

2020

# Health & Wellness

How to get healthy, and stay healthy, in your every day life





# Strength for Today, Hope for Tomorrow

There are times in everyone's life when personal problems and challenges may interfere with their quality of life. Our goal at Coal Country Community Health Center is to provide assistance to individuals and families who experience emotional and coping problems as well as to those who have a serious and persistent mental illness. We provide assistance to individuals and families who experience the devastating effects of substance use disorders by using counseling and Medication Assisted Treatment.



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- Substance Use Counseling
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- Medication Assisted Treatment – Suboxone Program
- Intensive Outpatient Services (IOP)

# Running for their lives

BY SUZANNE WERRE,

Start 'em young and they'll love it for life.

That's Underwood Run Club's Ronda Knutson's theory and her motivation when she opens the doors and welcomes students to the gym every Tuesday and Thursday morning at the school in Underwood.

For the past year-and-a-half Knutson has been holding regular running sessions at the school, typically Tuesday and Thursday mornings unless there's a conflict or school vacation.

"It provides an opportunity for them to do something that leads to living a healthy lifestyle," said Knutson. If they start young and love it, there's a good chance they'll run for the rest of their lives.

Knutson and her assistant Cynthia Bjorge typically open the doors for running at 7:50 a.m., and the kids are allowed to run until almost 8:20 a.m.

"If they're here early and we're ready, they can start running," said Knutson. When they're done, the school provides a snack, and if students are really hungry, they can grab some breakfast, too.

"A lot of the kids eat breakfast and save the snack for later," said Knutson.

But that's okay. It's a little extra reward for getting up a little early to go running. The students are regularly awarded for milestone achieve-

ments (the first one, three, five, ten, 20, 50 miles, etc.) Knutson joined forces with the New York City Run Club, so the runners now receive t-shirts letting everyone know they're an avid runner. Knutson is also given the opportunity through the NYRC to nominate runners for special prizes – new running shoes. She's awarded some already, and currently has five pairs ready to be given to the recipients.

"She's got five more pairs," said runner Blake Frohlich to Kannon Hunt. Frohlich was wearing his NYCRC tennis shoes, which are already practically worn out, he noted; and he's thinking Hunt should be in line to get a pair pretty soon. Both of the young runners have run more than 100 miles since starting run club last November.

"They are here every day," praised Knutson.

The leader of the pack as far as miles goes is sixth-grader Levi Repnow who has more than 120 miles under his belt.

He's not sure why he's taken to running so much, but he loves it.

"I don't really know why, he said. "It's just been something I've always liked."

He's not a sprinter – he's in it for the long haul.

"I'm a long-distance runner. I don't really like short distance," he said.

He's anxious for next year's track season, when he can start running as a Cougar.



Underwood sixth-grader Levi Repnow has logged the most miles in Underwood's before-school run club, having run more than 120 miles so far.

Knutson is hoping he'll be able to run as a Cougar a little earlier than next spring, potentially running cross country this fall.

"I think Levi could do it," said Knutson. "I hope he sticks with it and does cross country and track and field."

To consistently show up for run club, the kids have to love running – or at least walking – or maybe a combination of the two.

Some of the kids run the whole time, but they don't have to, said Knutson. They can walk if they want to, or do a combination of both – just so they're getting some miles in.

She and Bjorge keep track of how many laps around the gym the students get each

**RUNNING**  
continued on page 6



Run Club organizer Ronda Knutson points to a reward runner Blake Frohlich received from the New York Run Club, a free pair of running shoes. Knutson says she's got five more pairs of shoes waiting for some of her runners, courtesy of the New York Run Club.



These shoes are still good for more miles. Runners Kannon Hunt, Blake Frohlich and Olivia Pongratz show off their running shoes. The three are among the regular runners at the Underwood School's morning run club.



## Palliative Care

### What You Should Know

Palliative Care is specialized medical care for people with serious illness. This type of care is focused on providing relief from the symptoms and stress from serious illnesses. The goal is to improve quality of life for both the patient and the family.

Palliative care is provided by a specially trained team of doctors, nurses and other specialists who work together with a patient's provider as an extra layer of support. It is appropriate at any age and at any stage in a serious illness, and it can be provided along with curative treatment.

#### WHERE DO I RECEIVE PALLIATIVE CARE?

Palliative care can be provided in a variety of settings including the hospital, outpatient clinic and at home.

#### HOW DO I KNOW IF PALLIATIVE CARE IS RIGHT FOR ME?

Palliative care may be right for you if you suffer from pain, stress or other symptoms due to a serious illness. Serious illnesses may include cancer, heart or lung disease, Alzheimer's, HIV/AIDS, ALS, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's and more. Palliative care can be provided at any stage of illness and along with treatment meant to cure you.

