

tipping the scales

Nancy Austin

Short skirt gives new diet motive

My horoscope today said I should start my diet.

Ordinarily, I pay little attention to my horoscope (though I read it faithfully). But this one hit me between the eyes.

It seems that all summer I've been playing around with three to five pounds, but it makes the difference between the skirt fitting properly or being a little snug. I prefer the former, naturally.

So I ask myself, if I prefer to be slimmer, than why don't I just stay that way? No matter. I never do.

I have always envied the tall, slender, long-legged look. Now I know I'll never be tall (I'm only 5 feet 3 inches). And I'll never be leggy, since my legs are naturally short. But slender — I could try harder.

Somehow, my enthusiasm is waning. I need a fresh shot in the arm.

Exercise, too, of course helps. I mentioned some time ago that I had a renewed interest in roller skating. That interest has continued and am now involved in lessons on a regular basis.

If I pursue it vigorously, my thighs should slim down a little and firm up a little.

I'VE ALWAYS had good luck slimming my thighs, once I discovered the secret. At least it works for me.

Structured exercises designed specifically for slimming the thighs have never worked. Probably because I have never had dogged persistence.

However, bike riding and lots of hiking have always worked wonders. I seem to enjoy these activities and will stay with them for quite a while.

This summer, however, my 20-year-old Schwinn has been in a state of disrepair. (I never give up easily on old faithfuls). But I have squeezed quite a bit of walking into my overworked schedule.

As good as they are, biking and walking don't keep me slim all winter, since I don't ride my bike in winter months, and walking tends to be put aside on sleety, cold, blustery winter days.

MAYBE ROLLER skating will sustain me throughout the months.

But it has had an additional impetus. Have you watched the women skating in their little short skirts gracefully dancing the waltz, tango, and other fun things around the roller rink?

They are never attired in jeans, slacks or even shorts. It's always the short, short skirt.

So if I want to become a little more proficient in the dances, which I intend to, I also intend to wear the appropriate clothing for the occasion.

Now I find myself wandering around the house saying to myself, "Think thin" and using the visual imagery that goes with it.

It would be such a pleasure starting out next summer with slimmed-down thighs and perhaps fewer pounds.

I've done it before. I hope it works again.



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consumer mailbag

I would like to have my car serviced to get better mileage. How can I be sure I'm not being ripped-off?

A well maintained car can save you money by giving more miles per gallon. A car in need of tuning uses as much as 9 percent more gasoline than one that is well-tuned. Under-inflated tires also eat up fuel.

Margie O., Plymouth

Choosing a competent mechanic is one of the most difficult tasks facing the consumer. The following guidelines are outlined by U.S. Office of Consumer Affairs:

- Read your automobile driver's manual and get to know your car.
- Talk to others who have used a particular mechanic's services, especially those who have the same kind of car you do.
- Check the mechanic's credentials, certification and reputation.
- Visit the mechanic to establish good rapport and communication.
- When you take your car in for repair or tune-up, ask for a written itemized estimate.

Alumni festival raises funds for OU

Oakland University's Alumni Association will sponsor a one-day fund-raising festival Sept. 7 for scholarships. The community is invited to visit the Aven Township campus to participate in the Sept. 7 activities.

Included in the day's events are tethered balloon rides, three runs, an alumni reunion reception, and lunch with Dr. Sonya Friedmann who will talk about coping with stress.

Also scheduled are an outdoor concert by OU's Meadow Brook Estate performers, entertainment by the Oakland County Parks Puppetmobile and OU Mime Ensemble, a barbecue chicken dinner, a helium balloon/post card distance contest, and square dancing and softball game.

Concession booths will operate during the afternoon with the OU Kresge Library selling used library books and the OU Bookstore selling OU merchandise. Other campus organizations will be represented.

The entire promotional cost and administrative cost of the OU September festival has been donated through an educational grant from City Beverage Corp.

With nearly 134 million motorists in this country, the energy waste both in dollars and fuel from poorly maintained cars is staggering.

Evergreens, pines, cedars, spruce, hollies, etc. should be planted on the west and north sides of the house to shelter them from winter winds.

As a windbreak, trees should be planted at a distance four to six times the height of the house so that prevailing winds hit broadside. A house 20 feet high would benefit most from a hedge of evergreens planted 80 to 120 feet from the north and west sides of the house. Double or triple rows of planting which include a mixture of tall trees and low, dense shrubs are the most effective.

Eco-Tip: An excellent guide to citizen involvement has been published by East Michigan Environmental Action Council. For a free copy of Community Care, write to EMEAC, 5500 Crooks, Troy 48068.

Consumer Mailbag answers your questions on all consumer and environmental issues. Address mail to Concern, Inc., Detroit, 1 Northfield Plaza, Troy 48068.

We are planning to plant trees this fall to act as a windbreak. Is there a formula we can use to increase protection?

Vet Views

The 1980 edition of the Veterans Administration's publication, "Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents" is available for \$2 through the Superintendent of Documents in Washington, D.C. 20402.

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