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Cranking up
the Endorphins
page 10



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MINDFUL MUSINGS

Summer and the Squash Blossom

STORY AND PHOTOS BY NICOLETTA LAMARCA SACCO

When I let people know we grow the zucchini plants in our garden just for the sunny yellow flowers, some understand why. Oh, I haven't eaten them since my grandparents kept a garden....I remember they were so good. I see we are going to

have some ready to be beer-battered, fried, and served along with our Fourth of July picnic. I tell one of our out-of-town guests that the zucchini flowers are ready to be picked. She is delighted. I haven't had them in years! I'm really looking forward--and my daughter will be trying them for the first time!

Fiori di Zucca or Zucchini Flowers aren't just nice to look at. They are incredibly tasty and have some nice health benefits as well.

Weeding near the daylilies, I realize how fleeting zucchini

CONTINUED ON 4H

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'A Guide to Keeping Healthy in the Summer'

Published by
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July 13, 2021 • Vol. CXXXI, No. 10

Proud Member of



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CONTINUED FROM 3H

really are. Even the overwhelming supply of zucchini bread in 'zuke season lasts just a short time. Growing zucchini mostly to pick the flowers is one way to keep from having an explosion of zucchini later in the summer. Inevitably, it happens anyway. We seem to miss a sneaky one that grows, hidden in leafy camouflage, into monstrous size that we discover later. Weeding and watering makes me think these thoughts. As a newer gardener, I get out there at different times of day and notice the insects and their activities, the voles scurrying, the hummingbirds congregating around the feeders. I take note of the frequency with which to make simple syrup, let it cool, and refill the feeders to hear the

tiny birds buzz and see them blur by. There is much quiet joy in looking and listening while watering and weeding.

But mostly, for us, the tangled spread-out vines are all about the flowers. You can see from the vibrant yellow-orange color that they contain beta-carotene, but according to nutritionists, they are a source of vitamins A and C, also. When you try the recipe, remember to leave 2" or so of the stem intact so you can dip them into the batter easily, hold them and let excess batter drip off, and grab each flower by the stem to flip it while frying. Also, never wash them with water, as this will cause a terrible splatter when you fry them. Rather, use a soft vegetable



Nicoletta LaMarca Sacco

brush or gently shake them to clean them of garden debris.

There is some debate among cooks about stuffing zucchini flowers. In restaurants, they may be stuffed with cheeses, anchovy, olives and other ingredients that

bring tangy flavor since the flower itself is bland. But the process of frying makes this summer-only treat delectable, and the stuffing can make it unbalanced and awkward to handle in the hot oil. I prefer them dipped in beer batter, fried golden brown and served with a sprinkle of coarse salt. Buon appetito!

Nicoletta LaMarca Sacco learned to cook and be curious about dishes from around the world from her mother, who loves to cook, and her father, who loves to eat. All three also love to meet new people and talk to them about their travels, cultures, and interests. LaMarca Sacco is a graduate student living in Roscoe with her husband, Steven, and their dogs, Pupcake and PomPom. Their children are grown.

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Recipe: Fried Fresh-Picked Zucchini Flowers (Fiori di Zucca Fritti)

12 zucchini flowers, picked the same day
 8 oz of a 12 oz bottle of beer (I use a bottle so I can measure by eye as I go)
 1 ½ cups all-purpose flour
 Coarse salt and pepper to taste
 You will need: a medium bowl and whisk for preparing the batter, a heavy skillet and peanut oil for frying, a dish lined with layers of paper towels for letting fried flowers rest as they come out of the pan.
 Add ¼ cup flour to a plate and set aside.
 Add 1 ¼ cups flour to a medium bowl and whisk to remove lumps. Grind in pepper to taste. Whisk in bottle beer and then more until batter resembles thin

pancake batter.
 Heat peanut oil or vegetable oil in a heavy skillet to 350 degrees. Gently dredge zucchini blossoms in flour on plate, then dip in batter, holding them by the stem so excess drips back into the bowl.
 Fry in hot oil in small batches 3-4 minutes. Do not crowd your frying pan.
 Remove with slotted spoon to drain on paper towels. Fry next batch.
 When all blossoms are fried, serve sprinkled lightly with coarse salt.