#### WHAT CAN I EXPECT FROM PALLIATIVE CARE?

You can expect assistance with management of symptoms such as pain, shortness of breath, fatigue, constipation, nausea, loss of appetite and difficulty sleeping. Staff can help you better understand your condition and choices for medical care, including completing an Advance Directive. In short, you can expect improved quality of life while planning for your future.

#### WHO PROVIDES PALLIATIVE CARE?

Palliative care is provided by a team including physician, nurses, social worker and other specialists.

#### HOW DOES PALLIATIVE CARE WORK WITH MY OWN DOCTOR?

The palliative care team works in partnership with your provider as an extra layer of support for you and your family. The team provides expert symptom management, extra time for communication about your goals and treatment options and help navigating the health system.

#### HOW DO I GET PALLIATIVE CARE?

You have to ask for it! Just tell your doctor and nurses that you would like to see the palliative care team.

*Palliative Care is now being offered for the Hazen and Beulah area. Call 748-7380 for more information.*



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# Health benefits of sourdough promote bread

BY AMY NASH

For years, when we hear the word “bread,” we think “carbs” and “sugar.” Bread has become an “unhealthy” addition to a meal. Options to eliminate it on restaurant menus is commonplace. Long gone are the days when a slice of bread was a staple at every meal.

There is a woman in Beulah who is removing the stigma of bread as unhealthy. Diabetics and gluten-sensitive people can rejoice that there is a way to enjoy the soft, satisfying taste of homemade bread.

Sourdough. A process of fermentation of flour and water has been around for at least as long as ancient Egypt, thousands of years ago. People have been eating long before words were ever written. All over the world, people have used wild yeast to naturally leaven their bread.

Since she was 12 years old, Carrie Nottingham has been fascinated with baking. Five years ago, she started the journey with sourdough. “It has become a passion of mine. I have loved the process of making naturally leavened bread and all of the wonderful health benefits that come along with it” said Nottingham.

The health benefits of sourdough extend from the process by which it's made. Contrary to common belief, sourdough is more than just a category, flavor or type of bread; it is a process. “With a few simple ingredients: flour, water and salt, you can make the most amazing bread you've ever eaten,” said Nottingham.

Fermentation is the chemical breakdown of a substance by bacteria, yeasts, or other microorganisms. Sourdough's natural form of leavening is a result of fermentation. The natural fermentation of flour and water break down the gluten and converts the natural sugars into carbon dioxide and ethanol.

Sourdough starter must be fed to stay alive. There are living bacteria in a sourdough starter. Studies have shown that sourdough contains the natural yeast called *Lactobacillus sanfranciscensis*. This bacteria was never seen before and seemed to be unique to the properties of sourdough.

Traditional baker's yeast, *Candida milleri* undergoes manufacturing to create the desired leavening results. Baker's yeast is a byproduct of sugar or molasses. The molasses is diluted with water, adjusted for acidity, heated until almost boiling and filtered through heavy cloths.

The manufactured yeast is processed in a carefully main-

tained laboratory to avoid contamination with wild (natural) yeast that can be found in the air. The process includes fermentation, but strains the fluid before complete.

With the ingredient labels of store-bought bread too numerous to count and too incomprehensible to read, the outcome of an intolerance to bread is understandable.

Sourdough does not fit the same nutrition profile as store-bought bread and possibly even store-bought sourdough bread (which may only share the name and not the fermentation process.)

Nottingham was determined to find a way to satisfy the needs of her young family while providing nutritious meals. “My young sons were incredibly picky eaters who would gobble up rolls, crackers and anything bread-like made with flour. So I started researching to find the most healthful bread I could make for them,” said Nottingham.

Nottingham unveiled the truth behind the world's oldest form of bread-making. “The natural fermentation of wild yeast lowers the amount of insulin the body needs to process the bread and the natural probiotics that are present in the final product make it really easy for your body to digest,” said Nottingham.

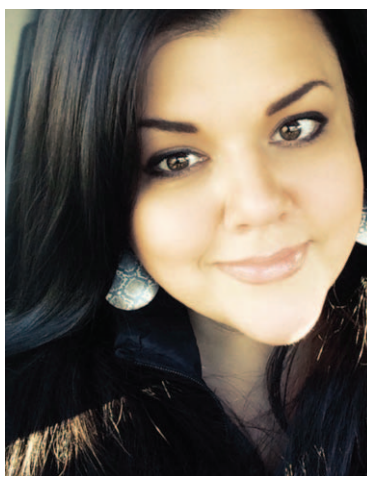
Nottingham spent months of “fun” and almost daily experimentation with the starter to “fine tune” her favorite recipes. Nottingham said “Now, I keep my starter in the refrigerator and have been making bread for my family almost weekly for the past five years.”

