

## Area Bloggers



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# Shingles Are a Good Thing - By Ruth Dockins

MAY 18TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Shingles Are a Good Thing - By Ruth Dockins

**Age Spots – Ruth Dockins**

Shingles are a good thing

Well, shingles are a good thing to have on your house but you really don't want them on your body. I have heard about Shingles all my life but until recently thought they were just a little "itchy" and no big deal. It turns out they are a **very** big deal!

If you have had chickenpox, and more than 90% of adults in America have, you are at risk for Shingles. Shingles is caused by the same virus that causes chickenpox. Once a person has had chickenpox, the virus can live, but remain inactive, in certain nerve roots within your body for many years. If it becomes active again, usually in later life, it can cause Shingles.

The first signs of Shingles are often felt and may not be seen. These can include: itching, tingling, burning. A few days later a rash of fluid-filled blisters appears (usually on one side of the body or face). The blisters may take 2 to 4 weeks to heal.

For most people, the pain from the Shingles rash lessens as it heals. After the rash heals, however, Shingles may lead to pain that lasts for months or even years in some people. This long-term nerve pain, called postherpetic neuralgia or PHN, occurs because the virus that causes Shingles may damage certain nerves. For many people with long-term nerve pain, even the touch of soft clothing against the skin can be painful.

Other serious problems that may result from Shingles include skin infection, muscle weakness, scarring and decrease of loss of vision or hearing.

The older you get the more you're at risk for Shingles. This is because your body can't defend itself against the virus that causes Shingles as well as it could when you were younger. Statistics show that about half of the nearly 1 million Shingles cases in the United States each year occur in people 60 and older. 1 out of 2 people who live to age 85 will have Shingles. The older you get the more you're at risk for long-term nerve pain.

There is a vaccine now for Shingles, it is effective more than 50% of the time and those cases where Shingles do occur are generally less painful. You should ask your doctor about the vaccine. If you have Medicare Prescription Drug coverage your plan should be responsible for the vaccine and the injection with you being responsible only for the co-pay. **One word of warning** ...be sure and ask the provider if they are a participating provider of your Medicare Prescription Drug plan and will they bill the plan directly. If you have questions regarding this article please contact me at 573-335-3331 or 1-800-392-8771.

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## Hello, Neighbor Featuring Delores Bailiff

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APRIL 27TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

## Hello, Neighbor

Written by Nancy Nelson Vines

“I am blessed. God is good to me,” replies Delores Bailiff, when asked about her motivation to serve the Dexter community. Her dedication to her hometown and her modesty are evident by the many service awards that adorn a wall of her home. Proud of her accomplishments, but not to toot her own horn, the varied plaques of appreciation hang inconspicuously in the kitchen above the table--displayed along with kitchen-themed trinkets and a framed drawing of Dexter landmarks.

“As a child I moved quite a bit, and attended several different schools. When I was a senior in high school, my dad was transferred to Poplar Bluff, and immediately upon graduation we moved there. Maybe my moving around is what made me want to be a part of the Dexter community when I settled here after I married.”

She and her future husband met accidentally, or by fate, when he accompanied his sister to Charles Miller Dress Shop in downtown Poplar Bluff. Delores was there with a friend, and the handsome Navy pilot caught her eye. He was nine years older, but through some creative scheming on her part, the pair became acquainted, then became a couple, and eventually married. Her husband of forty-four years was from Dexter, and when they moved here upon their marriage in 1953, Delores embraced the town as her own.

“I loved this town from the first time I saw it. In fact, on our first night-time date, Bill took me to the Hickory Log.”

“We agreed that I would be a stay-at-home mom, but when the kids came along, I began to volunteer to be involved in their activities.” Delores relates that she has always been involved in church, but her first foray into community service came with membership in the PTA, which is now PTO; then came Park and Recreation and Girl Scouts. It was through her role as a Girl Scout leader, as-a-matter-of-fact, that led Delores to decide to go to college and pursue an education degree.

“At a Girl Scout award ceremony held in Cape, Dr. Scully spoke to the girls about going into education. He was so inspiring, that I came home and told Bill that I

thought I wanted to go to school.”

She began at Three Rivers, and then finished her coursework at SEMO, graduating in 1973. The Dexter schools employed her as a teacher for fourteen years before she retired. During that time she was actively involved in both the Community Teachers Association and the Missouri State Teachers Association.

Today, she continues her interest in teachers' issues as a member of Missouri Retired



Teachers Association. After her retirement from teaching, her concern for education and her love of the Dexter schools led her to serve on the Dexter School Board for twelve years.

“I have enjoyed being a part of this community, and feeling as if I have made a difference,” Delores says, “but, of course, I have to limit myself these days.” Her first priority is church, and the activities associated with that. Delores teaches a Bible study at Central Gardens on Saturday and Cypress Gardens on Sunday.

On Wednesday night during the school year she works with fifth-graders at First Baptist Church, and will assist with Bible School there this summer.

Currently she serves on the Regional Health Care Foundation Board of Directors, and on the Planning and Zoning Commission. She also is active in Church Women United and Daughters of the American Revolution. In addition to activities previously mentioned, Delores has also volunteered her time and talents to Eastern Star and the Dexter Downtown Association.

“I am a blessed woman. God is good to me.” Those are the words Delores Bailiff uses to describe herself; however, those who have had the pleasure of her company through the years, would probably say that the blessing is Delores, herself.