Note: you may have batter left over, so if there are any zucchini on your plants, have them ready, cut into discs or the long way, dip and fry them, too! But first enjoy the blossoms while they're hot!

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When someone is diagnosed with a psychiatric illness

BY M. LORI SCHNEIDER



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Someone experiencing a full blown psychiatric crisis needs time for treatment. It's not a quick fix that can be solved in an Emergency Department or 72-hour admission.

Many, many people live with a psychiatric illness and lead full, productive lives. Psychiatric illness; mental illness is as real and biologically based as any other physical illness. The brain is an organ like any other and susceptible to illness the same way as are the heart, lungs, kidneys or pancreas. But to quote Young Frankenstein, "hearts and kidneys are tinker toys!" The human brain is more complex than the most sophisticated computer ever created. It controls our thoughts, beliefs, emotions, behaviors, memories, regulates the entire body's function without us having to give it any conscious thought. When something goes awry in such a complex system, be it biochemical, electrical, structural, psychic, environmental – or a combination of those factors, the way we think, feel and relate to others is affected.

When someone is first diag-

nosed with a psychiatric illness, odds are that there have been symptoms going on for some time which have been either compensated for or masked, self-medicated with street drugs or alcohol or have been so frightening to the person experiencing them that they've done their best to hide them and not discuss them with anyone. At some point, when it becomes impossible to compensate, an intervention may become necessary.

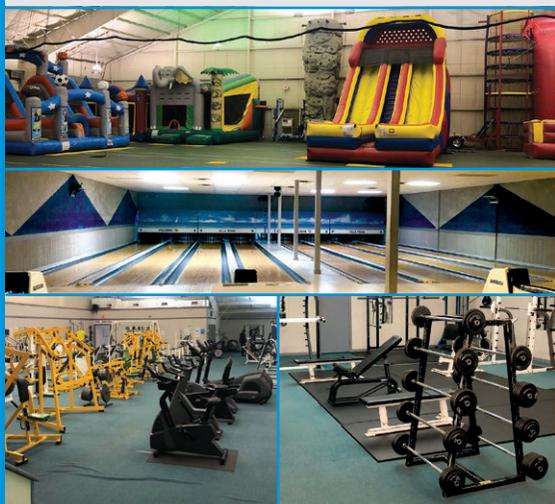
Unlike with many other illnesses, there is still, in this day and age, no blood test, tissue sample or anything to be looked at on a slide under a microscope that will pinpoint the specific issue, and so diagnoses are made clinically, based on the way someone is presenting and how they've been feeling/behaving over a period of time. Medication can be a trial and error mix of science and art, and medications typically take from ten days to

two weeks to build up in the bloodstream before any benefit can even begin to be seen. Finding the right medication or combination of medications for an individual takes time. Let's step away from psychiatric illness for a moment and look at something relatively simple, like pain relief. If everyone responded exactly the same to pain relievers, we'd just have aspirin. Why would we need acetaminophen, ibuprofen, naproxen or the big league players? Similarly with psychotropic medications, what works well for one person may not work well for another with the same diagnosis. Stabilization for someone in a crisis, whether during a first hospitalization or after having been off of medication for a time can take months. It's not as simple as "I have a headache, I take an aspirin - after a bit, it kicks in and my headache is gone." To think that someone in a full blown psychiatric crisis can be stabilized within an Emergency Department visit or a 72 hour admission is misguided, at best. With time, treatment works.

If you or someone you love has been diagnosed with a mental illness, you are not alone! NAMI Sullivan County, NY can help. For more information about support groups or to find out more about the advocacy, education or referral to clinical services, phone (845) 794-1029.

M. Lori Schneider is the Executive Director of NAMI of Sullivan County, which is located at 20 Crystal Street in Monticello.

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Trying to repair the painful damage after-the-fact is all too common. Sun damage usually occurs faster than people anticipate.

The importance of sun safety

BY
SAMANTHA
MONTAGNA



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It's the summertime, and people flock to the beach, a lake, or a pool. Many love to sunbathe to get that classic sun-kissed look. What is summer without a tan? While it is beneficial to enjoy the outdoors, most people do not realize the dangers of too much sun without protection.

