

Get expert advice on how to minimize everyday aches and pains and the best ways to treat them.

[Renew](#)[Membership & Benefits  
Members Edition](#)[AARP  
Rewards](#)[Hi, Amy](#)[Work & Jobs](#) [Social Security](#) [Medicare](#) [Caregiving](#) [Games](#) [Travel](#) [More...](#)[AARP EN ESPAÑOL](#)[Renew](#)

MEMBERS ONLY

AARP MEMBERS EDITION™

# I Don't Want to Move to Be Near My Grown Kid. My Friends Are Puzzled

But at age 67, here's the big reason why

By Amy McVay Abbott, AARP

Published December 18, 2024



LAURA LIEDO

Welcome to *Ethels Tell All*, where the writers behind [The Ethel](#) newsletter share their personal stories related to the joys and challenges of aging. Come back each Wednesday for the latest piece, exclusively on [AARP Members Edition](#).

Our son resembled every other freshman: wrinkled American University shirt, beige cargo shorts and dirty sneakers. We took his picture, hugged him tightly, and crossed Massachusetts Avenue to the parking garage. We drove the rented van for the two-day drive back from Washington, D.C., to Indiana and listened without talking to *Team of Rivals* by Doris Kearns Goodwin, distracted with thoughts of what life would be like for our son and us, empty nesters.



## See What's New

Discover new AARP Benefits

On that day in 2008, I did not know our son would never return to Indiana. I should have known because it was our family pattern. I left home, and the closest I lived was 300 miles away. My father went to college and didn't move back near his mother. Our son stayed in D.C. and built a wonderful life.

Sixteen years later, he's still in the D.C. area, and we're still in southwestern Indiana. Unlike some friends with children, I don't want to move near our son. Moving 700 miles to an urban area isn't on my radar. The bottom line is that, at 67, I don't want to start over again.

Do I love our son less than my friends love their children? Of course not.

A community is like a bank. To draw from your account, you need to make deposits. I've been depositing and withdrawing from my bank here for 36 years. Moving to a new community — even with family present — brings our balance down.

We live near a small city of about 115,000 people. Our son lives in the Washington, D.C., area, in downtown Silver Spring, Maryland. When my husband finished graduate school at the University of South Florida, he accepted a tenure-track position with a small college here. We've lived in our large family home since 1996 and haven't had a mortgage for about 15 years. We plan to sell our home and downsize here, hopefully finding a condominium on one level.

---

ARTICLE CONTINUES AFTER ADVERTISEMENT

---

So why not move to Maryland? I'm asked this all the time.

## Downsizing in a big way

The difference in the cost of living between Evansville, Indiana, and Washington, D.C., is huge. For some perspective, we purchased our 3,400-square-foot, five-bedroom, three-bath home in a nice neighborhood for \$135,000 in 1996. A real estate agent sent me a monthly market report showing that our home should sell for between \$270,000 and \$325,000 today.



## HEALTH & WELLNESS

### BMI Calculator

Determine your healthy weight

According to Zillow, the average housing price in Montgomery County, Maryland, is around \$620,000. While we can afford a nice two-bedroom condo, HOA fees run between \$400 and \$1,000 per month, property taxes are quadruple our taxes here, and homeowners insurance is about the same for a third of the square footage. Those expenses add up to what our mortgage used to be.

Access to our son and his future wife would be important, so rural Maryland isn't an option. The logistics of any move are always challenging, whether moving two miles or 2,000.

But it's much more than the move itself. It's learning to drive in an urban area when Tampa Bay was the busiest area we have lived in. Getting new doctors and dentists, changing insurance and bank accounts and finding a new church are overwhelming. It's deciding whether we need two cars and how we use and access public transportation.

### No matter our choice, there will be an emotional toll

Reality bites, and someday I may be forced to move closer to my son out of necessity. If I need assisted living, it won't matter where I am, as my life will be smaller. But that's not today's reality.

---

ARTICLE CONTINUES AFTER ADVERTISEMENT

---

Today, I would lose much — my frequent girlfriend gatherings at coffee shops for a vanilla latte chased with salted caramel ice cream. I would miss our conversations and the camaraderie of long-term friendships with inside jokes and aching familiarity.

Never was this community more pronounced than when my husband had a recent serious illness that kept him homebound. We had a tsunami of help, including each of our brothers who drove hundreds of miles to be here, friends and neighbors who brought dinner, sent flowers, an electric blanket and cards, and helped with things we couldn't get done.

Our refrigerator went out when my husband was first hospitalized, and friends came and cleaned it out so I could stay at the hospital. When my husband missed our city's big fall festival, a friend brought him his favorite fried corn fritters and hot maple syrup.

