



# USAP News

United Seniors Association of Pittsburgh

[www.usaofpittsburgh.org](http://www.usaofpittsburgh.org)

Volume 4 Issue 2

April 2022



Welcome to the Spring Issue of the USAP News. There is much to report and look forward to upcoming planned events. With the coming of the Spring and easing of Covid restrictions, we all look forward to in-person meetings more often in 2022. In fact, many members have expressed their strong desire for USAP to resume meetings in person. Our first in-person meeting for 2022 is scheduled for Sunday, April

17, 2022 at ICC with a talk on **Advances in the Treatment of Blocked Arteries of the Heart, by a renowned cardiologist Dr. Suresh Mulukutla**. This program has been long in the planning and should not be missed.

USAP continues to grow and evolve. With membership at record high, focus now is how to serve best the many needs of the seniors. The **Humanitarian Committee** of USAP chaired by Devayani Pandit, became active this year and will explore the many needs of the seniors and means to tackle them. Also becoming active in 2022 is the **Garden Club**, chaired by Rajnikant Popat which will bring about lots of social interactivity in a sub group of members who have passionate interest in gardening. More such special-interest groups will be forthcoming depending upon the interest shown and the member who is willing to take a lead.

Our **Tours and Travel committee** has been most active this year. A trip to **Costa Rica** was most popular as it sold out almost immediately after its announcement. Fortunately, the committee was able to arrange a second group with the same itinerary and price structure to accommodate the immense interest we received from the members. Another tour that has been arranged this year is a domestic tour to prominent **National Parks**.

Other new programs to look forward to include a **Weekend Retreat to Vraj** and a **River Cruise** on the Allegheny rivers. The popular **Melody Makers Karaoke** is planned in May of 2022.

USAP is certainly making progress. All this is possible thanks to the very active members on the Executive Board and the encouragement and support received from the community. The support shown is in form of membership that is at record highs and continues to grow. We have a large community of seniors who yet need to be reached despite the USAP News and e-mails that go out to over a thousand families. Members can serve as an important link with the community inviting their personal friends to USAP events.

You can also help by providing your feedback, your likes and dislikes and suggestions for USAP to make it serve you even better.

## USAP TOTAL MEMBERSHIP

(AS OF MARCH 31, 2022)

**TOTAL Members : 317**

**Charter Members : 72**

**4 Year Members : 236**

**Annual Members : 9**

## CHARTER (LIFE) MEMBERS

Veena Agarwal  
Subash Ahuja  
Suhendar & Surinder Ajmani  
Kiran & Viharika Bakshi  
Dharam & Shashi Batish  
Devender & Pramila Batra  
Ranjan & Meena Bhandari  
Rajesh & Neelam Brahmbhatt  
Bharati Desai  
Dilip & Kirtida Desai  
Nainesh & Jayna Desai  
Amit & Sonali Ghosh  
Som & Sadhana Gupta  
Ved & Alka Kaushik  
Ravi Kolli  
Ashok & Indra Kumar  
Chetan & Leena Ladani  
Juginder & Dolly Luthra  
Vasanti Majmudar  
Vasu & Durga Malepati  
Dinesh & Manisha Mittal  
Khozem & Rezwana Mogri  
Pravin & Rekha Monpara  
Deviyani Pandit  
Kiran & Bharati Parikh  
Chetan & Bakula Patel  
Gauttam & Rita Patel  
Minaxi Patel  
Sudhir & Nilam Patel  
Kiran Patil

## CHARTER (LIFE) MEMBERS

Rajnikant & Bharati Popat  
Hemal & Dipali Purohit  
Ashok & Ranjana Sahai  
Surendra & Hira Sethi  
Brahma & Anita Sharma  
Krishna Sharma  
Adi & Jasmin Tamboli  
Girish & Lina Thakar  
Jamnadas & Kavita Thakkar  
Vijay & Arati Warty

## WARM WELCOME TO USAP

### NEW 4-YEAR MEMBERS

Subhas & Chhaya Bole  
Chandrasekhar & Saraswathi Golla  
Karan & Shashi Gupta  
Suresh & Rani Kumar  
Haresh & Prajna Malkani  
Sanjay & Amita Mehta  
Sunil Nagpal  
Mohan & Jayanthi Nama  
Mina Patel  
Shyam & Durga Somani  
Sandip & Smita Shah  
Tom Sharma  
Dilip & Shakuntala Shinde  
Shailesh & Urvashi Surti  
Shanti & Pramila Swarup

