



## WHY RETIRE?

By Teresa Mears

**Before you get far down the retirement road - - here are some tips for starting your own business in or near retirement.**

**Determine whether your idea is really a good business plan.** What problem does it solve? Take a look around and see where there is a need.

**Evaluate your skills.** Do you have an ability to do all the tasks necessary to make your business a success? Make sure you're really good at it. You have the passion and the capability.

**Consider the time involved.** Most retirees *don't* want to work long hours. Stay away from starting businesses that require your *constant* presence.

**Get good advice.** Explore free and low-cost resources to help beginning entrepreneurs. Attend conferences and trade associations in your field.

**Figure out how to finance your startup.** Many businesses, especially those with no physical location, can be started for a minimal investment. Don't invest money you can't afford to lose.

**Know if you want to manage others or work alone.** Many people *don't* want the burden of managing employees. However, a one-person business gives you a lot of time by yourself.

**Have an exit strategy.** Plan whether it is to leave the business to your children, sell it or just shut it down. Share your plan with your family.

**Use your professional connections.** Being in the workforce gives you access to potential customers as well as consultants.

**Embrace technology.** You may need to learn online commerce, website management and other technical skills. It enables you to have the look of a high-end business.

**Protect your assets.** Make sure your business structure protects your assets. If your business goes down the tubes, you don't want to lose your savings.

**Don't expect overnight success.** You may need to try several things and radically change your initial business plan before you find a formula that works.

Source: U.S. News / Money

## Sneaky Fees

by Charles Inlander

**Many doctors and hospitals are adding on sneaky fees for services that used to be included with routine visits and treatments, and the fees typically are not covered by insurance.**

If you are covered by Medicare, the medical provider is required by law to clearly inform you in advance about any service that may not be covered and to estimate what the cost to you will be.

However, private insurers are under no such obligation if patients don't ask for this information.

### *For Self-defense ...*

**Speak to your doctor and the person in charge of billing before you are treated.**

**Ask:** "Is everything you are going to do for me covered by my insurance? If not, you need to tell me in advance."

If they disclose an unexpected fee, check ahead of time whether your insurer will agree to cover it as part of the general treatment.

If not, tell your doctor, "I'm not able to afford to pay anything beyond my co-pay and deductibles," and ask to have the fee removed or reduced. Many doctors will comply.

**Refuse to pay a bill if there's a fee that was not disclosed even though you asked.** File a report with the state insurance department requesting that launch a fraud investigation.

Many providers would rather dismiss a miscellaneous charge than endure an investigation.

Source: BOTTOM LINE



## Improve Your Credit

By Dana Dratch

- ◆ **Need to boost your credit score?** - They take into account years of past behavior, not just your present actions. A few easy steps can push your score in the right directions.
- ◆ **Watch those credit card balances** - Your credit score is how much revolving credit you have *versus* how much you're actually using. The smaller that percentage is - the better it is for your credit rating. To boost your score, 'pay down your balances, and keep those balances low'.
- ◆ **Eliminate 'nuisance balances'** - To improve your credit score gather up all those credit cards on which you have small balances and pay them off. Then select one or two cards that you can use for everything.
- ◆ **Leave (good) old debt on your report** - One of the ways to improve your credit score: leave old debt *and* good accounts on as long as possible. By not closing old accounts you show you have a solid repayment record.
- ◆ **Use your calendar** - Every time you apply for credit, it can cause a small dip in your score that lasts a year. By making multiple applications for credit, it usually means you want to use more credit.
- ◆ **Always pay bills on time** - While you're juggling bills, you *don't* want to start sending bills late. One of the biggest ingredients in a good credit score is on-time payments. Saving money for a big purchase is smart. Just don't slight the regular bills - - or pay them late.
- ◆ **Don't hint at risk** - One of the best ways to improve your credit score is to not do something that could sink it. The biggies are missing payments and suddenly paying less than you normally do. *Don't* do anything that would indicate risk.
- ◆ **Don't Obsess** - Are you getting ready to make a big purchase? Get a copy of your credit scores. If you are denied credit - the lender has to show you the credit score it used.

