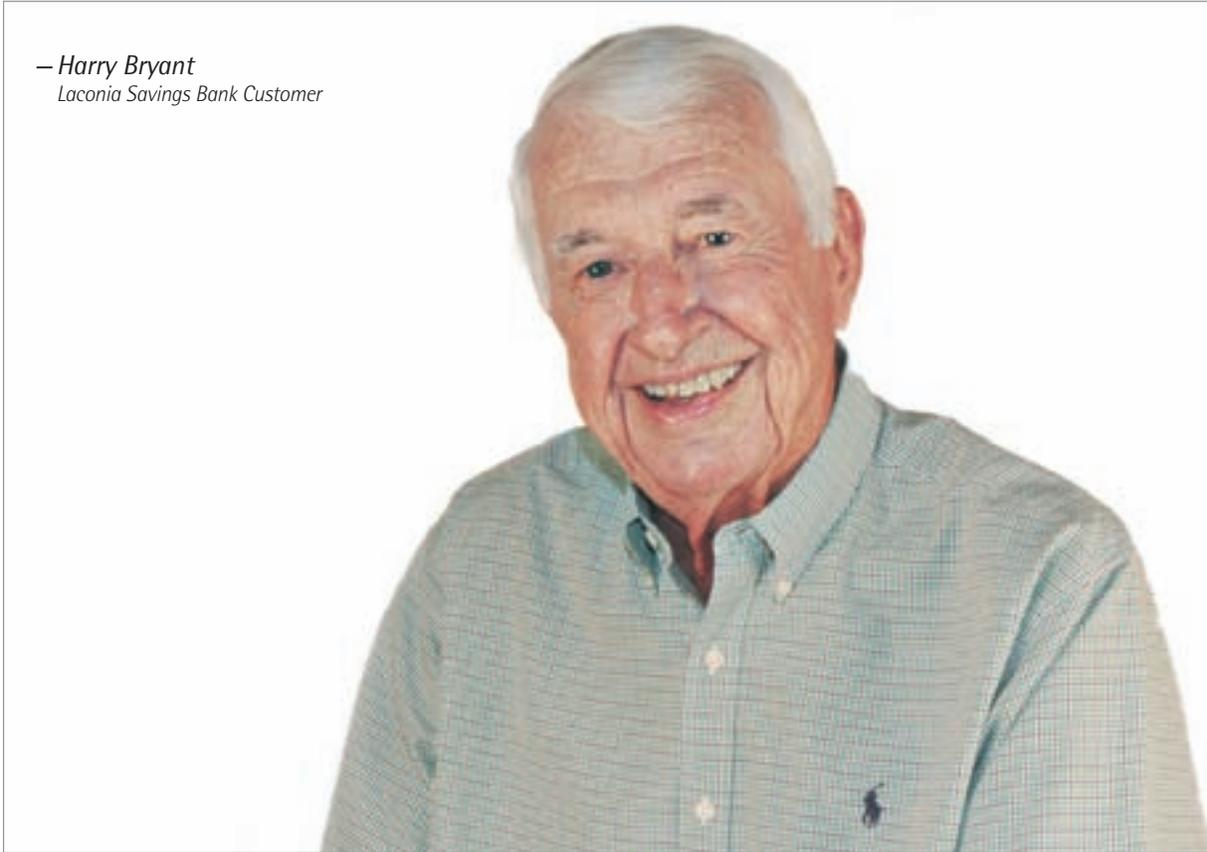
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# Setting the perfect table this season

Entertaining at its best happens during the holidays and families and friends create many nostalgic memories around the dinner table. At this busy time of year you may be tempted to put your table setting on autopilot by using the same plates, stemware and napkins from years before. This season, strive to update your look by dedicating your decorating time to the area where guests gather to eat. A well-appointed tabletop can elevate an everyday meal to an elegant and sophisticated soiree.

Rather than setting a uniform table this year, consider these entertaining tips to add flair to your holiday look:

- Review the basics of table setting to ensure all dining elements are in their proper place.

- Linens and cloth napkins add a rich feel for guests at the table. Adding these accents in vibrant colors can make your dinnerware pop and bring a fresh yet festive air to your meal.



- When decorating the table, keep in mind that your dinnerware is the star of the show. Consider your personal style when choosing a plate pattern and be sure it's versatile for many holidays to come.

- Visit [Oneida.com](http://Oneida.com) for a range of options, such as the Culinaria Collection offering classic, elegant styles in festive colors or the "HoHoHo" dinnerware line to create a whimsical, seasonal approach to your table. (ARA)

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# Get moving to treat and prevent arthritis

More than just aches and pains, arthritis is a chronic inflammatory disease that damages joints and can even lead to loss of function or disability. For many years, it was believed that people with arthritis should not exercise, because movement could cause further damage to joints. Now, physical activity is recognized as playing an integral role in the prevention and treatment of arthritis.