### NEW ANNUAL MEMBERS

Lakshmi pathi & Saraswathi Chelluri  
Mahesh & Sarla Desai  
Vasundhara Jain  
Deepak & Shobhita Kamath  
Jitendra & Raksha Modi  
Vinod & Bharati Patel

## JOIN US AND BE A PART OF THE EXCITING COMMUNITY OF USAP

**USAP:** United Senior Association of Pittsburgh Active Since Dec 2017

**Our Motto:** How to keep our Community Happy & Healthy

**Our Mission:** Healthy Living Through Education, Participation & Social Support

**Our Program Focus:** Health, Finance, Music, Entertainment, Sports, Travel Tours & Motivational Talks for Self-Enhancement

### Recent Program Events That Added Value to Our Community

31 Events in 2020 and 25 events in 2021 despite the Covid Pandemic: Yoga, Health-Fitness, Nutrition, Finance, Self-Motivation, Sport, Music including Grand Gala Music Concerts

**2022:** Personal Tax Planning, Saving & Management, Melody Makers Karaoke, Yoga, 8 Days National Park Tour (in Sep 2022) and 12 Days Costa Rica Tour (in Dec 2022), Advances in Treatment of Blocked Arteries of Heart, Weekend Retreat (in Aug 2022)

**We kindly request all our brothers and sisters, who are 50+, to please consider becoming USAP member and support us. Warm welcome to USAP Family.**

Annual Membership - \$30 per person,

4-Years (2022 thru 2025) Membership - \$100 per person, and

Charter Membership - \$500 per person for lifetime.

You can become USAP member **online by clicking the following link**

<https://www.unitedseniorsassociationofpittsburgh.org/index.php/membership/become-a-member>

or write a check Payable to "USAP" and send to following address:

Kiran Bakshi, USAP Treasurer

1031 Harvard Rd, Monroeville, PA 15146

### Happy Birthdays to Special USAP Members

**April:** Saroj Patel, Bharati Gandhi, Zarin Balaporia, Krishna Sharma, Alka Patel, Nainesh Desai, Pravin Monpara, Girish Kothari, Pushpa Patel

**May:** Jayanti Shah, Bharati Patel, Bhupendra Kamdar, Neelam Patel, Lakshmi Mirani

**June:** Bharat Monpara, Dayal Sutaria, Kirtida Desai, Gauttam Patel, Shashi Batish, Ranjan Bhandari, Subash Ahuja, Yogendra Gupta, Khozem Mogri, Tripta Goyal, Umera Khatri, Madhu Doshi, Alka Jhaveri





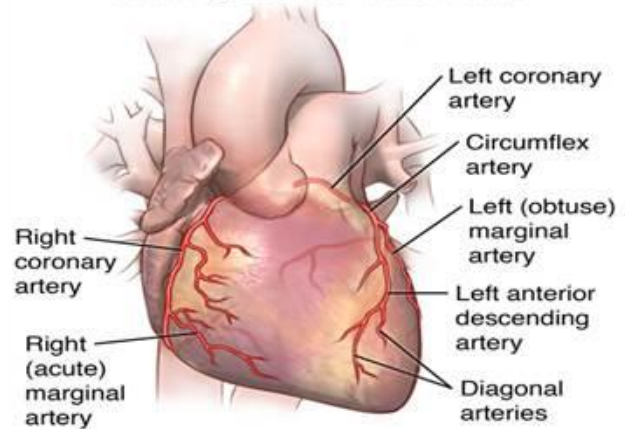
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# USAP Presents

## **Advances in Treatment of Blocked Arteries of Heart** *From Diagnosis to Medications to Intervention*

**Coronary artery disease** is one of the most common diseases in the adult population, especially among seniors. We have a highly qualified practicing interventional cardiologist, Dr. Suresh Mulukutla, who will bring us up to date in the diagnosis and treatment of blocked heart arteries and answer all our questions and concerns that we may have. Please do not miss the discussion on this important topic.

Coronary arteries of the heart



**Suresh Raghu Mulukutla, M.D.** comes from the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. He is an interventional cardiologist and is certified in general cardiology and interventional cardiology by the American Board of Internal Medicine. He is Chief of Cardiology at UPMC Passavant, a large suburban hospital within the UPMC Health System. He is Director of Analytics (Cardiology) for the UPMC Heart and Vascular Institute. He is an Associate Professor of Medicine at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine.