When people do not wear sunscreen, they are putting themselves at risk for skin cancer, which can be painful, costly, and deadly. According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC) website, skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the United States with about 4.3 million cases every year.

Skin cancer is caused by ultraviolet (UVA) rays given off by the sun, and too much exposure can damage skin cells, which can lead to many different types of skin cancer, the most serious being Melanoma. The CDC website rec-

ommends that people protect themselves from UV light not only in the summer, but all year round. UV rays can affect the skin even on cold days, cloudy days, or in the reflection of the ground or water. The CDC recommends always checking the UV index, and anything over a "3" warrants using sunscreen.

Melanoma is the third most common type of skin cancer and the deadliest, according to the CDC. The Skin Cancer Foundation states, "melanoma is more dangerous because of its ability to spread to other organs more rapidly if it is not treated at an early stage." Early detection is key, and melanoma can appear anywhere on the body, even on normal looking skin. Both

the CDC and the Skin Cancer Foundation recommend reporting unusual moles or spots on the skin to a doctor for further guidance.

One of the best ways to protect the skin is to wear sunscreen. The CDC recommends choosing a "broad spectrum" sunscreen that protects against both UVA and UVB rays with sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or higher. The higher the SPF, the more protection the sunscreen will provide. Dr. Anne K. Julian, Ph. D from the National Cancer Institute (in an article featured on the CDC website) says to "use more [sunscreen] than you think you need" because "studies have shown that consumers use much less sunscreen than is needed to effectively protect." Make

sure to put sunscreen on all exposed skin and reapply at least every two hours especially after swimming or sweating. In addition, the CDC recommends making sure to check the sunscreen's expiration date to ensure maximum protection.

Dr. Julian also states that "sunscreen isn't an all-protective force field. It is intended to be combined with other sun safety approaches." She recommends "covering the skin with clothing, staying in the shade, wearing a hat, and scheduling activities to avoid times of day when the sun is most intense (10 AM- 4 PM)."

When applying these sun safety methods, one can enjoy the outdoors safely and lower the risk of skin cancer.

For more information, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/skin/index.htm> and <https://www.skin-cancer.org/>.

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Running has many benefits, from better physical health to better mental health, including being able to boost one's mood. Pictured below are runners at a past Forestburgh 5K. While that race recently ended after many wonderful years, there are several other local races to participate in. Pictured at bottom left is Audrey and Angela Wheeler during the 2019 B.A.T.S. Run for Vets.



Going the distance for health and high spirits

BY JOSEPH ABRAHAM

Running or even walking a 5K or longer distance race is an amazing feeling. Not only because you're participating in something that's good for your health but also because of the camaraderie on display. Strangers or lifelong friends, at these events, everyone cheers one another on. Some health benefits of running and jogging, according to health experts, include building strong bones, strengthening muscles, improving cardiovascular fitness and maintaining a healthy weight. On the cardiovascular side, WebMD says, "Running for just 50 minutes each week at a moderate pace can lower your risk of heart

disease." That's 10 minutes, five days a week, even less if you run a few minutes each day. Also, running's benefits go beyond physical health. WebMD also states that running can reduce stress, boost one's mood, help some relieve symptoms of anxiety and depression, as well as improve sleep. While most people are safe for a brisk walk, it's recommended to speak with your doctor before starting a running program. According to an article published by Harvard University's Medical School, titled, "Do you need to see a doctor before starting your exercise program?," they suggested one

do so if: You are extremely unsteady on your feet; You have dizzy spells or take medicine that makes you feel dizzy or drowsy; or you have a chronic or unstable health condition, such as heart disease (or several risk factors for heart disease), asthma or another respiratory ailment, high blood pressure, osteoporosis, or diabetes. Once you've got the green light, an abundance of benefits await. While we've discussed the health side of running, it should be stated that there are several local races that not only provide someone with a vehicle to challenge themselves and compete against others, but also raise money for extremely important causes.

