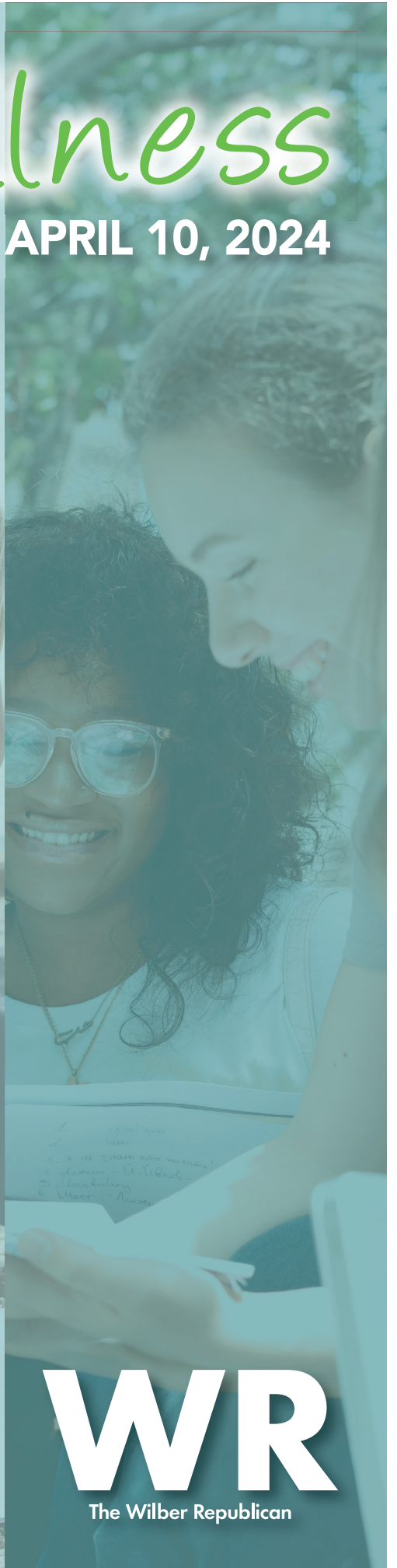


HEALTH & Wellness

APRIL 10, 2024



SCI MT CN FS WR

Seward County Independent

The Milford Times

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Swim smart, stay safe

BY HANNA CHRISTENSEN
scireporter@sewardindependent.com

Summer is just around the corner, meaning so are swimsuits, water slides and belly flops. However, before lathering on that sunscreen, it's vital to dive into water safety.

Drowning is the number one cause of death for children ages one to four. Even non-fatal drowning can cause brain damage, long-term disabilities and other serious outcomes, according to the Centers for Disease and Control and Prevention.

Thankfully, Director of Crete Parks and Recreation Liz Cody said it is highly preventable with supervision and education.

Cody, a lifeguard in-

structor and water safety instructor for Crete's Wildwood Pool, said the following steps should be taken after noticing someone is drowning: safely get the person out of the water, call 911, use a combination of rescue breathing and CPR and use an AED if applicable.

One of the most important pieces of water safety is supervision. Adults should always be attentive and within an arm's length of a child in or near water.

According to Norton Healthcare, signs of drowning can include not using the legs and being vertical in the water, gasping for air, appearing to climb an invisible ladder, trying to roll over on the back, swimming motions without making



DOUG CARROLL

Taking swim lessons is one of the best ways to prevent drowning, especially for young children.

progress, hair over the forehead or eyes, the

mouth at water level with the head low and the

head tilted back with the mouth open.

"Drowning can happen in seconds and is often silent. It can happen to anyone, any time there is access to water," the CDC said. "This includes pools and lakes, and also smaller water bodies like bathtubs and water-filled buckets."

Swim lessons can reduce the risk of drowning by 88%. Cody said the Red Cross's free app, Swim, provides a progress tracker for swimming lessons; kid-friendly safety education and water safety information for the pool, lake, river, beach and home.