**SUNDAY, APRIL 17, 2022 AT 10:00 am**

**Indian Community Center, 205 Mary St, Carnegie, PA**

**Admission: Free RSVP: By Friday, April 15, 2022**

There is Masala Tea before the meeting and Delicious Lunch after the meeting.  
RSVP is strongly recommended, for proper food arrangement.

### Contact:

Chetan Patel 412-908-1711  
Subash Ahuja 412-216-8135  
Chetan Ladani 412-221-4837

Bhavna Mehta 412-443-0959  
Kiran Bakshi 412-841-2718  
Brahma Sharma 412-708-9128

# USAP TOURS & TRAVEL PROGRAMS FOR 2022

By Kiran Bakshi

After a pandemic-constrained hiatus of almost two years, USAP Tours & Travel program is excited to be back in action this year, with two wonderful tours organized for the USAP members.

1. **Domestic Tour of US National Parks:** This 8 Day tour, organized for September, 2022, covers the spectacular National Parks of Utah and Arizona, starting from Las Vegas and visiting Hoover Dam, Zion National Park, Bryce Canyon National Park, Monument Valley, Grand Canyon National Park and Sedona, returning back via Scottsdale Arizona.



At the present time, 12 USAP Members are scheduled to take advantage of this tour

2. **International 12 Day Kaleidoscope Tour of Costa Rica with Tortuguero :** This 12 Day tour, organized for December covers the wonderful natural attractions, wild life adventures, the famous Arenal Volcano, and the lush plantations of coffee, pineapple, sugar cane, and many tropical fruits along the way, starting from the capital of Costa Rica San Jose and covering most of the scenic tourist attractions from the Caribbean Sea Coast in the East to the Pacific Ocean in the West at Guanacaste.



The popularity of this tour for the USAP members has been impressive: The first group of 28 was booked within hours of the announcement! Subsequently, USAP Tours & Travel Committee was able to arrange another group tour with the same itinerary, and that too has been fully booked.

Thus 56 USAP members are scheduled to enjoy the Costa Rica Tour in December.

We appreciate the prompt response and interest in our program offerings and look forward to arranging similar tours in the coming years.

## USAP HUMANITARIAN COMMITTEE

HELPING HANDS ARE BETTER THAN PRAYING HANDS

By Devayani Pandit, [devipandit@aol.com](mailto:devipandit@aol.com)



With more than three hundred members and ever growing, it is time for USAP to undertake the important objective of USAP's mission statement – “- - - **and provide a forum that would encourage able seniors to help fellow seniors in need** - - -”.

Many of us are having health issues while some are experiencing isolation and loneliness, having lost their spouses and families living far away. It is time for us seniors to help one another during such time of need. Many a times all that is needed is caring support with periodic checking in with a phone call or a text message. It is the loving thought that counts. Some may need help with a ride to an appointment, or shopping, or delivery of food to their home.

It is for this purpose that the Humanitarian Committee has been created.

Here are some of the activities that can be undertaken. This is just a draft document and we will need your feedback with your suggestions and comments and your active support and participation.

### Action Plan

1. Develop a Directory of seniors who are in need of help and kind of help needed.
2. Develop a community of compassionate volunteers who are willing to provide such help.
3. Develop a forum, a website or a WhatsApp Group that would connect the people who need help and those who are in a position to help.
4. Meet regularly to review and revise the activities performed and discuss ways to improve upon them.
5. Provide regular reports to the Executive Board and the community.
6. Develop a Support Resource Directory for
  - 1) Health Issues
  - 2) Technology Support
  - 3) Estate Planning
  - 4) Finance and Tax Support
  - 5) Transportation Needs
  - 6) Daily Activities - Meal Planning, Housework, Grooming, recreation.

We also need a more catchy and appealing name for the committee than the generic humanitarian committee. Some names that have been suggested include: Helping Hands; Forever Young Club; Happy Hearts; Golden Years; Older & Wiser.

Please contact anyone of the committee members – for your feedback.

**Committee Members:** Devayani Pandit, Chairperson (412-443-6660); Dilip Desai (412-916-2473); Navin Kadakia (412-302-5495); Subash Ahuja (412-216-8135); Chetan Ladani (412-519-9024).