Here are just a few upcoming events!
The Turtle Trot: July 17, 2021
 Proceeds from this race, which boasts a scenic course around Kenoza Lake, benefit families struck with catastrophic illnesses. For more info, visit runsignup.com/Race/NY/Jeffersonville/TurtleTrot10Kand5K.
Delaware Youth Center River Run: July 18, 2021
 This annual race in Callicoon, NY benefits the Delaware Youth Center — a community staple that's been around for decades, promoting educational and recreational opportunities for young people in the area so they can socialize and

meet each other. For more info about the race, visit delawareyouthcenter.org/the-river-run.
The Monster Classic: August 1, 2021
 The Monticello Rotary Club and Resorts World Catskills are partnering together for the 43rd chapter in this race which benefits the Sullivan County Veterans Coalition. For more information, visit raceroster.com/events/2021/48467/the-43rd-annual-monster-classic-5k-and-10k-road-races.
Roosa Gap Roller Coaster Runs - Sept. 26, 2021
 This race is graciously hosted by the Sullivan Striders Running Club

and The Mamakating First Aid and Rescue Squad. Proceeds from the race benefit the PFC Jerry B. Evans Memorial Scholarship Fund. For more info, visit runsignup.com/Race/NY/Wurtsboro/39thAnnualRoosaGapRollerCoasterRuns. Two other races to keep an eye on are the Begin Against Transitional Services (B.A.T.S.) Run for Vets usually slated for sometime in the summer, as well as the Vintage Run Half Marathon and 5K which takes place in Bethel each fall. Both dates are TBD. For more info about the Run for Vets, visit batsforvets.org. For the Vintage Run, visit vintageruns.com.

Important Action Step:

Ensure your child or teen is fully vaccinated

Summer is in full swing, but school, with in-person learning, is returning this fall. By making sure that your child is up to date on vaccinations, you can ensure they return to the classroom safely.

COVID-19 disrupted many parts of our lives, including in-person education and doctors' visits for children. That meant many have fallen behind on receiving recommended vaccines. More than 400,000 fewer vaccine doses were administered to children and teens in New York State outside of New

York City in 2020 compared with 2019, according to the New York State Immunization Information System. Across the country, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) found that vaccine rates dropped 14% in 2020-2021 compared to 2019.

Planning on traveling internationally before school starts? As travel increases, the risk of outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases in New York State increases. The CDC recommends that international travelers be up to date on routine vaccinations, regardless of



By Dr. Joseph Chavez Carey
Medical Director for Primary Care
Garnet Health Doctors

travel unprotected.

Before those school bells ring again, remember that New York State requires all students to receive certain immunizations before being allowed to attend classes. The CDC recommends that all children receive the following vaccines: Chickenpox, Diphtheria, Hepatitis A and B, Human Papillomavirus, Measles, Meningococcal Disease, Mumps, Pertussis, Polio, Pneumococcal Disease, Rubella and Tetanus.

Measles, also called rubella, can be serious and even fatal for small children; that's why that vaccina-

school requirements. Some diseases prevented by routine vaccines rarely occur in the United States. However, these diseases can be much more common in other countries. Make sure you are up to date on your vaccines, and don't

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tion is so critical. CDC data show that measles vaccinations were down by more than 20% in 2020 compared to 2019. Symptoms begin to appear around 10 to 14 days after infection and typically include fever, dry cough, runny nose, sore throat, inflamed eyes, tiny white spots with bluish-white centers on a red background inside the mouth or cheek, and a skin rash with large, flat blotches. Measles are highly contagious and can be spread by coughs and sneezes. If you believe you or your child has been exposed to measles or see a rash resembling measles, call your doctor right away.

The seasonal flu vaccine also should be a priority. The CDC strongly advises that everyone 6 months and older receive a flu vac-

cine each autumn. The flu, while a routine illness for some, can lead to severe health complications and death for others. Every flu season is different, and each season's vaccine is tailored to battle the most commonly anticipated flu strains. During 2019-2020, flu vaccination prevented an estimated 7.5 million influenza illnesses, 3.7 million influenza-associated medical visits, 105,000 influenza-associated hospitalizations, and 6,300 influenza-associated deaths according to the CDC.