Source: Bankrate

## Alzheimer's Treatment

For the treatment of Alzheimer's disease, it's important to work closely with your doctor and your health care team to create the best treatment plan for you or the person in your care. An optimal treatment plan will take into account your - - -

- Age and overall health
- Current treatment goals
- Severity of symptoms and their impact on your life
- Living situation and availability of family members and caregivers

Ask the doctor the following questions when you discuss treatments. These questions will not address all treatment needs, but the answers will help you understand the options and make informed decisions.

- What treatment options are available?
- Which option do you think best fits our situation?
- What kind of assessment will you use to determine if the treatment is effective?
- How much time will pass before you will be able to assess the treatment's effectiveness?
- How will you monitor for possible drug side effects?
- What side effects should we watch for at home?
- When should we call you?
- Is one treatment option more likely than another to interfere with medications for other conditions?
- What are the concerns with stopping one drug treatment and beginning another?
- At what stage of the disease would you consider it appropriate to stop using the drug?

Source: Alzheimer's Association



## Leaving Inheritance

By Bambi Holzer

**Inheriting money is a lot like winning the lottery - and not only because both involve free handouts.**

**Whether you have benefited from an inheritance, or expect to, it may now be your turn to ponder what - if anything - you'll be able to leave your kids and grandkids.**

### Don't Leave Money Directly to Minors -

It would be a shame to have worked hard and saved diligently so you can leave your grandchildren an inheritance, only to have them squander the cash. Unfortunately, young adults don't always have the maturity to handle money responsibly, and a large inheritance could be too much temptation.

### Talk About Your Expectations -

To help ensure that your grandchildren respect their inheritance — whatever their age, whatever the amount — start a conversation with them now about where the money came from, how you earned it, and what you hope they will do with it.

### Don't Attach Strings -

Be careful not to "control" the inheritance. Use caution with grandchildren when putting restrictions or desires in their wills or living trusts. You can put in desires such as using the money for college, but they are not binding.

### Be Specific -

Whether you're able to leave \$5,000 or \$500,000, it's critical to be as specific as possible in your will or living trust. Ambiguous language is susceptible to attack. Specify who gets what, and how much. Do you want the money divided equally?

### Consider Giving Now -

Another option is to give your grandkids their "inheritance" while you're still alive. You can give an annual exclusion gift of \$12,000 per child - tax free - to an unlimited number of recipients every year.

Source: American Grandparents Association

*Materials contained herein are for informational purposes only and should be verified by an appropriate professional or agency.*

## Scam Alert

## Credit Cards

by S. Kirshheimer

**Beware:** 'free' offers *may* come from thieves. Free credit card scores could be *bait* from a scammer who's after your money or your identify.

Here's how to protect yourself.

- **Read carefully.** In the most popular ruse, fraudsters recruit you by masquerading as well-known companies and banks, sending you replicas of ones from real McCoys. On their own rogue websites, your "free" score comes with strings attached and sometimes with nondisclosed enrollment in credit care monitoring or identity protection. *Never* click on links embedded in emails from parites you don't know.
- **Don't give your credit card number.** Being asked for your number to obtain a "free" score is a *red flag* that you'll be enrolled in a fee-based service that can cost \$300 a year.
- **Flee from "free" in names.** In tracking companies that offer free credit scores, legitimate providers of free credit scores – *never* have the word 'free' in their domain name.
- **Be especially wary after a data breach.** Emails may appear to be from legitimate score providers, but in fact spread malware or solicit sensitive personal information.
- **Ask your bank or credit card provider for your score.** If your financial institution won't provide it – try one of the legitimate websites.

Source: AARP

**SarahCare**

Adult Day Care Centers



**Adult Day Care**  
SarahCare of Campbell  
"Experienced Care,  
Delivered with Love"

450 Marathon Drive  
Campbell, CA 95008

Dr. Timothy Dupic  
Executive Director  
408-374-2273 (office)  
408-821-2147 (cell)  
tdupic@sarahcare.com  
www.sarahcarecampbell.com