Water wings and arm floaties can easily slip off and do not prevent drowning, so life jackets approved by the U.S. Coast Guard are advised.

see SWIM, page 8



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Trainer offers ways to work out from home

BY KEATON BURGESS
reporter@sewardindependent.com

Finding time to work out can be difficult, especially finding the time and money to go to a gym.

One way to save time and money is by doing workouts from home. There are many ways to do workouts from home and still get a quality workout.

Vashone West, personal trainer in Seward, said there are many ways to exercise in the gym or at home to lose weight or gain muscle mass.

For cardio, West recommended things such as mountain climbers, burpees, running, sprint drills and sprinting.

"It's important that high impact cardio is done along with long sustain cardio," he said. "Your body will burn through the sugar and fat during high impact cardio. Just doing slow sustain cardio will burn

sugar, which is not burning the fat that leads to the weight loss."

Doing pushups and workouts with dumbbells can help work out your arms, back, chest and shoulders.

"The use of a pull-up bar would greatly benefit a person for the back as well as the lat muscles. Purchasing a set of dumbbells is really inexpensive and that could be used to do dumbbell rows to also work the back. Push-ups also work the triceps as well as doing dips which can be done from a chair or even the couch," West said.

West said dumbbells can also be used to do curls and also used for shoulder raises.

West said you can also work your core and legs at home. For core, West said it can be in multiple ways.

"Some examples are mountain climbers, planks, ankle touches, medicine ball crunches, Russian

twist and leg tuck and twist," he said.

West also said the legs can be worked in many different ways including back bridges, fire hydrants, donkey kicks, air squats, clams and single leg raises.

"These are simple exercises that could be done at home. If a person wants to enhance the workout or work a specific muscle group, I recommend purchasing some dumbbells and it doesn't have to be a complete set," West said. "A person can buy just a set of 25s. A pull-up bar is good to use. Muscle bands are excellent to use. They add resistance and can assist with certain workouts like pull-ups."

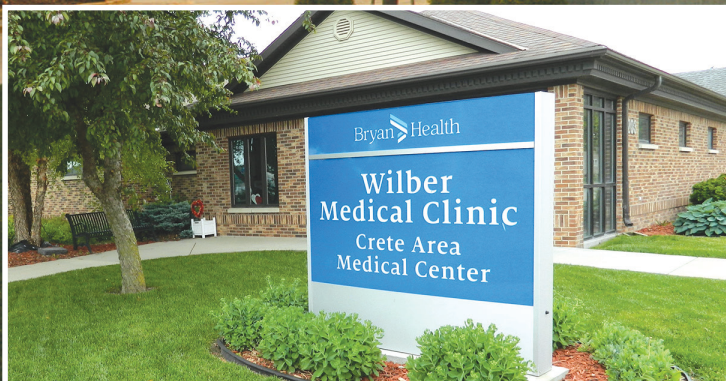


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Building, programs taking shape

BY EMILY HEMPHILL
emily@sewardindependent.com

Construction, the general contractor for the project.

Walls and rafters are up at the site of the Seward Wellness Center, and plans are coming together for the programs that will be offered once the building opens.

“We are on schedule, knock on wood, and things are going well right now,” said Wellness Center Executive Director Joel Brase.

In a matter of three days, all the precast walls around the natatorium, or swimming pool, were installed, and the steel frame that will enclose the gymnasium has been erected.

“It was an impressive process to see those slabs brought in and the crane work,” Brase said. “You really get a good idea of the size of the whole facility now that parts are being added to it.”

Brase and other city officials meet every two weeks with representatives of Sampson

Planned programming

When he’s not attending to the physical building, Brase is busy lining up what will happen once the facility opens to the public.

First on the list is cardio classes. Brase said a wide variety of classes will be offered at different times of day to appeal to multiple age groups.

“Those could be anything from Pilates to Zumba to something new,” Brase said.

In the weight room, the center plans to offer personal training for people who need a little help getting started or who want more personalized workouts.

“There are going to be some people who know exactly what they want to do when they go in to workout. Some won’t have any idea,” Brase said. “This will be just to give them some ideas.”



PHOTO COURTESY CITY OF SEWARD

Seward City Administrator and Seward Changing the Game President Shane Baack stand inside what will be the gymnasium at the Seward Wellness Center.



