

Health Matters

Navigate internet with caution for reliable health information



Dr. Hallion

In this column, Maria Elena Hallion, Ph.D., talks about accessing reliable health information online.

An associate professor and department chair in the Exercise Science and Health Promotion Department at Cabrini University in Radnor, Pa., Dr. Hallion lives in Gibbstown.

Finding a good source for health information depends on finding a reliable website first.

Some of the most accurate websites end in .edu (which means it comes from an edu-

cational institution, such as a college); .org (a nonprofit organization); and .gov (a U.S. government agency).

Trustworthy websites also will post contact information,

such as an e-mail, toll-free number, and mailing address on the home page.

Helpful information about how to prevent, detect and manage many diseases can be found online.

Two great places to start are the National Institutes of Health (nih.gov) and Medline Plus (medlineplus.gov).

Almost every health condition has its own foundation or organization that is committed to informing the public via a website. Some of these include: The Alzheimer's Association, The American Cancer Society, The American

Diabetes Association, The National Arthritis Foundation, and The National Osteoporosis Foundation.

The internet also can be used to search for information on exercise and nutrition.

Some of the best sites on these topics include: Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, The American Council on Exercise, and The American Heart Association.

Remember, do not rely on just one website and always consult with a health care provider before acting on advice found on the internet.

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to repair and repaint the structure and install a mixer to improve water quality over

a four-month period in 2017.

Both projects are financed through a U.S. Department

of Agriculture Rural Development \$700,000 shared grant and a low interest loan.

"Our town needs to be run like a business," said Stevenson. "We need to focus on a small set of goals and then put together a workable plan."

One of his administration's goals is to address vacant and abandoned homes in the borough.

"We need to get more homeowners," said Stevenson, adding that steps are being taken to determine if borough officials can obtain the structures, tear them down, or have groups rehab them. "Vacant and abandoned houses and lots do not help the borough. They breed filth and crime."

Three other goals important to Stevenson are being fiscally responsible, exploring shared services with other towns, including equipment or personnel, and improving the business climate in town.

"I look at every bill I sign," he said. "I saw that we were paying someone \$750 a year to update us on

the weather. We also have returned to using radios instead of cell phones for all workers in the water department and street and highway department. This saves the town \$4,000 per year.

"Delaware Street is a huge concern," said Stevenson, who is contemplating the need to hire an economic planner. "There are many empty stores. We are working with people who can help fill them in the next few years.

"This administration is working hard to solve some of these problems," said Stevenson. "They take a lot of time, effort and money.

"These issues did not occur overnight and will not be solved overnight," said Stevenson. "By working together, we can make a huge dent in these issues. Patience is needed."

To keep up with the town's progress, visit the paulsboronj.org website and the borough's Facebook page. The mayor plans to hold his next town meeting in the spring of 2017. The front page photo was taken from the top of the Tinicum Lighthouse.

Pet owner draws comfort from local resources

By Katherine L. Shawaryn

PAULSBORO — Losing his canine companion after 8-1/2 years has not been easy for Len Curtis.

"I was his magnet, and he was my steel," said the borough resident. "We did everything together."

His dog, Harry, passed away in September. Despite his grief, he knows better days are ahead thanks to a nearby pet support group and pet food bank.

"I've been able to turn a negative into a positive," said Curtis, who hopes his story helps other owners endure the loss of their pets.

His story began the day he picked up Harry from the Gloucester County Animal Shelter. The dark tan pup with a black snout was eight months old when Curtis and his wife, Mary (Robertson, PHS '80), opened their hearts and home to him. They were Harry's third family.

"For Harry, it was three times a charm," said Curtis. As a puppy, he came to the shelter as a stray where he was adopted by a family.

Within a week he was returned to the shelter. Curtis adopted Harry in January of 2008. It was the second time in his life that he had adopted a dog from the shelter.

"It was such a smooth transition the moment Harry walked through the door," said Curtis. From taking daily walks in all types of weather, enjoying ice cream from Mister Softee, to hanging out with the boys around a fire pit in the backyard, Harry chased a ball right up until his last walk on Sept. 1. The next day he was too weak to get up.

Curtis took Harry to a local veterinarian who referred him to the St. Francis Veterinary Center in



Harry

Courtesy photo

Woolwich Township where Harry was diagnosed with four inoperable masses. Curtis took Harry home with plans to return the following week for a follow up visit. He passed away the following day.

"Within five days my heart was broken," said Curtis, who draws comfort from an ironic find he made a week before Harry's last walk.

"Something shiny caught my eye," said Curtis. In a field off Berkley Road, he uncovered a medal with Harry at his side.

"I later learned it was a St. Francis medal. He is the patron saint of animals," said Curtis, who reflects on the coincidences linked to his find.

"I wound up taking Harry to the St. Francis Veterinary Center, and now I attend an animal support group called Day-by-Day there once a month."

He attached the St. Francis medal to a dog collar and chain that he keeps in a cedar box with Harry's ashes.

After Harry passed away, Curtis also connected with Paulsboro resident Carlotta Goldman (PHS '99). She runs a pet food bank out of her home off Swedesboro Avenue with the help of her father and fiancé.

The connection gave Curtis an outlet to donate

Harry's unused canned and dried dog food, treats, and flea medications. "It's a win-win opportunity for both donors and recipients," he said.

A pet owner herself, Goldman agrees.

"I started this because I love animals," she said. I've seen animals on Craigslist for sale because people can't afford to feed them. There is a big concern out there by people who can't afford to feed their animals.

"I figured we have food banks for people, why not for animals," said Goldman. She accepts dog and cat food (dry and cans), leftover toys and leashes, and training pads for puppies. She also accepts monetary donations.

"To receive items from the pet food pantry, individuals just need to come in and fill out an application," said Goldman. There are no fees.

"It's a great service for those on limited incomes, such as the elderly and veterans, who have difficulty feed-

ing their pets," she said.

For Curtis, donations to the pet food bank, his monthly support group and fond memories of Harry, definitely have helped ease the loss of his faithful companion.

At this point in his life, he remains unsure as to whether he would add another dog to his family.

"If I do, I wouldn't hesitate to going back to the shelter; however, I wouldn't get a puppy at my age," said Curtis. "I might consider rescuing a senior dog."

"I believe you don't have to spend \$500 and go to a pet store to find love," he added. "I found it right there at the shelter."

For more information on the pet food bank, contact Carlotta Goldman at (856) 879-5762 or e-mail her at lottakayla@yahoo.com.

For more information on the Gloucester County Animal Shelter on 1200 Delsea Drive in Clayton, call (856) 881-2828.



Photo by Teresa Colanero

A team with a mission — Left to right, pet bank coordinator Carlotta Goldman and James Lewis stand with donor Len Curtis of Paulsboro. Goldman collects dog and cat food (dry and cans), leftover toys and leashes, training pads for puppies, and monetary donations.

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