***Shown in the photo above is Delores Bailiff looking over the Bible lesson she will present at local nursing homes.***

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## Hello, Neighbor Featuring Pat Myers

APRIL 23RD 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Hello, Neighbor Featuring Pat Myers

Hello, Neighbor

Written by Nancy Nelson Vines

"There's no place like home," Dorothy tells Aunty Em, and for Pat Myers those words resonate to a place deep within her.

"I left Puxico in 1963, after finishing my eighth grade year. I had gone to school there since third grade, and felt a real connection to my classmates," she explains. As anyone who has attended a small school knows, the friendships forged there are special because everyone in class is your friend.

"Every school day for six years I spent seven hours a day with the same people. Then, I moved to St. Louis and enrolled in Roosevelt High School where I was in a class of 400. I made friends, of course, but it wasn't the same."

Shortly after finishing high school Pat met her future husband Larry on a church trip to the St. Louis Zoo. "Larry was from Arnold and had attended school at

Mehlville, so we did not know each other. This was an outing sponsored by several area churches, and he just happened to sit next to me on the bus. He pestered me the entire day," she fondly recalls. A short time later he asked her out on a date, and six months later they married. Larry worked for Bell Telephone and was eventually transferred to Houston, Texas. There they lived for the next forty years and raised two daughters.

"I never felt like I was at home," Pat says. "I don't mean I wasn't happy because we were very happy with our life there, but something inside of me was just a little unsettled." As thoughts of retirement began to stir, Pat felt a twinge of longing for the place where she felt "at home."

"I began by idly scanning the internet looking at houses and land around Puxico. I never really thought we would come back to this area," she says in amazement. "I honestly was only looking." As she broadened her search to include more of Southeast Missouri, however, she began to think that maybe they could do this.

"I always told Larry how pretty this area was, with all the wildlife, flowers, and birds. I remember seeing roadrunners in the cotton rows when I was a little girl chopping cotton. He also understood my emotional ties, and how happy my school days in Puxico had been."

Things began to "get real" for Pat when an older home in Bloomfield caught her eye. The couple made a trip to check it out, purchased the home, and three years later made the move to Southeast Missouri.

The couple's devotion to their home is obvious, as they have spent much of the past two years updating, refurbishing, and redecorating. Among Pat's many talents are interior design, sewing, and landscaping. "I am happiest when I am working, and nothing makes me happier than working around my home."

Through [classmates.com](https://www.classmates.com) and Facebook, Pat has reconnected with many of her old friends.

"We have been apart for forty years, so it is like starting over to rebuild the friendships we once shared; however, I truly believe that 'connection' is still there," she says. The couple is also busy making new friends in their adopted hometown of Bloomfield.

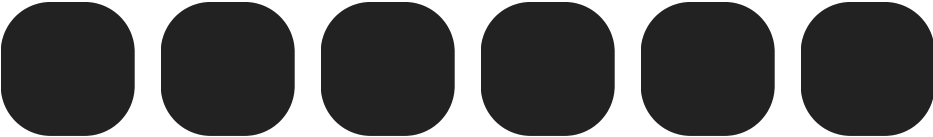
Standing in their lovely yard, with yet more plants waiting to be planted, Pat glances around. "This is home," she whispers lovingly.

Shown in the photo is Pat Myers as she pauses beside one of her beloved yard angels in her historic home in Bloomfield, Missouri.

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## National Kindergarten Day

APRIL 21ST 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

[National Kindergarten Day](#)

National Kindergarten Day is celebrated annually on April 21st.

This day honors Friedrich Wilhelm August Frobel (April 21, 1782 – June 21, 1852) who is credited for starting the very first Kindergarten in Germany in 1837.

Froebel was a German teacher and a student of Pestalozzi who laid the foundation for modern education based on the recognition that children have unique needs and capabilities. He created the concept of the “kindergarten” through play and activity institute as a social experience for children for their transition from home to school.

His goal was that children should be taken care of and nourished in “children’s gardens” like plants in a garden.

Today, most states in the United States offer free kindergarten to children ages five and six. Kindergarten is a fun and memorable time in the “social experience of the transition from home to school.”

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## Medicare Part C and Part D Options by Ruth Dockins

MARCH 17TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN



### **Medicare Part C and Medicare Part D Options**

The Center for Medicare/Medicaid Services (CMS) sent out notices around the end of February to individuals who are enrolled in Part C or Part D plans, if the plan has earned less than three stars for three consecutive years during the recent annual enrollment period. The plans can get ratings between 1 and 5 stars. 5 stars meaning excellent and 1 star being poor.

This notice was to alert beneficiaries to the sponsor or organization's low rating and to inform enrollees of an opportunity to contact CMS to request a special enrollment period to move into a higher quality plan in 2015.

If you received one of these notices you may want to make a change to another plan. To make a change you should call 1-800-medicare (1-800-633-4227). If you are having no problems with the plan and want to continue with it you may do so. If you have questions about this you may call our office at 1-800-392-8771 or locally at 335-3331.

#### **Premium Assistance**

Please don't forget that our office can assist you with applications for assistance paying your Part B, C or D premium if you meet the income guidelines. If you are single and have monthly income of \$1,471 or less and resources (things you own not counting your house and car) of \$13,640 or less you would be eligible for assistance paying your premium for Part D. If you are married the monthly income could be \$1,991 or less with resources of \$27,250 or less to get help paying the premium for Part D.

To get help paying the premium for Medicare Part B (\$104.90 per month this year) you would need to have monthly income of \$1,345 or less as a single person or \$1,813 or less as a married couple with resources of \$7,280 or less for a single person or \$10,930 or less as a married couple.

If you have questions about any of this information or need help applying for the benefits please call my office at 1-800-392-8771 or locally at 335-3331.

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