PHOTO COURTESY CITY OF SEWARD

Precast concrete panels are set in place around the natatorium the week of March 14.

He said the center also hopes to partner with area experts to be able to complement physical therapy or rehabilitation.

“I think the pool area will be big with that as well,” Brase said, noting that the pool will have a current channel for resistance walking and lanes for walking or swimming laps. “I see that as being a great physical therapy tool.”

Water aerobics classes and open swim times will be on the schedule, as well.

Swim times will be scheduled for families with children opposite times for adults and seniors so they can workout in the water without disruption.

Swimming lessons will be offered year-round, working with the city’s outdoor pool in the summer and the wellness center’s indoor pool the rest of the year.

Brase said the schedule for the gym will remain fairly open, aside from pickleball leagues

and city rec team practices.

“We will keep one court open for anyone to come in and shoot baskets,” he said.

The city plans to enhance its existing recreational offerings by starting leagues with other teams outside of Seward.

“We want to make this a hub of our greater Seward County area and get some good competition going so people are coming here on Saturday mornings for youth sports,” Brase said.

He said nothing is set in stone with any of the proposed programming.

The city is open to offering whatever works best to serve people the most.

Memberships

Membership rates for the wellness center have not been set, but Brase said the city has a good idea of the membership categories it will offer based on age and family size.

Categories include:

- Youth ages 12-18. Anybody under age 12 must be accompanied by an adult and won’t be allowed in the facility by themselves.

- Young adult ages 19-24
- Adult
- Senior age 62 and older
- Adult couple (not including children, lower cost than two separate adult memberships)

- Senior couple (lower cost than two separate senior memberships)

- Family (two adults with children)
- Single-parent family (one adult with children, lower cost than regular family rate)

- Daily rate for adults, youth, seniors and families (for non-members to attend occasionally, such as when visiting from out of town)

- Corporate membership (for employers wishing to offer discounted membership to employees)

Strong bodies building more than muscles

BY AMY HAUSMAN
amy@friendsentinel.com

Saline County Aging Services offers a senior strength training program at the Cultural Center in Wilber four days a week. The 45-minute class is Monday through Thursday beginning at 9 a.m. for seniors aged 60 or above. There is a suggested contribution of \$2 per class.

The evidence based program began in August 2023 and since that time, heavier weights have needed to be purchased for the participants. The class is customized to the individual's ability. The instructors from Saline County Aging Services went through a certification to be able to teach weight training.

"Everything in the class is able to be modified," Lori Moldenhauer, program director, said. "Everyone is at different levels so someone can join at any time and be taught the correct techniques to get caught up and comfortable."

Group strength training classes for senior citizens offer a myriad of benefits crucial for maintaining their health and well-being. These classes provide a supportive environment where seniors can engage in structured exercises tailored to their needs, helping them to improve their physical strength, balance and overall functionality. The importance of these classes lies in their ability to address common age-related issues such

as muscle loss, decreased bone density, and loss of balance, which can significantly impact seniors' quality of life.

Participating in group strength training classes helps seniors combat sarcopenia, the age-related loss of muscle mass and strength. By incorporating resistance exercises into their routine, seniors can increase muscle mass, enhance muscle strength, and improve their ability to perform daily activities independently. Additionally, strength training can help mitigate the risk of falls by improving balance and stability, ultimately reducing the likelihood of fall-related injuries that can be par-

see SENIORS, page 11



AMY HAUSMAN

Donna Kovar, program assistant for Saline County Aging Services, leads the Strong Bodies class at the Cultural Center in Wilber. The class meets Monday through Thursday and follows the school closing schedule for the Wilber-Clatonia school district.

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- Poison or drug overdose
- Signs of a heart attack or stroke
- Severe bone breaks
- Unexplained seizures



Wellness plan can benefit any workplace

BY STEPHANIE CROSTON
scroston@sewardindependent.com

Workplace wellness has been an important topic for years. Employers look for ways to keep their employees healthy and satisfied with their jobs, while employees look for ways to stay healthy and happy.