Don't forget about the COVID-19 vaccination. The CDC recommends that everyone 12 years and older receive a vaccination. Although more adults than children have been infected with COVID-19, children can still

become infected and spread the virus – especially to classmates when they return to school in the fall.

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About Joseph Chavez Carey, MD, FAAFP

Primary Care Medical Director, Dr. Joseph Chavez Carey, is Board-certified in Family Medicine. He received his medical degree from New York University School of Medicine and completed his internship and residency at Contra Costa Regional Medical Center in California. Dr. Chavez Carey sees patients of all ages – including kids – and is fluent in Spanish. He is a Castle Connolly Top Doctor and was ranked as the 2018 Favorite Doc by Hudson Valley Parent.

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Providing affordable hearing help

BY SAMANTHA MONTAGNA



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Pictured above is the Catskill Hearing Center's hearing test. The business is located at 343 East Broadway in Monticello. You can call 845-794-7766 for more info.

Stuart Kabak opened the Catskill Hearing Center in February 1985 with the goal of providing affordable hearing aids while providing personal individualized care. Kabak told the **Democrat** he became motivated to help those who were hearing impaired while working as a waiter when he tried to speak with a woman who was deaf. After, he decided to go to SUNY Brockport to obtain his bachelor's degree in audiology.

Kabak moved to California and opened a chain of hearing centers but soon found that with a larger business, he could not provide personalized care. He soon moved back to Sullivan County where he grew up and opened the Catskill Hearing Center where he held the goal of staying small to

ensure the best care to his clients.

Catskill Hearing Center offers hearing testing, hearing aid repairs, ear molds, batteries, and the hearing aids themselves at a "reasonable and affordable cost." Kabak stated that he knows of other places selling hearing aids for thousands of dollars to pay for commissions and advertising. He cited one competitor who charges \$7,000 for a set of hearing aids, something that Kabak stated he is not interested in doing. "There are a lot of people who need the help and cannot afford hearing aids at inflated prices," Kabak stated.

"We're a small hole-in-the-wall office," and he can keep prices low because his overhead is low, he does not advertise much, and he keeps his staff small, Kabak

said. He said he is the one who sees clients, and he has another audiologist that he works with in cases that need an advanced diagnosis.

He said he is best known for providing premium brands of hearing aids such as Starkey and Unitron at lower prices. Kabak has also always provided home visits, which helped him to continue providing care throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Kabak stressed that hearing loss cannot be repaired, and hearing loss can occur due to age, genes, medications, or noise exposure. Hearing aids only help with the ability that is there. He also stressed that prevention is key. He said the Trading Post in Rock Hill or Liberty sell ear plugs for \$.39 cents that do a great job of preventing hearing loss in loud places.

Kabak stated that his center

accepts most insurances, no referral is needed, and they are open Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and by appointment on Thursdays and Saturdays. If someone suspects they are suffering from hearing loss, they can call to make an appointment, and Kabak will test their hearing and ask a few questions. If the answers to the questions indicate a medical problem, by law, Kabak said, he will refer the client to a doctor for additional testing. If the client can benefit from "hearing amplification," then Kabak will discuss the options he can provide.

Kabak stated that he was happy where he was and does not have plans to expand as it is his goal to provide the best customer care for the people of Sullivan County who need help with their hearing needs.



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Nursing Students gain practical insights through on-site experience

New Hope Community, in Loch Sheldrake, is forging forward with a collaborative partnership with SUNY Sullivan to provide nursing students with an invaluable clinical rotation involving the provision of healthcare supports to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD).

CEO, Debra McGinness, whose career began as a pediatric nurse, extolled the importance of this program, saying "It is critical to equip nursing professionals with a comprehensive understanding of how best to holistically support patients with special needs. Optimal health care experiences can only be realized when all health care professionals understand the nuances and needs of patients with I/DD."

The weekly program complements students' academic coursework. "The program has been an excellent experience for the students because it opens their eyes to working with a population whose needs may not be addressed in the typical nursing school curriculum," said Karen Russell, Chief Operating Officer, New

Hope Community. While developmental disabilities affect a small portion of the population – 1 to 3 percent globally -- meeting their needs can be quite complex. "This is an ideal opportunity to change perceptions and to build practical skills that nurses can use throughout their careers," Russell said.

