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## Inside This Issue

A Positive Place on the Internet  
page 1

The Power of the Golden Spice  
page 2

Find Your Family's Next  
Crafting Project  
page 2

Essential Employees and  
Workers' Comp Rights  
page 3

Soul Snacks  
page 3

How Meals on Wheels Atlanta  
Stepped Up for Its Community  
page 4



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# NEWSLETTER

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## A SHINING LIGHT

### The Unexpected Joy of Socially Distant Fest

This year didn't start out the way any of us would have preferred. The COVID-19 pandemic created a lot of challenges that cannot be overstated. But for all the negatives, there were also a lot of positives. For me, one of these bright spots has been the Socially Distant Fest group on Facebook. With over 150,000 members from around the world, this group has served as a platform for musicians to perform who could no longer do so in public places.

Once upon a time, long before I became an attorney, I was a musician myself. I played guitar, and when I was in law school, I started booking a bunch of gigs all over town. One night, I even opened for America when they played The Boathouse in Norfolk. Though I didn't pursue that rockstar life, I still remember how fun it was to play in front of an audience and how important those gigs were as a form of income.

When the pandemic shut everything down, a lot of artists and musicians were left hurting, unable to play gigs that paid the bills. The Socially Distant Fest group gave a lot of musicians a way to keep playing and making money during the shelter-in-place orders. Musicians were able to livestream shows to an online audience. Some musicians set up virtual tip jars through Venmo, so people who like their music can send a few bucks their way to help support them. This was a pretty cool feature, but it wasn't what made Socially Distant Fest so cool to me. What I love most about this group is that it provides a place for artists and

musicians of all skill levels to perform.

There are quite a few professional musicians active in the group, but there are also a lot of folks like me who played professionally years ago but now have a day job and just play for fun. There are also a lot of novices who began streaming on a whim to pass the time during the lockdown. Some of them were surprisingly awesome, while others, well, let's say they could use some more practice. Another cool thing about the group is that, regardless of the musician's skill level, you won't find any negative comments. The group is very strict about that. They'll kick people out who try to bully anyone. Socially Distant Fest is about coming together and celebrating a shared love of music and art. It's a positive place, which you don't often find on the internet.

I have really enjoyed scrolling down the feed and seeing all the different kinds of musicians playing. Most members are from the U.S., but there are also folks from Israel, Romania, Iceland, Great Britain, Ireland, even Vietnam. There are singers, guitarists, violinists, DJs, accordion players, pianists — musicians with just about every talent you can think of. There's this one guy who really rips on acoustic guitar and he's just outstanding. If I owned a record label, then I would sign some of these folks in a heartbeat.

Being part of the group has really inspired me to play again. It's been a while since I really played guitar, and I was just getting into music again when the pandemic started.

Socially Distant Fest gives me a good reason to keep playing. I even did a few livestreams. I'll admit, that first one was pretty lousy. Doing a livestream is way more nerve-wracking than posting a video on YouTube. If you mess up while filming a YouTube video, then you can start again. For a livestream, you need to be as prepared as you would be to do a live show, which I have not done in at least 30 years.

Fortunately, I got the hang of it soon enough and did a few more videos. When I did a livestream, I didn't have a tip jar for myself. Instead, I asked folks who liked hearing me play to donate to charities like Frontline Foods or MusiCares. Frontline Foods is an organization that partners with local restaurants to donate meals to health care workers, and MusiCares provides assistance to musicians during times of need. It was really cool to be able to play music and support causes that were helping some of the people who were most impacted by the pandemic.

Music can help people find solace and get through some tough times in their lives. The Socially Distant Fest group has certainly helped a lot of people. Seeing people create music that brings them and others joy is a beautiful thing. This group has been a shining light for me during these difficult months. If you could use some more music or positivity in your life, I highly recommend checking out Socially Distant Fest at [Facebook.com/groups/sociallydistantfest](https://www.facebook.com/groups/sociallydistantfest).