“It has many benefits,” Chris Blanke of Four Corners Health Department said. “No matter the size of the business, there are benefits.”

If employees are healthy, a business is healthy and families are healthy.

“Ultimately, the community is healthier,” Blanke said.

Having a wellness program for employees at a business makes it easier to access resources, and that leads to productivity, safety and loyalty, she said.

Laura McDougall, Four Corners executive director, said health insurance falls into that category. Screenings, both free and those covered by insurance, can help prevent chronic illness and some injuries, she said.

Four Corners works with businesses with from 20 to 500 employees, Blanke said.

Setting up a wellness program is not hard, Blanke said.

“It’s a great way to demonstrate care for employees,” Blanke said.

She recommended setting up a wellness

committee to represent employees throughout a company. Someone with a passion for wellness would be a good committee leader.

“Most don’t have a designated person,” Blanke said. “It is in addition to what else they’re doing.”

Blanke said a group would keep a wellness plan from becoming just one person’s idea. Members from different areas in the business will bring different ideas and perspectives.

The business’s leader – president, chief executive officer, owner – should also be on board with the idea.

The committee looks at what the employees’ interests are when it comes to wellness. Some might be looking for mental health resources, while others are looking for help with a healthy diet or becoming and staying active.

The committee should pick one priority to focus on. Blanke said Four Corners can provide resources and can point the committee to others, as well.

“There are simple, free things,” she said. “There are good resources for all areas.”

For example, if an employee is trying to eat healthier but the office has doughnuts once a week, perhaps fresh fruit could be provided along with the doughnuts as a healthy option. That way, the employee could

see **PLAN**, page 8

Look into the importance of eye exams

BY HANNA CHRISTENSEN
scireporter@sewardindependent.com

There is more to vision exams than meets the eye.

Seward Vision Clinic optometrist Keith Wintz said although some people only go to the eye doctor if they notice something wrong with their vision, not getting consistent eye exams can lead to problems down the road.

“Your eye exam is more than just coming in to get your glasses or your contact lenses done,” he said. “We do a whole eye health exam, and the eyes can be a gateway to what’s going on in the rest of your body.”

Wintz said the eyes are the only place in the body that offers a direct, unobstructed view of the blood vessels. If a doctor notices issues such as hemorrhages on the retina or inflamed blood vessels, they will recommend a related workup by a primary care physician.

Retinal exams sometimes lead to the discovery of diabetes, high blood pressure, rheumatoid arthritis or elevated blood glucose.

The exams can also indicate when a treatment adjustment may be necessary for patients with a diabetes diagnosis.

Some eye diseases, such as glaucoma and



DOUG CARROLL

Seward Vision Clinic optometrist Dr. Craig Slepicka examines a patient’s eyes. Eye exams not only show potential problems with a patient’s eyes, they can also indicate other health problems.

macular degeneration, can be prevented or slowed in their early stages. However, since they do not cause vision loss until their later stages, people do not catch them if they do not go to the eye doctor.

“Most of the time with glaucoma, you have pressure building up inside the eye that is slowly damaging the optic nerve, and it can be going on for quite a while before it impacts your vision,” Wintz said. “By the time it impacts your vision, it is really pretty severe, and there’s not as

much as we can do about it at that point. You can’t recover vision that’s been lost.”

Eye exams are recommended for everyone once a year. This is especially important for children, teens, people over 65, people with a family risk of eye conditions and people with diabetes.

Sometimes, parents do not take their children to get an eye exam because they have not expressed any vision complaints. However, Wintz said kids often do not recognize when their sight is impaired because it is all

they know.

About one in five children have undiagnosed vision problems that could impact their learning, he said.

“Inevitably, every year when we have the kindergarten exams that are required by the state to have your eyes examined before kindergarten, we’ll see a handful of kids that have issues that could impact their learning that they’re not even complaining about,” he said.

Wintz encourages everyone to make their eye doctor part of their overall healthcare team.

12 tips to maintain healthy lifestyle

Taking care of your health is arguably the most important thing you can do for yourself (and your loved ones).

Adopting just a few of the following recommendations can go a long way to improving your physical and mental well-being.

