

<< **CRP (Continued): 1. Brush and floss.** Research now links gum disease and tooth loss with a higher risk of atherosclerosis and higher CRP levels. Though doctors don't know how or even whether the bacteria travel from one site to the other, one theory is that mouth bacteria enter the bloodstream directly through the inflamed gum tissues. The best defense is dental hygiene: brush at least twice a day with a soft-bristle brush, and floss daily.

**2. Butt out.** "When you smoke a cigarette, over a thousand chemicals enter your body, many of them irritants that get into the bloodstream, triggering an inflammatory response," says William Joel Meggs, M.D., Ph.D., author of *The Inflammation Cure* (McGraw-Hill, 2004). Quitting the habit immediately reduces inflammation and eventually reduces the risk of cardiovascular disease back to levels for nonsmokers.

**3. Banish the belly.** Any excess poundage - especially belly fat - is a possible inflammation inducer. To battle that killer belly fat, you'll need regular aerobic exercise. You can burn 500 calories by walking five miles a day!

**4. Rethink your diet.** Fatty, cholesterol-laden foods can clog arteries. But if some foods hurt our arteries, other foods can help protect them. Leading the pack of good foods (rich in inflammation-fighting omega-3 fatty acids) are olive oil, walnuts and cold-water fish such as salmon, mackerel and herring. For optimal heart health, choose whole grains over processed white flour and eat at least five servings of fruits and vegetables daily.

**5. Stay in for lunch.** Long-term exposure to air pollution - specifically from car exhaust and coal-fired power plants - poses a greater risk of death from heart disease than from respiratory ailments. Since air and ozone pollution tend to peak between noon and 4:00 p.m., try to limit outdoor activities. Additionally, whenever you exercise, the farther you are from busy streets with a lot of traffic, the better.

**6. Don't have a cow.** Anxious or depressed people have higher rates of heart disease. Meditation and other stress-management strategies in combination with a heart-healthy diet, exercise, laughter and owning a pet may reverse heart disease!

**7. Raise a glass.** Red wine grabs the headlines for its antioxidant-fueled, heart-helping abilities, but studies show that any alcohol - in moderate doses - has an anti-inflammatory effect. So, keeping inflammation to a minimum makes good sense! *ggd* ☺

# Choice

February 2009  
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The Newsletter Of AARP Chapter 1952  
Warner Robins, Georgia  
"To Serve - Not To Be Served"  
[www.Choice1952.com](http://www.Choice1952.com)

Meeting Dates/Time: **Wednesday, February 25<sup>th</sup>** (10:00 A.M.) and **Wednesday, March 25<sup>th</sup>** (10:00 A.M.)  
Location: Wellston Center - 152 Maple Street | Warner Robins, GA 31093

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			Nancy Harrison	922-1526

### Birthdays For February

Irene Hughes 2<sup>nd</sup> Lillian Werner 7<sup>th</sup> Miriam Buchmaster 13<sup>th</sup> Jean A. Berry 24<sup>th</sup>

### Birthdays For March

T.C. Ayres 3<sup>rd</sup> Marcella Cunningham 3<sup>rd</sup> Mattie Nash 5<sup>th</sup> Betty Jordan 6<sup>th</sup>  
Linda Hartley 6<sup>th</sup> Nancy Booth 10<sup>th</sup> Sara Dimino 16<sup>th</sup> Louise Mullis 16<sup>th</sup>  
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Hattie Taylor 28<sup>th</sup> Bernice Poole 30<sup>th</sup>

### WE CARE

*For each new morning with its light, For rest and shelter of the night, For health and food, For love and friends, For everything Thy goodness sends. Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882) "Blessed are those who mourn, For they shall be comforted." Matthew 5:4*

**Day At The Capital:** We still need signups for the trip - presently scheduled for **Thursday, March 12, 2009!** An invitation to attend has also been extended to AARP members in Montezuma, Macon and other "local" chapters. We plan to lobby our legislators to pass the AARP state goals for our one million members. This fun trip will cost members nothing and lunch will be provided! Additional details will be presented at the meeting so let's all get involved.