# USAP GARDEN CLUB

By Rajnikant Popat

## Garden Club FOR SENIORS

In an effort for USAP to reach out to all its members, a special-interest group of members who love nature and are interested in gardening has been newly formed. You are welcome to join us. Gardening keeps us engaged in the miraculous life that is constantly blossoming and blooming, does keep us physically and socially active, and enhances the quality of our lives. A few of us met informally over dinner and drafted a purpose and plan to get started.

### PURPOSE

To encourage and promote the hobby of home gardening for the members who love to see things grow, be it from a seed or a cutting, and have a passion for gardening and horticulture.

### ACTION PLAN

1. Let members know of the creation of the Garden Club.
2. Form a WhatsApp Group of people interested in joining, for easy interactive communication.
3. Team members will share with one another their knowledge and specialized skills, gardening tools, planting calendar, etc.
4. Learn from knowledgeable members or invited speakers about annuals, perennials, bulbs, orchids, cacti, bonsais, rose gardens, rock gardens, etc.
5. Take periodic field trips to botanical gardens, parks, interact with other gardeners.
6. Share resources such as gardening books, community events, articles, etc.
7. Conduct plant exchange events periodically at USAP in-person meeting events.

We hope the Garden Club will encourage further bonds of friendship among its members, and social interaction so important among seniors. The club will continue to evolve and more activities added as more members join.



**The committee members** are Rajnikant Popat (Chair), Veena Agarwal (Co-Chair), and Dilip Desai, Vasanti Majmudar, Chetan Patel and Subash Ahuja as members. We invite you to join us and we can all grow together.



# Custom Settings to Improve iPhone Experience for Seniors



By Dilip Desai



## Can you make iPhone elderly friendly?

The answer is yes! If you are wondering how to configure your iPhone to be more usable for older adults, this article is for you.

### 1. Increase Text Size

One of the useful options that iPhone offers to improve the readability is that it allows users to adjust the text size. Increasing the font size to the desired level will make the texts easier to read. Before handing over the iPhone to seniors make sure to enlarge the font size. Follow the below steps to increase the text size.



1. Navigate to **Settings**.
2. Select the option **Display & Brightness**.
3. Choose **Text Size**.
4. Adjust the slider and Slide the marker to the right to increase the size of the font.

### 2. Turn on or off Voice Dial

Voice Dial lets you call people on phone without touching and unlocking it. Enabling Voice Dial will let Siri access your phone even when it is locked. This feature can be extremely useful if your loved ones can't reach the phone physically but still need to call. Once this feature is enabled, simply say "Hey Siri" and then ask Siri to call someone. Siri places the call through your voice commands even when the device is locked. Follow the below steps to enable Voice Dial

1. Navigate to **Settings**.
2. Select the option **Touch ID or Face ID & Passcode** and enter your passcode.
3. Scroll down to **Voice Dial** and toggle it On or Off.



### 3. Turn on LED Flash for Alerts

Enabling LED flash for alerts ensures that your elder ones never miss a call, text or an app notification. Your iPhone blinks flashlight whenever you have a call or receive a message. Follow the below steps to enable LED Flash for Alerts.

1. Navigate to **Settings** and tap **Accessibility**.
2. Under the header Hearing, tap **Audio/Visual**.
3. Scroll down to **LED Flash for Alerts** and toggle it to **On**.





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## MANY BENEFITS OF INTERMITTENT FASTING

By Nina Ahuja, MD, Gastroenterologist



Although fasting is practiced by many people, intermittent fasting became popular only recently. It is especially beneficial to senior citizens as it boosts thinking and memory, improves heart health by lowering blood pressure and resting heart rate, and improves physical performance. It essentially means sticking to an eating method that cycles between periods of fasting and eating.

There are many ways to intermittent fasting. A 16/8 implies fasting for 16 hours and eating a healthy meal during the next 8 hour period. And a 5/2 would mean intermittent fasting for five days of the week and enjoying normal eating the next two days. Simply put, you fast until the calories from your last meal have been completely exhausted and you start burning your fat reserves (also referred to as *metabolic switching*). This methodology of eating is recommended to be practiced on a regular basis to experience the many benefits of intermittent fasting.