Maintain a healthy weight for you.

Eat nourishing foods.

Limit processed foods and sugar.

Drink water and stay hydrated.

Exercise regularly.

Reduce sitting and screen time.

Get outdoors daily.

Get plenty of sleep.

Go easy on the alcohol.

Quit smoking (if you smoke).

Consider taking a multivitamin supplement.

Stay on top of health screenings and check-ups.



DOUG CARROLL

Participants take part in a tai chi class at Wilber's Dvoracek Memorial Library on April 2.

Mindful mornings at Wilber library

BY HANNA CHRISTENSEN

scireporter@sewardindependent.com

Every Tuesday, Ruth Karlsson guides people through a tranquil start to their day with free Tai Chi at Wilber's Dvoracek Memorial Library.

Karlsson leads them through

17 to 18 continuous movements for about 30 minutes and always presents an inspirational quote of the day.

"Tai Chi is very spiritual in its practice," Karlsson said. "Our mind is becoming peaceful as we're doing these repetitive motions that are so easy to our body, and yet, when

we're done, our body feels good because it's been in motion in such a healthy way."

Karlsson said the 9 a.m. classes are open to everyone and are especially useful for seniors or people with limited mobility. All the movements can be done in a chair.

"Especially as we age, the

reason Tai Chi is so wonderful is there's no stress and exertion and strain on joints or muscles," she said. "It's all just smooth and flowing and fluid."

The classes started after library director Holly Baber had a conversation with Karlsson about the possibility of starting Tai Chi at the library. Karlsson

told her she was happy to lead them, and they began offering them toward the end of last summer. She said she enjoys sharing such a helpful practice with other people.

"Holly is so intentional about offering things at the library for adults," Karlsson said.

see TAI CHI, page 8

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Tai chi

Continued from 7

Karlsson started practicing Tai Chi, which is a martial art, during the pandemic. She could no longer go to the gym due to the lockdown and discovered Tai Chi videos online. She began doing

it every day and said she found it extremely helpful and calming for her mind, body and spirit.

“It’s just a good way for me to start my day. It puts me in a really calm frame of mind,” she said. “Also, the added benefit

of keeping my body in motion because so many of us are busy or we’re at work in a sedentary position most of the time.”

Anyone can sign up for the free classes by coming to the library at class time and filling out a form. Be-

tween four and 11 people typically attend.

Marge Rhynalds said she enjoys going to class because she knows she is doing something to take care of her body and improve herself as she gets older.

“It’s the mindfulness, just kind of getting yourself in a different headspace and just kind of wiping the rest of life away and just concentrating on what you’re doing and relaxing,” Rhynalds said.

She also attends Tai

Chi classes at Aging Partners every Friday.

“I could do it at home or online, but I just like getting out and being around other people and doing it at the same time,” she said. “I enjoy the camaraderie.”

Plan

Continued from 6

still participate and socialize with coworkers.

If improving physical activity is a goal, the office could post a list of local places employees can go and walk or participate in other activities.

The annual Walk at Lunch Day is Wednesday, April 24, Blanke said. Employers could allow a little longer lunch break so employees may participate.

Four Corners staff is also available to help set up wellness programs, Blanke said.

The first thing they do is learn the culture of the workplace, which helps with planning. Some learning may be done one site, while some may be done remotely.

They visit with the business owner and wellness committee, if one exists. They help plan and encourage engagement, as well as determining what the business hopes to achieve with the wellness plan.

A culture survey of the employees can help measure interest and can show the



Walk at Lunch Day is Wednesday, April 24.

committee and Four Corners staff the choices the employees make.

After reviewing the results, a plan is created that is adapted for each workplace, Blanke said. Staff then helps implement the plan and helps keep the employees motivated.

“Even small steps can make a difference,” Blanke said.

McDougall said any business with questions or interest in setting up a wellness plan can contact Four Corners at (402) 326-2621.

Swim

Continued from 2

The Red Cross also recommends home pools be fully enclosed with fences at least four feet tall. Fence gates should be self-closing and self-latching, and toys that could attract a child should be removed from the pool when not in use.