Frank/Greg

## Middle Georgia Community Crusade

- **Monday, April 27 and Tuesday, April 28, 2009. | 6:30 P.M.**
- Location: Miller-Murphy-Howard Building [Georgia National Fairgrounds] | Perry, GA
  - Guest Speaker: **Dr. Tony Evans**
- **Wednesday, April 29 and Thursday, April 30, 2009 | 6:30 P.M.**
- Location: Second Baptist Church | 2504 Moody Road | Warner Robins, GA
- Guest Speakers: **Evangelist Nick Vujicic** and **Evangelist Willie Raines**

Tel: 478/953-7480 | [www.MiddleGeorgiaCommunityCrusade.com](http://www.MiddleGeorgiaCommunityCrusade.com)

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**AARP Defensive Driving Classes:** For local classes contact Lynn Partillo (478/971-4473) or Paul Bennett (478/783-1988)

**AARP Tax Aide (February 1 – April 15, 2009):** Contact: 478/929-6960

**Editor's Notes:** Chapter membership (total names versus **active/current dues-paying members**) reveals a "financial imbalance" that directly impacts our ability to publish and mail our newsletter. Consequently, **DURING THE JANUARY 2009 MEETING THE MEMBERS PRESENT VOTED TO TEMPORARILY SUSPEND MASS MAILINGS AND REDUCE THE NUMBER OF PRINTED NEWSLETTERS.** Newsletters will be available at our meetings and will continue to be mailed to our advertisers and sponsors. Please renew/update your membership ... still a "bargain" at only **\$5.00/year!**

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Please contact me at **478/318-0471** and/or via e-mail at **gdavismail@gmail.com!**

Sincerely,

**Greg (Formerly Known As "Da Baby") Davis** ggd ☺

### Shield Your Heart

By Sid Kirchheimer/AARP/The Magazine/January & February 2006

Your immune system can go into overdrive and damage your ticker. Here's what you can do:

Slash your skin or catch a cold and you'll be thankful for inflammation, a physical reaction that is one of the body's key germ-fighting maneuvers. The obvious signs of inflammation - redness, swelling, and warmth - are evidence that your immune system is working: waging war against marauding microbes and trying to protect surrounding tissue from possible infection.

Usually, once the threat subsides, so does inflammation, and you begin to heal. But inflammatory conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis and asthma; long-term infections; persistent insults such as smoking, obesity, and high blood pressure; or even a genetic predisposition can trigger a state of chronic inflammation. When the immune system doesn't get to shut down, it does damage to the body - including your cardiovascular system.

Growing evidence shows that atherosclerosis, or hardening of the arteries, results at least in part from chronic low-grade inflammation, says Robert O. Bonow, M.D., Chief of Cardiology at Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine in Chicago and former president of the American Heart Association. First, a state of continuous inflammation may contribute to the development of plaques on the artery walls. But more important, there's very strong evidence that when patients already have some plaque buildup - as we all do by age 50 - the immune system perceives this as an injury, sparking more inflammation. "White blood cells that are involved in the inflammatory response attack the plaque," says Bonow. "In doing so, the plaque can rupture, initiating a blood clot." That may explain why half of all heart attacks and strokes occur in people with normal or even low cholesterol levels, says Paul Ridker, M.D., M.P.H., director of the Center for Cardiovascular Disease Prevention at Harvard's Brigham and Women's Hospital. One in four of these events - which afflict some 2 million Americans a year—strikes people who don't smoke or have high blood pressure, diabetes, or high cholesterol. "Our research finds that people with high inflammation levels but low cholesterol have a worse survival rate than people with high cholesterol and low inflammation," says Ridker, who is widely considered a pioneer in researching the inflammation-cardiovascular disease link.

A simple blood test can determine your inflammation level by measuring the C-reactive protein (CRP), a molecule produced by the liver in response to an inflammatory signal. A CRP reading above 3.0 milligrams per liter means a tripled risk of heart attack, even when cholesterol levels are normal. Here's how to lower your CRP level.

**SEE CRP >>**

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