### THE MANY BENEFITS OF INTERMITTENT FASTING

- Helps weight loss by increasing metabolic rate which helps to burn even more calories. Studies have shown people lose their waist circumference indicating loss of visceral fat. Interestingly, studies have also shown that intermittent fasting causes less muscle mass loss than continuous caloric restriction.
- Helps control diabetes by lowering blood insulin level and facilitates fat burning. This is thought to occur through an increase in human growth hormone levels.
- Increases brain hormone called brain derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF) which has been proposed to help prevent neurodegenerative diseases (e.g. Alzheimer's disease).
- Initiates a cellular process called autophagy, or waste removal. Autophagy involves metabolizing broken and dysfunctional proteins that build up inside cells over time. Removal of waste material from cells stimulates molecular changes that can lead to longevity and disease protection.
- A reduction in oxidative stress and inflammation in the body. Oxidative stress generates unstable molecules called free radicals that interfere with normal cell function at the molecular level and can result in DNA damage. Reducing oxidative stress helps healthy aging and prevents chronic disease.

One way to start intermittent fasting is to eat dinner in the early evening around 6-7 pm, skip breakfast and have a healthy lunch around noon-1 pm. This habit would adhere to a 16 hour fast. Binge eating following the fast would negate the benefit of fasting. Mindful eating during the eating hours would be the way to go to enjoy the overall anti-aging health benefits of intermittent fasting.

*Nina Ahuja practices Gastroenterology with Geisinger Medical Group in State College, PA.*

# Recipes from Krishna's Kitchen

Hare Moong Ki Daal (Green Split Lentil)



## Ingredients

- 1 cup split moong dal with skin
- ½ cup water
- 1 ½ tsp turmeric
- 3 tsp salt
- ½ tsp Garam masala
- 1 ½ tsp Kashmiri chili powder
- 2 tsp whole cumin
- 1 tsp ginger crushed
- 1 cup diced onion
- 1 cup diced tomatoes
- ½ cup cilantro chopped
- ½ cup lemon juice
- 2 tbsp butter
- Salt according to taste

*Tip:  
Do not  
overcook and  
remember to  
remove the  
foam during  
cooking.*

By Krishna Sharma



## Preparation

- In a 6 quart pan add 12 cups of water and bring it to boil
- Wash lentils 2 or 3 times and add to the boiling water
- Immediately add turmeric and salt
- After 5 minutes, remove foam which appears on top with a large spoon and discard
- After 10 minutes add the onions and tomatoes.
- Keep boiling for 20 minutes but don't over cooked

### Tadka (Seasoning)

- In small pan add butter and melt
- Add cumin seeds and stir
- When seeds are brown take the pan off the stove and add chili powder
- Stir and add mixture to prepared daal
- Add lemon juice, garam masala and garnish with cilantro

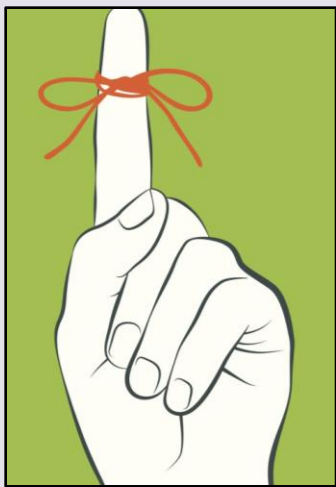
*Ready to eat as a soup or enjoy with rice, chapati, or a slice of ciabatta bread.*



## HAVING THOSE SENIOR MOMENTS?

### Practical Tips That Help Improve Memory

By Khozem Mogri



Forgetfulness is a normal aging process but it can be managed. Seniors need not accept forgetfulness, rather they should change their mindset about aging. We don't have to eat "miracle" brain booster pills to enhance our ability to remember things. Memory research literature provides findings relevant to everyday memory problems.

#### SOME PRACTICAL STEPS TO IMPROVE MEMORY

**Get better organized.** Identify a place for everything and put everything in its place. Write down your planned activities in to-do lists and work through these lists. Set up reminders such as post-it notes and place them in areas where you are most likely to see them.

**Remove Stress & Distractions.** Human brain can only process so much information at any one time. When your cognitive load is bigger than your brain's ability to handle it, you can't learn or consolidate new knowledge as effectively. Aging reduces ability to focus and pay attention, hence do not allow yourself to be distracted or stressed out. Minimize stress by opting for a slower pace and focusing your thoughts on the immediate task on hand instead of multi-tasking. Other helpful actions could be Meditation, taking frequent breaks, etc.

