



MIRAGE *On the Ocean*

A Newsletter for the Residents of the Mirage on the Ocean Condominium Association, Inc.

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MIRAGE

ON THE OCEAN

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STRESS AWARENESS MONTH

Are your symptoms stress-related?

Stress isn't just about your emotions -- it affects your physical wellbeing, too, with physical symptoms and potential health consequences that can manifest before you're even ready to acknowledge how stressed-out you really are.

Our body's natural stress response -- the fight-or-flight instinct -- helps us manage stressful

situations. But according to the Cleveland Clinic, our stress response can wreak havoc on our bodies if we're struggling with chronic long-term stress, such as high-pressure jobs, long-term illness or financial hardship.

Some of the symptoms of chronic stress include:

- Body aches and pains
- Problems with sleep, such as extreme fatigue or insomnia
- Chest pain or a racing pulse
- Elevated blood pressure
- Headaches, dizziness, shaking
- More frequent illness from a weakened immune system
- Hives
- Psychological symptoms like anxiety, depression, or panic attacks
- Substance abuse
- Excessive gambling, shopping, or other compulsive behaviors

Chronic stress can also contribute to long-term problems with your immune, digestive, cardiovascular, and reproductive systems.

There are things you can do to manage stress and protect your health. Daily physical activity, positive thinking, and taking the time to set achievable goals can all help you manage day-to-day stress. Your doctor or a therapist can also evaluate your symptoms and determine whether medication or talk therapy might be appropriate for you.

Remember that stress happens in life. While you can't always control the sources of your stress, you can control how you respond to it.



Want a refund? First, try asking

There's a good chance that you spend more -- way more -- than you think you spend on subscriptions. In a subscription-heavy economy that willingly extracts monthly fees for premium content, razors, air fresheners, food deliveries, and dog toys, it's pretty easy to do. According to CNBC, around a third of consumers spend \$100 to \$199 more than they think they do on subscriptions, and more than 40 percent of consumers are still paying for forgotten subscriptions that they never use.

If you want to trim all the fat for good, you'll need to take the time to go through your emails and credit card statements to identify all the things you're paying for that you don't actually want. But there may be an upside: When you decide which companies to contact to cancel subscriptions, you can also ask for refunds.

For companies that deal in digital-only products and services, you might be pleasantly surprised at how easily you can claw back at least some of that wasted cash. Writing for the Guardian, Chloe Hamilton asked Amazon to refund several months of unused credit when she canceled a forgotten Audible subscription. To her surprise, the customer service representative immediately agreed, and the money reappeared in her bank account within a few days.

After finding out that she'd been subscribing to Babel for a full year without realizing it, another consumer requested a refund and to her amazement, promptly received it.

If you're going to the trouble of figuring out all your subscriptions and canceling them, you might as well take a few extra minutes to ask for your money back. The worst they can say, after all, is no.



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April Showers

International Beaver Day, April 7



Today, manmade (mitigation) wetlands cost from \$10,000 to 100,000 per acre to build, while each beaver family creates and maintains several acres of wetlands — for free.

April is

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EARTH DAY 2026: The forest is fighting back

If you've ever doubted whether big environmental goals can actually be achieved, Pakistan has a story for you.

In 2014, the Pakistani province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa launched an audacious goal: plant one billion trees. Skeptics were plentiful. But by 2018, a WWF audit confirmed the province had not only hit its target but surpassed it — planting 872 million seedlings with an average survival rate of nearly 89 percent, ahead of schedule, expanding the region's forests by 350,000 hectares. The International Union for Conservation of Nature called it "a true conservation success story," and the province became the first entity in the world to complete the Bonn Challenge, a global pledge to restore degraded land.



Energized by that success, Pakistan launched the Ten Billion Tree Tsunami in 2019 — a nationwide, government-backed effort to keep going. More than 500,000 green jobs were created in the process, many of them going to daily workers in rural communities who needed them most. Forest cover has measurably increased around every major planting site.

No project this large is without bumps. Independent researchers note that survival rates at some sites run lower than official estimates, and that species selection and long-term care matter as much as raw planting numbers. But even the skeptics agree: this is one of the most ambitious reforestation efforts ever attempted, and it is working.

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