For more information, the Red Cross offers a free online water safety course for parents and caregivers. Additionally, Cody said groups such as the Crete Public Schools Family Literacy Program offer opportunities for bilingual water

safety education.

Drowning CPR steps as stated by the National Drowning Prevention Alliance:

For adults:

1. Immediately call 911
2. Check for responsiveness using the Shout-Tap-Shout.
Shout to get a response, tap on the shoulder (or bottom of the foot for babies), shout again.
3. Place the victim on their back on a firm and flat surface.
4. Place two hands centered on the

chest, your shoulders directly over your hands, and give 30 chest compressions at a depth of 2 inches. Allow their chest to return to normal after each compression.

5. Open the victim’s airway using the head-tilt technique. Pinch the nose shut, take a normal breath, and make a complete seal over the person’s mouth with your mouth or a rescue mask (if available).

6. Ensure each breath lasts about 1 second and you see the victim’s chest rise. Allow air to exit before administer-

ing the next breath.

7. Do not stop until help arrives or until you notice an obvious sign of life.

For children and infants:

If performing drowning CPR on an infant, use two thumbs side by side at the center of the baby’s chest. Alternatively, you can use two fingers placed parallel to the chest in the center of the chest, performing compressions to a depth of 1 1/2 inches.

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A guide to transitioning into a senior living facility

BY HANNA CHRISTENSEN

scireporter@sewardindependent.com

Whether someone is considering senior living for a loved one or for themselves, the decision is often not easy.

Examining guidelines for when an added level of care is necessary and looking at ways to make the transition go more smoothly can help.

Wilber Care Center Administrator Nicole Lane said common signs that indicate the need for assisted living include struggling to complete household chores such as cooking, cleaning and laundry. Forgetting or having trouble completing routines such as bathing and taking medications are other indicators.

Many people may also struggle to adequately feed themselves as they age. Noticeable weight changes are signs that a loved one may be skipping meals, not going to the store, struggling to cook for themselves or relying on unhealthy snacks instead of meals.

This is especially common after the death of a spouse.

Loved ones should also look

out for an increase in injuries or bruises from an unknown origin as signs that someone may be having accidents or falls at home, she said. If they are struggling to get around their home or are nervous about using the stairs, it might be time to look into a senior living facility.

Social and emotional needs also need to be considered. Some seniors become withdrawn, do not leave the house and stop doing activities they enjoy, especially after the loss of a spouse.

This isolation can be damaging, Lane said.

"It's really important for people's mental and physical health to stay active and do as much as they can," she said. "If you start to see a decline in that, it might be an indication that they could use an assisted living where those activities are not only offered, but encouraged, and more of a social setting where they would be able to do so with friends and things like that."

Lane said she sometimes sees family members struggle with guilt when it comes time to make the decision to move

their loved one into assisted living. She encourages them to think about the positive things, such as increased opportunities for socialization and added safety precautions, that come with the change.

"We really want to improve the quality of life for people and make sure that they are living the best life that they possibly can," she said. "That doesn't always happen if they're living at home by themselves."

Being proactive and beginning the transition to assisted living before something happens, such as a fall that requires extra care or a mix-up with medications, can help the move go smoothly and help the new resident have more of a choice over their own life.

"Just help them to understand that it's important to be safe and taken care of, and we're not suggesting this because we don't want you to live at home," Lane said. "Rather, we want you to maintain that level of independence and be healthy and safe and have a good quality of life."

Carla Thompson, the marketing director at Kinship Pointe in Seward, said the cen-

ter offers a 30-day trial option for people considering making the move. Similarly, Wilber Care Center's respite services can help people get accustomed to the facility before they make a decision. Lane said the center is partnering with some local agencies to offer senior dinners in which any senior in the community can come and get familiar with the residents.

"No one wakes up and decides, 'Oh, I'm going to move to independent or assisted living today.' Typically, one doesn't want to leave their home," Thompson said. "But, if we can do a trial offer where they can experience our food, experience the care if they need it, the activities, the outings, all of the things and have that open door for them to make that decision and not feel like family is making them make that decision."