## More From Ethels Tell All

- [Women's Questions About Sex](#)
- [How I Keep My Man's Libido Up](#)
- [I've Never Had an Orgasm With a Man](#)
- [I Wouldn't Marry My Husband Again](#)
- [My Husband Found New Love](#)

Finally, there are the feelings of our son and his future wife. I've never wanted to crowd him, and we encouraged him early to build his own life. We pushed him out of the nest, beginning with a weekend with his grandparents, church camp, Cub and Boy Scout high adventure trips to the Teton Mountains and Huntsville Space Camp, and finally, a trip to France and Italy with his high school French club.

We see our son and his fiancée four to five times a year and talk via Zoom once a week. We miss him terribly, but we also know he is where he wants to be, doing what he wants to do, and building his community.

I don't see us crashing his party, but things can change, and circumstances usually do. Meanwhile, I'll enjoy the present: sipping morning coffee with my husband, the view from my office of my lilac bushes, multiple coffee klatches, my diverse church with jazz/gospel music, our neighborhood's amazing autumn palette and the mournful horns of coal barges we hear from the Ohio River.

---

*Amy McVay Abbott is a retired health care executive. Her work appears in Next Avenue, USA Today, Business Insider and HuffPost Culture and Entertainment, as well as other national, regional and local print and digital venues.*

---

[More From Members Edition](#)

---

## You Might Also Like

### 15 Worst Things to Carry in Your Wallet

With identity theft rampant, keep only the essentials in your pocket or purse

MEMBERS ONLY



## 6 Memory Boosting Tips

Simple ways to enhance your recall

MEMBERS ONLY



## Top Things Women Over 60 Ask About Sex

A few of these are sure to surprise you

MEMBERS ONLY



## Most Popular

HEALTH

### 10 Worst Habits for Your Heart

RETIREMENT

### Biggest Social Security Changes for 2025

RETIREMENT

### Your Kids Don't Want to Inherit These Assets

CONTENT

### 3 Big Medicare Prescription Drug Changes

AARP NEWSLETTERS



Get **The Daily** for news that matters

The latest in health, money, entertainment, jobs, and travel each weekday!

Subscribe

[See All Newsletters](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

## Recommended For You



MEMBERS ONLY

### 10 Things Americans Aren't Buying Anymore

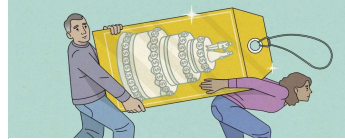
From landlines to motor homes, older consumers will find many of these fading products and service familiar



MEMBERS ONLY

### 15 Ways You're Using Your Dishwasher All Wrong

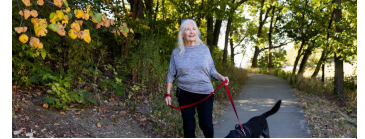
Get cleaner dishes, save money with these tips



MEMBERS ONLY

### We Offered to Pay for Our Son's Wedding But Forgot to Set a Budget....

These parents learned how wedding expenses can spiral out of control



MEMBERS ONLY

### I Tried Going Back to Work. It Didn't Work.

Money was tight, but unretiring was bad for my health

ARTICLE CONTINUES AFTER ADVERTISEMENT



## Benefits Recommended For You

[See All](#)



MEMBERS ONLY

**SHOPPING & GROCERIES**

### AARP Members Edition™...

Dozens of different recipes just for members



**HEALTH & WELLNESS**

### AARP Fitness Center

Workout videos, tips and tricks to help you on...

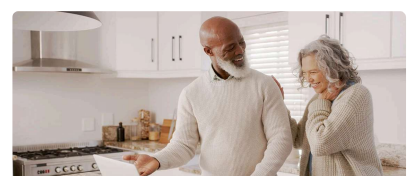


MEMBERS ONLY

**SHOPPING & GROCERIES**

### Clarks

20% off online purchases of \$100 or more



MEMBERS ONLY

**INSURANCE**

### AARP® Medicare Supplement from UnitedHealthcare®

Medicare Supplement plans

ADVERTISEMENT

### HOT DEALS

SAVE MONEY WITH THESE LIMITED-TIME OFFERS

---

---

---

---

---

[See All Hot Deals](#)

[About Us](#)

[Donate](#)

[Volunteer](#)

[Membership](#)

[AARP Rewards](#)

[Advertise with AARP](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[Careers at AARP](#)

[AARP Services Inc.](#)

[Policy & Research](#)

[Newsletters](#)

[AARP In Your City](#)

[AARP En Español](#)

[AARP樂齡會](#)

[Press Center](#)

[AARP Foundation](#)

[Wish of a Lifetime](#)

[Senior Planet | OATS](#)

AgeTech Collaborative™

Legal Counsel for the Elderly

Sitemap

AARP Privacy Hub

Terms of Service

Accessibility Statement

AARP Rewards Terms & Conditions

Copyright Information

Vulnerability Disclosure Program

Ad Choices

Your Privacy Choices

Cobrowse