"The program is innovative and fills a void," noted Karen Kerendian, RN, Director of Health Services for New Hope Community, "because it brings together the expertise of educators and health professionals working within the I/DD community to prepare students for addressing the physical, social and emotional well-being of people with disabilities."

The program is an outgrowth of New Hope Community's partnership with SUNY Sullivan which has included the establishment and operation of a 3-acre organic farm on its campus and enrollment services for individuals with disabilities from New Hope Community in the College for Educational Enrichment Program.

Since signing an agreement in



Nursing students meet with their clinical instructor at New Hope Community to receive their assignments and goals for the day.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

2019, 65 students have rotated through the clinical rotation program. Students start their day at New Hope Community in a classroom setting with their instructor and are assigned to group residences on the NHC campus where their education continues. The visiting students are encouraged to observe and ask questions of the nursing staff, and residential managers, and shadow the one-on-one direct support professionals, who comprise the New Hope Community team.

"We are excited about the program and are happy to welcome the nursing students and work with them so they are comfortable caring for people who might have different ways of

communicating or use adaptive equipment they are not familiar with," said Kerendian. "We are able to draw on our experience, share some of the tools we use and to be there for them as a resource."

In addition to ensuring that people with disabilities are approached with respect and understanding, Russell believes the program could open students' minds toward pursuing careers in disabilities services or similar nursing opportunities.

"We hope this will serve as a model for nursing programs across the country to start gradually closing the awareness gap for intellectual and other developmental disabilities in health care," Russell concluded.

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River Safety on the Upper Delaware River

Summer is a wonderful time to come and enjoy the Upper Delaware River whether it is fishing, boating, swimming, or floating. But being on or near the river has its risks and everyone should follow safe river practices.

One of the most important pieces of safety equipment is the life jacket which will keep you afloat if you find yourself in the river intentionally or unintentionally but not everyone wears a life jacket, or they are not worn properly.

Unfortunately, since Memorial Day weekend, four people have drowned while boating, swimming, or wading in the Upper Delaware River. Three were not wearing a life jacket and the fourth wasn't wearing a properly fitted life jacket. This brings the total number of drownings since 1980 up to 73.

It is important to remember that boating and alcohol don't mix. Alcohol can impair decision making and response time in an emergency situation. Think twice about boating under the influence.

Many people enjoy swimming or wading in the river but are unaware of the dangers. Sudden drop-offs, deep holes, and swift currents are typical of the Upper Delaware River. Most drownings in the Upper Delaware River occurred while swimming. Wear a Life Jacket.

Never swim alone and do not try



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Boaters enjoying a rafting trip while wearing their life jackets.

to fight the current. If you step into deep water, float with the current until you are able to swim toward the shore. A life jacket, throw line, and first aid kits are recommended. The Delaware River is unpredictable and rocks in the river and along the bank are slippery. Walk carefully and wear protective footwear.

Always wear a properly fitted Life Jacket. All vessels on the Upper Delaware are required to have a readily accessible, wearable type, Coast Guard approved life jacket for each person on board. Inner tubes are considered vessels on the Upper Delaware and require life jackets.

Children 12 and under are required to wear their life jackets when boating on the river. When wearing a life jacket, it is important to make sure it is properly fitted and secured.

Never tie a Life Jacket into a vessel. A Life Jacket tied to a boat cannot save your life. If your boat capsizes, be ready to help yourself. Keep upstream of the craft; float on your back with your feet forward and close to the surface to fend off any rocks.

Never stand up in fast-moving water; your feet or legs could become trapped, allowing the current to push you under. Release your boat only if it improves your

safety. A canoe, even filled with water, is a good floatation device, but be sure to stay upstream of your vessel. The force of the water can easily pin a person between their vessel and a river obstacle.

Before you go out into the river, find out what to expect by calling the River Information Hotline: (845) 252-7100. This recording is updated daily with reports of air and water temperatures and river heights.

The National Park Service reminds river users to follow these safety tips to ensure a safe and enjoyable visit to one of America's most scenic and recreational rivers.



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