*-Joseph Miller*

## A Meal for Every Member of the Family Meals on Wheels Goes the Extra Mile

Meals on Wheels doesn't often get the credit it deserves. The international nonprofit ensures those who are unable to buy or make their own meals get the food they need to survive. Of course, for many recipients, the efforts of the organization go far beyond "survival." For those who receive food daily or weekly, those deliveries may be their only source of social interaction. And during times of social distancing, the program became more important than ever.

Meals on Wheels doesn't just serve meals to the elderly and people with disabilities — it also serves those people's pets. In 2019, Meals on Wheels Atlanta realized there was a huge need in their community to feed the pets of senior citizens. It stands to reason that if an elderly individual is unable to shop or cook for

themselves, their pets may be in a similar predicament. And when someone's pet is their entire world, making sure the animal is fed and healthy means everything.

In response to this need, Meals on Wheels Atlanta began stocking up on cat and dog food, creating their own pantry to serve the local pet community. When volunteers made their rounds delivering meals to seniors, they made sure to bring cat and dog food along too.

One volunteer with Meals on Wheels Atlanta, Larry Auberbach, had a unique experience delivering meals to Jeffery Jones and his dog, Grizzly. The volunteer told 11Alive News in Atlanta that Jeffery and Grizzly "have their own special relationship." Larry loved Grizzly long before Meals on Wheels Atlanta started the pet pantry because he saw how much Grizzly's companionship meant to Jeffery. Now, Larry enjoys his service that much more since he gets to provide for Jeffery's beloved pet, as well.

On top of delivering food to seniors and their pets, Meals on Wheels Atlanta also delivers pet toys and pet beds, and they are happy to take in any pet-related food or items for donation. The organization says this endeavor was done out of love, not only for the people they serve but also for the *whole* family — wagging tails, fuzzy whiskers, and all.



# THE POWER OF THE GOLDEN SPICE

## An Introduction to Turmeric's Health Benefits

People have raved about many superfoods over the past few decades, but one that's garnered notable attention is turmeric. Fittingly known as the golden spice due to its orange-yellow hue, turmeric is famous for being a crucial part of Indian cuisine, ayurvedic medicine, and Chinese medicine. But does turmeric actually help people? And if so, how? Let's start with the basics to find out.

### What's in turmeric?

First, it's important to know what the spice contains and why researchers are so excited about it. Turmeric is packed with a chemical known as curcumin, which has been shown to provide anti-inflammatory effects, pain relief, antioxidants, and a decrease in the risk of cancer.

*Pro Tip:* You should not consume excessive amounts of turmeric if you take medication that has blood-clotting effects, such as aspirin. However, a moderate amount typically doesn't react with these or other medications and has many other benefits.

### Can it improve joint health?

In many cases, yes! The Arthritis Foundation recommends taking a 400-600-milligram tablet of turmeric up to three times daily. Multiple studies cite turmeric's ability to reduce inflammation and relieve arthritis pain, and one study even notes that turmeric seemed to work just as well as ibuprofen (Advil) for people with arthritis in their knees. Participants in that study took 800 milligrams of turmeric every day.

### Can it help the liver?

Yes. One of the spice's most notable characteristics is its powerful antioxidant abilities. Antioxidants play an important function in our bodies. The average person is exposed to refined and processed foods, smoking, environmental pollution, and chemicals found in pesticides and drugs. Turmeric can protect the liver from damage due to these toxins, which also aids those who take strong medications known to cause long-term liver damage.

### Can it decrease symptoms of hay fever and depression?

Some symptoms, yes. The curcumin in turmeric can help reduce hay fever symptoms like sneezing, itching, runny nose, and congestion. When used in tandem with antidepressants, turmeric may help reduce symptoms of depression.

There are many benefits to using turmeric in your weekly meal routine. Try out some Indian or Chinese recipes or prepare some Instagram-worthy golden milk. In whatever you make, enjoy the rich flavor combinations turmeric offers!



# Workers' Comp and COVID-19

## 'I Got Sick on the Job. Do I Have a Case?'

"I was designated as an essential employee during the COVID-19 pandemic. I interacted with the public while on the job and was infected with the virus. Can I file a workers' compensation claim?"