Lane said Wilber Care Center encourages residents to take charge of their move by personalizing their rooms upon coming to the facility. Digital photo machines that display photos uploaded by family members have become increasingly popular.

Residents can keep up with

the things they did before moving by inviting their family members over for meals or friends over for card games, she said. Those who are safe to drive can keep their vehicle or golf cart at the center.

"We really want families to have those discussions early on to encourage their loved ones to really research and be educated that things have changed in the nursing home and assisted living world, and it's really not what maybe it once was," she said.

Thompson suggests that everyone involved in the decision looks at things from one another's point of view. If siblings strongly disagree on what choice to make for their parents, it can make it harder on those parents. On the other hand, parents who refuse to make the move can add stress on their loved ones who are worried for their safety at home.

"The roles reverse as we grow older, so adults are now taking care of their parents," she said. "(The adult children) worry about (their parents) like they did when they were kids."

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Train for a 5k run

BY KEATON BURGESS
reporter@sewardindependent.com



Keaton's Corner
Keaton Burgess
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With summer coming up, road races such as 5k's and 10k's start and become more popular with the nicer weather.

According to Runner's World, the 5k is the best distance for someone starting to run for the first time because pretty much anyone can finish a 5k after some training.

Running in high school and college gave me an idea of how to get ready for a 5k. It may not be perfect, but here are a few tips I picked up in my running days.

Get good shoes: Finding a good pair of shoes is a good start to running. If you wear an old pair or shoes that don't have enough support for you, you risk getting injured. In my experience with running high school and college cross country, brands such as Hoka, Brooks and Asics have good support and work well for most people.

Find a training plan: Getting a training plan can be a good way to stay on track with your running.

Start off small: When starting training, don't start off trying to run the

5k right away. Start off with a small amount of mileage and work your way up. Starting off with too much mileage can cause injuries.

Stay consistent, but don't be too hard on yourself: Try as best as you can to keep up running on a consistent basis, but understand that you're not going to be perfect. Busy schedules and life can get in the way, so give yourself some grace if you're not perfect in your running schedule.

Running a fun run should be FUN: Running can definitely be a miserable experience at times, but remember through all the training to have fun. Have fun during the day and enjoy a journey to getting healthier.

5k's are a great way to get outside, have fun and exercise while doing it.

Vegetables? Sign me up (I guess)

BY EMILY HEMPHILL
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I may be the world's worst vegetarian.

I've skipped meat entirely for the last 19 years, and I don't regret it one bit, but I don't really love vegetables.

I'll eat them because yeah, they're healthy, and yeah, I'm a grown-up.

Sometimes I'll dance around the kitchen, scalions in hand, recreating scenes from my beloved "VeggieTales" VHS tapes, but I just don't have a hankering to eat them.

I'm not big on eggs and dairy, either.

What does that leave? Fruit and carbs. So many carbs.

Noodles? Love 'em.

Bread? Daily.

Rice? Eating some as I write this.

I know, they're not the healthiest, but neither is a heart full of pastrami.

Tasked with laying out some vegetarian tips for this Health and Wellness section, I really can't think of one facet of vegetarianism I'm doing well, other than the obvious no meat rule.

Instead, I give you the following:

What not to do

1. Don't limit flavor.

It's a common misconception that vegetarianism is bland and boring. I get it. It's easy to fall into the trap of making the same dish over and over because it's easy, cheap or you just don't know what else to make.

Vegetarianism provides the perfect opportunity to mix it up with different cooking meth-

ods (I can think of 14 different ways to serve a potato) and use up those spices that have been sitting on your spice rack since 2017 (looking at you, Tarragon).

2. Don't stick with one type of an ingredient. More than 90,000 varieties of rice exist in the world, and there are more than 350 kinds of pasta. Pair each one with a different sauce recipe, and the pasta-bilities are endless!

3. Don't focus on "meat-like" products. People think all I eat is salad and soy chik'n nuggets. I started out that way, but as my tastes have changed and I've gotten away from a lot of highly processed foods,



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I've drifted away from the imitation meats.

