

Caring Connections



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October is Boo-tiful!

The days get shorter, the nights get longer and the leaves on the trees get lovelier, painting the skyline and creating a colorful canvas of our yards with shades of red, gold and orange. Mums and pumpkins perch on porches, bags of candy crowd the shelves at the grocery store, and kids of all ages dream up daring disguises for Halloween night. While this October will look a lot different than last year's, there is still plenty of joy to be found in the sights and sounds of the season. We hope you'll celebrate all things fall with us during our [Connections Corner](#) virtual meetings each Tuesday at 11 a.m.

Wishing you all treats and no tricks,
Felicia Stein, *Director, Ellicott City Connections*



October Birthdays

In astrology, those born between October 1–22 balance the scales of Libra. Libras have strong intellects and keen minds and so need constant stimulation. Libras are also masters of compromise and diplomacy, acting as wise mediators between friends and colleagues. Those born from October 23–31 are Scorpio's scorpions. Scorpions are passionate and intense, yet you may never know given their calm demeanors. They value truth, loyalty, and justice in friends and family.

Happy Birthday to Connections' members Elaine, Jay, Dan, Marybeth, Robert and Program Assistant Jill!

Famous October Birthdays:

- Julie Andrews (actress) – October 1, 1935
- Chevy Chase (comedian) – October 8, 1943
- Dick Gregory (comedian) – October 12, 1932
- Mae Jemison (astronaut) – October 17, 1956
- Chuck Berry (musician) – October 18, 1926
- Dizzy Gillespie (musician) – October 21, 1917
- Bill Gates (engineer) – October 28, 1955

Master Aging, Virtually

The Office of Aging and Independence (OAI) presents its first Master Aging Showcase Virtual Experience on **Friday, October 23, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.** Join us for exercise demos, a History Alive performance and a tour of the new Resource Guide. Door prizes will be awarded throughout the day. You will find details for some events in the [October newsletter](#); for more information, be sure to [check OAI's homepage](#) to get the latest updates on this exciting event!



Roll Out the Barrel...It's Oktoberfest!



Crowds won't be gathering and swilling beer en masse this year as the pandemic wears on. But you can recreate a little bit of German culture at home for a more low-key version of this famous celebration. Cue the polka music and fire up the sausages!

The first Oktoberfest took place in Munich on October 12 in celebration of the marriage of the crown prince of Bavaria. Over time, the event morphed into a showcase

for local brewers, with each one setting up a tent featuring beer and food. With each passing year, the celebration grew to include larger beer halls, dancing, amusement rides and parades. Typically, an Oktoberfest celebration draws a crowd of 6 million people who consume around 2 million gallons of beer!

Speaking of beer, [find out what kind the Germans like best](#). You could have a tasting of authentic German beers (or even non-alcoholic beers) at home while you nibble on this [easy-to-assemble Oktoberfest snack board](#). And to set the mood, be sure to play [some authentic German folk music](#). Lastly, be sure to test your Oktoberfest knowledge with some [quick trivia](#). Prost!



What's Growing in Felicia's Garden?



Pumpkin seems to take precedence over all other produce in the fall, but let's not overlook pumpkin's tasty and healthy cousin—the butternut squash. Back in March, my family and I planted butternut squash seeds and grew them in the mini greenhouse my son made in school. Now we have a bounty of nine squashes from the original planting.

What to do with all that squash? My favorite preparation is simple: just peel, de-seed, cut into chunks and mix with salt, pepper, garlic and olive oil and roast at 400 degrees for 25 to 30 minutes until lightly brown and tender.

In addition to being tasty, butternut squash can:

- Lower and prevent high blood pressure due to its high levels of potassium.
- Help your eyesight; the squash's orange color means it is loaded with vitamin A.
- Improve your digestion. Butternut squash's high fiber content can help optimize digestion and relieve bloating and constipation.
- Improve bone density with its high concentration of potassium, magnesium, manganese and calcium.
- Help prevent and fight cancer. One type of protein found in butternut

squash has been found to inhibit the growth of skin cancer cells (melanoma).