It is important for Americans to make daily movement a year-round goal. There are plenty of opportunities for you to move year-round, no matter where you are or what the season:

- The Arthritis Foundation organizes events year-round to keep people moving, including the Jingle Bell Run/Walk and Arthritis Walk, which also raise money for important arthritis research and community services.

- For a walking program that is specifically designed to reduce arthritis discomfort and improve overall health, try the Arthritis Foundation's Walk with Ease program.

- Because its gentle movements are easy to learn and do not require uncomfortable bending or squatting, Tai Chi



is a great way to move all year. Check with your local Arthritis Foundation office to find a class near you.

To find out about more ways you can move year-round, visit [www.lets-movetogether.org](http://www.lets-movetogether.org). (ARA)

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# Pets and allergies don't have to go hand in paw

Pet owners are often torn between their love of Fido and Fluffy and the discomfort of stuffy noses and watery eyes. In fact, 15 percent of Americans are allergic to animals, and a whopping 11 million are allergic to cats alone, according to WebMD. Although those who suffer from severe allergies may not be able to own pets, mild allergy sufferers can take advantage of these tips and products at home to enjoy sneeze-free time with their furry friends.

Many pet owners would agree that pet hair is the number one problem that comes with owning an animal, and it's even worse for allergy sufferers. For relief, turn to a vacuum that not only offers superior cleaning, but also specializes in picking up pet hair. For example, the Eureka Pet Pal vacuum offers a Hair Raiser for Pets tool that can be used independently from the vacuum by rubbing the soft rubber tool on surfaces to grab embedded hair and gently lift



it away from fabric. In addition to Hair Raiser for Pets, the vacuum also offers a PET Power Paw tool, which features small plastic teeth and a rubber strip to gently grab and clean pet hair from

hard-to-reach areas, such as stairs.

For more information about Eureka products for dealing with pets and allergens, call (800) 282-2886 or visit [www.eureka.com](http://www.eureka.com). (ARA)

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# More Americans value funeral services

Americans plan their vacations, retirement, careers and even plan right down to daily life. But, of the two "inevitables" in life - death and taxes - tax planning receives the majority of attention.

An overwhelming majority of Americans - 95 percent - say a funeral service is important in honoring and celebrating the life of a loved one. Even individuals who would choose cremation indicate they want some type of gathering service for families and friends to share memories together, according to the research conducted by the Funeral and Memorial Information Council.

The act of having a funeral service, regardless of choosing cremation, burial or other disposition, is absolutely critical to the grieving process, says grief counselor Sherrie Williams.

"Many of us don't want our funeral to be a fuss for our loved ones, but the support that is provided during a gathering has proven to help families deal with the grief and loss more effectively," Williams says.

Anyone seeking to begin the pre-



planning process should understand all of their options and funeral directors can provide the best information. Information is also available online.

You can learn more about funeral choices at [www.FuneralPlan.com](http://www.FuneralPlan.com), download a free pre-planning guide and find funeral homes in their area. (ARA)

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# Support groups help patients cope

For many patients, receiving a medical diagnosis can cause a mix of emotions - from relief that their symptoms are no longer a mystery, to fear about how to cope with the disease. To manage the range of emotions and live well after a diagnosis, it is important to establish a strong support network. In fact, Dr. John Klippel, CEO of the Arthritis Foundation, believes patients who do so are often in better control of their disease.

Chronic, debilitating diseases like rheumatoid arthritis (RA), an autoimmune form of arthritis, can be especially humbling for people who want to be independent, leaving them feeling embarrassed or reluctant to engage those closest to them. But, creating a network of friends and family who are willing to offer assistance can help ensure a better quality of life. For example, support partners can help patients recall important medical instructions, as well as help guide the discussion with health care providers. In fact, studies have shown that 20 to 50 percent of what is said in the doctor's office is forgotten.

In addition to engaging friends and



family, patients can interact with health professionals and peers through in-person or online support groups. Studies show arthritis support groups can improve mood, provide better coping skills, decrease pain and provide relief from negative emotions, such as fear, resentment and hopelessness, according to Dr. Vicki Helgeson, of Carnegie-Mellon University in Pittsburgh.

Patients with a chronic disease such as RA should consider the following when selecting a support group:

- **Do your homework:** Find support groups where you can talk, share and interact with others.
- **Check with your doctor or**

**health professional:** about community volunteer groups in your area that can provide additional input and assistance.

■ **Find what works for you:** There are various types of support groups, and you may want to experiment with several to find the right fit:

■ **Closed** - requires registration and a commitment to a set number of sessions.

■ **Group therapy** - directed by a mental health professional with a time-limited purpose for specific therapeutic goals.

■ **Peer** - led by a fellow patient, this group's casual format focuses on sharing experiences and learning from others.

■ **Educational** - features an expert's presentation, with a question-and-answer session.

■ **Online** - support found on Internet chat sites or social media channels.

Connect with the Arthritis Foundation on Facebook, Twitter or YouTube to share experiences with a portion of the more than 40 million Americans living with arthritis, and learn about programs and events in your area. (ARA)

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## Travel tips for staying healthy while away

All it takes is a little foresight and effective planning to ensure that your trip - wherever you're headed - is safe, fun and memorable in all the right ways.