I never liked the taste or texture of meat anyway, so products meant to emulate the real thing don't add any enjoyment to my plate.

4. Don't forget to find it elsewhere! Protein, iron and B-12 are three of the nutrients our bodies

need to stay healthy, but I've long contested that the only way to get them is from meat.

Beans, seeds, nuts, lentils, oats, quinoa and whole grains are all good sources of protein. Leafy greens, broccoli, peas, wheat, potatoes and nuts offer iron, and B-12 can come from plant-based milks, some types of mushrooms and fortified foods.

5. Don't think of it as giving up meat. If you're ready to give vegetarianism a try, think about what you'll gain instead of what you'll go without. I gained a happier, healthier body, a smaller environmental footprint, a lower grocery bill and less greasy clean-up in my kitchen.

Periodic eye and vision examinations are an important part of preventive health care. Many eye and vision problems have no obvious signs or symptoms, so you might not know a problem exists. Early diagnosis and treatment can help prevent vision loss.



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Home gardens offer healthy options

BY NICOLE STONER
ISA Certified Arborist

We are entering the season to plant spring vegetable gardens.

As the saying goes, "Plant your potatoes on St. Patrick's Day" or others say to go with Good Friday. Either way, these

cool season vegetables can be planted now. But be cautious with your plants, they could be injured by late freezing temperatures or frost events.

Care of the garden

Make sure that the soil is dry before you work in

or plant your garden to avoid soil compaction. Locate your garden where it will receive at least six hours of sunlight per day, but 8-10 hours of sunlight is best.

Make sure that it is planted on level ground to ensure uniform watering. Gardens need about

1 inch of water per week. Soaker hoses and drip irrigation are the best options to reduce diseases, but overhead irrigation can be used.

If watering overhead with sprinklers, water early in the day, to allow the garden enough time for leaves to dry out before nightfall.

Vegetable gardens should be mulched to manage weeds. Grass clippings make a good mulch as long as the lawn hasn't been treated with any herbicides this season. If grass isn't available, use straw, newspaper, soybean or wood chip mulch.

Cold temperature injury

If your spring crops are planted too early and cold temperatures return, they

could be injured. Cold injury on plants will appear as black or dead leaves, water-soaked spots on the leaves, wilting, discoloration, or death.

Most cool season crops can withstand a frost of 31-33 degrees. Temperatures from 26-31 degrees may burn the foliage on broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, lettuce, onion, radish and turnips. These temperatures will likely not kill the plants, but that depends on other factors such as growth stage and temperatures the plant has faced prior to the freeze.

If the temperature suddenly drops to the freezing level when it has been warm, that can cause death.

While plants growing in consistently cool

weather with a drop lower into the freezing level are more likely to survive. Brussels sprouts, carrots, kale, and spinach can survive temperatures even lower than 26, for the most part. (According to Texas A&M Extension)

Spring crops

Vegetable gardens can be worked in the spring as soon as the ground is dry. Cool season crops such as radish, carrots, lettuce, spinach, broccoli, cauliflower, kohlrabi, asparagus, potatoes and peas can be planted from late March through the end of April when soil temperatures have reached a minimum of 40-45 degrees Fahrenheit.

Freezing temperatures and frost can always occur through April.

Seniors

Continued from page 5

ticularly debilitating for older adults.

Moreover, these classes foster social connections and a sense of community among seniors, which is crucial for combating loneliness and isolation often experienced in older age. The camaraderie and encouragement

from fellow participants and instructors create a supportive atmosphere that motivates seniors to stay consistent with their exercise regimen. Group classes also offer opportunities for seniors to share experiences, offer encouragement and celebrate achievements together, further enhancing their overall well-being.

"We laugh a lot,"

Donna vKovar, program assistant, said. "We are always having fun."

Overall, group strength training classes play a vital role in promoting the health, fitness, and social connectedness of senior citizens, contributing to their overall well-being and longevity.

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Open House

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Ribbon Cutting 1:10 p.m.

*Featuring welcome remarks from
Nebraska volleyball coach John Cook*

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Note detours: S. 40th road work is ongoing.