While the public was instructed to stay at home during the COVID-19 pandemic, essential employees, from health care workers to grocery store clerks, were required to leave their homes to work. This put them at a higher risk of contracting COVID-19. Many essential workers have been asking if they have grounds to file a workers' comp claim if they became infected with COVID-19. Historically, in both Virginia and North Carolina, the answer has been no.

While workers' comp benefits cover some diseases, these cases put a heavy burden of proof on the ill employee. The worker must prove that their illness is an "occupational disease," meaning the disease is a



direct result of their work duties. For example,

a coal miner who is diagnosed with lung

disease after years of breathing in coal dust

would have a strong case for an

occupational disease. However,

if an office worker caught the

flu from a coworker and had to

miss a week of work, then they

would not have a strong case for a

claim because the flu is considered

an "ordinary disease of life." This means the disease is something the general public is exposed to, and it is not unique to the employee's workplace.

Though COVID-19 is a pandemic, the virus is considered an ordinary disease of life because it is so widespread. For this reason, it would be incredibly difficult to prove you contracted the virus from your workplace and not from some other location, such as the gas station or at home from a family member. With these legal parameters, most employees who attempt to file a workers' comp claim after contracting COVID-19 would be denied automatically.

Due to the unique risk essential employees faced in the pandemic, several states across the country took action, extending their workers' comp protections. Some states only extended protections to health care workers treating COVID-19 patients, while others aimed to protect all essential employees. Back in April, Joe Miller Law reached out to members of the Virginia legislature and encouraged them to adopt similar protections for workers in our state.

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced many changes, including changes to our legal system. If you are an essential employee who became infected with COVID-19 while on the job, then make sure you know your rights. Call 888-667-8295 and learn if you have grounds to file a workers' comp claim today.

## Find Your Family's Next Crafting Project

### DIYs From Across the Entertainment Sphere

Whether you're a DIY enthusiast or brand-new to crafting, there are lots of ways to get your kids creating. For example, why buy merchandise from their favorite video game or TV show if they can make it themselves? Check out these resources for free crafting ideas to keep your kids connected to their favorite characters when they're not looking at a screen.

#### Disney-Themed Crafts

From "Star Wars" to all things Mickey Mouse, entire fictional universes can come to life inside your home and make your family time feel a little more magical. Family.Disney.com offers projects for every difficulty level. Many require glue guns and adult supervision, but that's what makes them fun and interactive for both you and your children. Who knows, you might just find inspiration for other decorations in your home after a few Disney-inspired crafting sessions.

#### Nickelodeon-Themed Crafts

Whether it's "Blue's Clues," "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles," or "SpongeBob SquarePants," there's no doubt that your little one is familiar with some of Nickelodeon's most iconic children's shows. NickelodeonParents.com offers DIY crafts that'll encourage your kids to get busy and creative while decorating their play areas

and beyond. The site also filters crafts by categories like Big Kids, Educational, and Noggin, so you even have options if you want your child to learn something while they play.

#### Geeky Crafts

If your kids are huge gamers, GeekCrafts.com is a great website for finding DIYs that they can get invested in. Not everything is designed for small kids, but there's a large archive to choose from, and it's not difficult at all to recognize what crafts will be best for your family. From Minecraft-themed building blocks to Pokemon felt hats, you'll find lots of fun projects that'll get your kids excited and asking, "What's the next step?"

We hope these free resources help you and your family spend a little more creative time together! Have fun!



## Joe's Monthly 'SOUL SNACKS'

**"Who is wise? He who can learn from every man. Who is strong? He who can control his passions. Who is rich? He who is content with his lot. Whom do men honor? He who honors his fellow men."**

**-Ben Zoma**

**"Our lives are fashioned by our choices. First we make our choices. Then our choices make us."**

**-Anne Frank**

## Our Clients Say It Best

*"Joe Miller represented me like a family member. Everything he did to help me was more than appreciated. Solving the case was simple, as was their guidance. I would say that it's been a pleasure being their client. The outcome of it all was pretty amazing, and I wasn't expecting a lot. Joe Miller put me in the right position and fought for what I deserved."*

**-K. King, Suffolk, VA**