Below are some essential tips for staying healthy while traveling.

■ **Don't forgo first aid**

A small first aid or medical kit is always a smart idea. Some good general items to include are bandages, disinfectant, pain relievers and medicine for stomach upset.



■ **Protect against problems**

Whether you are traveling 50 or 5,000 miles from home, there is always a possibility that you'll get sick or be involved in an accident. Purchasing a membership from a travel and medical emergency assistance company like On Call International before you leave will help eliminate your worries.

■ **Watch what you eat**

While it's particularly true when you're traveling abroad, being careful about what you eat and drink is applicable on trips within the United States as well. If you're traveling to a country where the water supply is not potable, only eat foods that have been peeled or thoroughly cooked.

When your trip is free of health-related hassles, you can be sure it'll be one to remember. For more information about safe travel and medical assistance memberships, visit [www.oncallinternational.com](http://www.oncallinternational.com). (ARA)



## Catch the fine print - without losing style points

When you have to switch to large print books, or move the food label farther away from you to see how much sodium is in a can of soup, it might be time for you to invest in a pair of reading glasses. Reading glasses provide relief of symptoms caused by the onset of Presbyopia, the eye's diminished ability to focus on nearby objects.

In addition to seeing better, reading glasses can also relieve eye fatigue, caused by concentrating and focusing on nearby objects for long periods of time or working in dim lighting. With a pair of over-the-counter reading glasses you can quickly and easily focus on any crafts you might be working on, including books, the newspaper and recipe directions so you make sure that you only put in one teaspoon of salt, not one tablespoon.

Some people choose to see their eye doctor for a prescription for singular power glasses or bifocal lenses, but you also have the choice of shopping at a nearby retail store for over-the-counter options.

To help you quickly choose the right pair, use the eye chart available at the store where reading glasses are for sale to determine the magnification level you need. Diopter strength - usually ranging from .5 to +3.50 - is the rating used to rank how strong the magnification is. Knowing what magnification level you need prior to visiting the store allows you to spend less time in front of the display.

Over time, you may find it more convenient to have several pairs of reading glasses handy - for at home, on the go and at work. Foster Grant LightSpecs are over-the-counter reading glasses that solve two problems in one convenient product. Prescription-quality reading glasses minimize eye fatigue while powerful LED lights allow you to read in dark or dimly-lit areas. They're perfect for your everyday use, whether you are reading in bed, doing the crossword puzzle or reading the ingredients on food products at the grocery store. (ARA)



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# Eight tax tips that will save you time and money

When all the holiday dust settles, tax time begins for millions of Americans. Regardless of when you file, follow these tips to make preparing your 2010 taxes easier.

■ 1. Good record keeping cuts down time spent doing your taxes and may be required if you receive an Internal Revenue Service notice or are audited. Records should include information that impacts your federal tax return, including a copy of last year's return.

■ 2. Don't procrastinate. Rushing encourages errors that can result in lost time and money, and ultimately a rejected return.

■ 3. Hundreds of changes are made to federal tax law every year. Dedicating a few minutes to learning about major changes can save you money and time. At minimum, learn about the tax breaks still available in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, including credits for energy improvements to your home and "green" cars.



■ 4. File and pay on time, or pay late fees and interest. While state deadlines vary, 2010 federal returns are due April 18, 2011, (April 15 is a federal holiday). Can't file by then? File Form 4868 for a six-month filing extension and pay as much as of your taxes as possible by April 18 to minimize interest and penalties.

■ 5. Do your taxes online or download tax preparation software, even if you have a complicated return or have never prepared your taxes. "Tax law can be complicated, but doing your own

taxes doesn't have to be," says TaxACT spokesperson Jessi Dolmage. "The best solutions go well beyond completing tax forms and doing the math for you.

■ 6. Do comparison shopping before choosing a tax preparation solution. Check out the free products. Can you try it risk-free? If you're using a paid product, at what point in the process do you have to pay?

■ 7. Electronically file. Nearly 70 percent of all federal returns were e-filed last year. Unlike paper filers, you'll receive e-mail confirmation when the IRS receives and accepts or rejects your return, usually within 48 hours of e-filing.

■ 8. Want your federal refund in as few as eight days? E-file and select direct deposit. You can track your refund status and receive your refund at least one week earlier than those requesting checks.

More tax tips and information can be found at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov). (ARA)



*Bow, New Hampshire*

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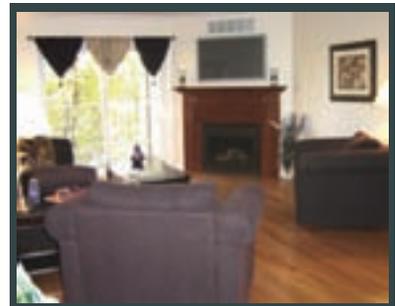
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This condominium is not yet registered with the NH Attorney General so only non-binding reservation agreements can be taken.