So don't pass up the pumpkin entirely, but do add butternut squash to your fall menu. For even more ideas on how to prepare butternut squash, [click here](#).

Ask a Musician: 5 Questions for Peter

Peter Francis has a distinctive style among our Connections performers with his original songs, occasional joke-telling and kazoo-playing. Since we won't be able to hear him in person for a while, here are some of his audio recordings to tide you over. To listen, click on the "download" arrow on the right side of the screen and then double click on the file you'll see at the bottom of the screen:

[One for the Road](#)

[Scotch and Soda](#)



How long have you been playing/singing?

I initially played drums in a rock 'n' roll band in the early to mid-60s, providing some back-up vocal harmonies. The summer of 1966 found me learning how to play the acoustic guitar.

Who were your first musical influences?

My sister (2 years my senior) and I grew up in the inchoate world of rock 'n' roll, so, naturally, Elvis Presley was a huge influence along with other rock 'n' roll pioneers of the day. I still have every 45 record she and I purchased—many of them Elvis records. We also listened to albums of Broadway musicals my parents had purchased (Oklahoma, South Pacific, etc.). I also enjoyed listening to Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Sammy Davis, Jr. Of course, when the Beatles hit the charts, my rock 'n' roll band played most of their songs.

What is your favorite type of music to play?

Because of the time period in which early rock 'n' roll was such an influence, I enjoy playing the "oldies." But I also love to play many songs from the American Songbook and Broadway musicals. These consist of songs by composers and performers such as Cole Porter, Rogers and Hammerstein, Hoagy Carmichael, Johnny Mercer, Frank Loesser, Fats Waller, George M. Cohan, George Gershwin, Jimmy Van Heusen and on and on. Those types of songs are always interspersed within my performing repertoire.

Why did you choose to focus on the guitar?

I have always enjoyed singing, and playing the drums was not an instrument where I could accompany myself, so the guitar seemed like the easiest route to go. I also play the piano, but I don't consider that my primary accompaniment instrument.

Do you have a favorite venue for performing?

I enjoy the smaller intimate locations such as Howard County Senior Centers or nursing homes where the audience understands and appreciates the repertoire I create for that performance.

Fall for This Easy Pumpkin Craft



Toilet paper pumpkins? They may not sound like the most appealing of craft projects, but these easy-to-make fall decorations are a great way to employ some of that spare toilet paper you might have sitting around from your quarantine hoard. And better yet, if you have some fabric odds and ends, it's a great way to use them, too. And once fall is over, you can unwrap your toilet paper and use it for its intended purpose!

You will need:

- Large roll of toilet paper
- 18-20 inch square piece of fabric
- Green ribbon or leaves for the stem
- 4-inch piece of branch or a few cinnamon sticks

To make:

1. Unroll the toilet paper about 10 times, and then roll it loosely back up to give more of a round shape.
2. Lay out your fabric and place the toilet paper in the center.
3. Grab one corner of the fabric and tuck it inside of the toilet paper roll. Slowly work your way around gathering up the fabric and tucking each corner into the roll.
4. Tie a ribbon around your branch piece and stuff it into the center.

Notes:

- The more toilet paper that you unravel and wrap around, the larger your pumpkin will be. Keep this mind when cutting your fabric. A mega size roll combined with lots of unraveling will probably require a 20 inch square piece of fabric.
- A thicker fabric like flannel makes it easier to disguise the shape of the toilet paper roll, giving you a more natural looking pumpkin.
- For the stem, you can also use several sticks tied together if you can't find anything thick enough to compliment your pumpkin (easy to find at a park). Cinnamon sticks also look nice!
- Fake leaves can also be used in place of the ribbon.



In the entire circle of the year there are no days so delightful as those of a fine October.

– Alexander Smith