**Get your Health Checked.** Medical conditions can contribute to memory loss. You may need to see your doctor for cognitive issues or other issues such as Depression, Heart disease; medications such as Muscle relaxants, Anti-anxiety medication that can interfere with memory; nutrition for healthy life and supplements for overall health.

**Exercise the body.** A good exercise regime in consultation with your doctor will relieve stress, improve mood and blood circulation to the brain and enhance your memory. Yoga can definitely help. Bear in mind that exercise is not overdone.

**Exercise the memory.** Mental simulation is the key. Challenge yourself to do more than what you are already good at, such as learn to speak a new language, code websites, play a new musical instrument, cook gourmet meals and so on. Remember the adage "Use it or Lose it".

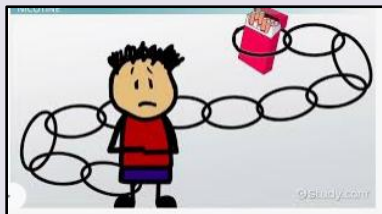
**Get plenty of sleep.** Studies have shown the brain processes the learning experiences and consolidates them in the memory when we are asleep. Thus, develop a good consistent sleep schedule. Avoid consumption of caffeine before bedtime and sleeping in a brightly lit room.

**Socialize and have fun:** Social isolation is a risk factor for memory decline. Humans are naturally social creatures and their brains are wired for communication and relationships. When you interact with other people in a positive way, you reap cognitive benefits. That's why mentally sharp seniors often find opportunities to socialize and have fun by doing things such as meeting family and friends, volunteering, joining clubs, traveling, hosting parties, etc.

## I QUIT!

A personal story by Arun D. Jatkar, Monroeville, PA

*(We all know how difficult it can be to overcome an addiction, be it nicotine, caffeine, or alcohol. Here a fellow USAP members shares his personal story how he was able to quit his long addiction to smoking!)*



It's been more than 12 years since I quit smoking. I quit cold turkey after 45 years of an unshakable addiction. I can say with conviction that smoking is the strongest addiction of all. Mark Twain once said, "Quitting smoking is easy! I have done it many times!"

I got addicted during my college days at I.I.T., Mumbai from a roommate who was a heavy smoker. From a cigarette or two 'bummed' from him at the beginning, it led to the point of buying my own pack of Panama a day to 2 packs of Wills a day by the time I graduated from my M.Tech. The habit continued in USA where a pack of cigarettes contained 20 cigarettes.

Years went by thus, and I began to admit to myself that I had become truly addicted. But try as I might, there was no way of getting out of the nasty habit. I worried that if I stopped smoking, there would be a horrible vacuum inside me, and I will be sucked alive inside that dark and unbearable black hole of morbid morosity. My wife and children had become totally resigned to my inability to quit smoking.

I made some meager attempts to quit smoking by stopping smoking inside the house, or in the car, or smoking only when outside the house, but these did not work for me. And I was too adamant to try nicotine patches. Somehow I felt like accepting defeat, and how could I ever surrender my ego?

Finally, one day in October of 2009, my wife dragged me into a smoking cessation class in a hospital in McKeesport. The instructor was a nurse who had successfully quit smoking. But everyone in that class was being urged to try out the nicotine patch. A young ambulance driver who sat next to me in the class also strongly encouraged using nicotine patches. But something inside me told me against it.

One evening an elderly lady, accompanied by her younger sister walked into the class. She carried with her a small oxygen cylinder with tubes stuck in both her nostrils. She lowered herself in a chair, put her purse on the table and pulled out two packs of cigarettes from the purse. As she longingly gazed at those two packets, her sister said to all of us, "This is my elder sister; she was in this hospital for the past two months because of Emphysema. She was released this afternoon. I dragged her here."

I took a long and hard look at her and a fearful thought gripped my mind – "If I didn't quit now, I will end up like being her and probably breathe my last while walking down a hospital corridor." For the next few days, that thought kept gnawing my mind day and night.

**And I quit then and there! Cold Turkey! And have stayed quit for the past 12 years!**

I know there is no one in USAP who is as insane as I have been. But I am sure that someone has a son, a daughter, a nephew, a niece, or grandchildren, who need to hear this story. Even if only one young person could be stopped from ever taking up smoking, this tale of my addiction would be well worth publishing. ❖