“Once you start making your own bread, it's hard to eat store bought bread. In fact, it's crazy how uncomfortable you feel after eating bread made with commercial yeast,” said Nottingham.

The possibilities are endless with sourdough bread. Not only can you make traditional “sandwich-style” loaves, but every other traditional style of sourdough bread. The “sour” in its name does not refer to the taste necessarily, but the process. Nottingham also makes homemade tortillas, naan and pancakes with her sourdough starter.

Having become the sourdough expert she is, Nottingham responds to common concerns and opinions about sourdough bread.

To the comment, “We don't really like ‘sour’ bread” Nottingham answers, “You can adjust the amount of sour in the bread! It's not as tricky as it seems. It really is wild, naturally fer-



Carrie Nottingham promotes baking with sourdough and teaches the health benefits of it.



Sourdough bread is the oldest process of leavening bread and makes eating it actually healthy for consumers.

mented yeast. You can make it as mild or as sour as you prefer.”

To the concern that “I don't have time for that in my life. I can't babysit a starter.” Nottingham assures, “There are so many ways to use natural yeast. Your commitment level can vary! There are people who keep it on their counter, feed it and bake with it every day.

Then there are those that bake with it weekly or just monthly. Once you have a strong start, it's very forgiving and doesn't mind hanging out in the fridge until you need it.”

If you are longing for the satisfied taste of homemade bread, but would love to eliminate the negative side-effects, such as bloating; sourdough could be

your answer.

Nottingham is Beulah's local source of information for all things sourdough. If you know Nottingham, see her on the street or at the school, ask her to tell you about sourdough, she will amaze you. She welcomes all to join in this “journey” with her.

“I have loved the process of making naturally leavened bread and all of the wonderful health benefits that come along with it”  
- Carrie Nottingham of Beulah.

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# Earlier detection, smaller risk

BY DANIEL ARENS

One Beulah resident was lucky to discover the presence of cancer when he did.

Early detection and an effective response by Hazen and Beulah physicians saved Jay Seibel's life. But, even so, he is kicking himself for not having made the discovery long before he did.

Seibel was 57 when he went in for a colonoscopy that revealed he had contracted Stage 3 colon cancer. The Center for Disease Control and other health organizations strongly recommend getting a colonoscopy at the age of 50, but Seibel dismissed the warning and didn't get the test done at that time.

"The key was catching it early," Seibel said. "But if I hadn't waited so long to get my colonoscopy, it might have been caught sooner. Basically, I want to tell people, 'Don't be stupid like Jay was.'"

It was in December of 2018 that Seibel finally had his colonoscopy, after several friends and family members noted that he was looking a little paler. The result of the test was the discovery of cancerous tumor that was removed by surgery later that month, with the chemo following after that.

"I went through 12 rounds of chemo for six months," Seibel said, with the treatments going on roughly every other week from January to June of 2019. "I had a CT scan in July, and that was clear, there was no sign of the cancer. Then I had repeat colonoscopy, and that was in December of 2019, and

that was also clear."

Seibel said he is still not 100 percent, with the primary lingering side effects being tiredness in the evenings and some residual numbness in his hands and feet. However, compared with the side effects some others face, and of course the fact that he is still alive, Seibel has much to be grateful for.

“ “  
*The key was catching it early”*  
 - Jay Seibel  
 ” ”

"In the evening, about 7:30 or so, I hit a wall," he said. "I used to be a real night owl, so that's been a change." In the morning and through the day, however, Seibel is able to maintain both his daily work and his upbeat spirit.

"I thank everyone for their prayers and concerns," he said, tearing up. "I'm very thankful we have the medical facilities and the staff that we have here. Dr. [Michael] Schmit saved my life."

His experience also enabled Seibel to make other connections in his life. Jayme Fritel, who worked with him at Sakakawea Medical Center, had been through a similar experience almost exactly 1 year prior to Seibel's, and that provided a common connection he came to value greatly.

"It was nice to be able to work with her and run things by her," he said. "We

became great friends from this. She was an overcomer, too."

Although gratitude is one dominant result of his harrowing experience, Seibel also continued to stress his hope that his story could serve the purpose of helping others avoid his mistakes.

"I would like to stress: Get them on time," he said, adding this isn't only for colonoscopies but also for other tests, like women getting their mammograms done.

Seibel is a well-known and well-respected member of the Beulah and Hazen communities. He said his story has already encouraged some to get their tests done sooner rather than later, and he's grateful that his situation has had that positive effect.

In order to stay up on his health, Seibel said he is focusing more on exercising, eating healthier and resting. This includes more fruits and vegetables in his diet, and drinking more water.

"I am definitely trying to drink more water, I was never a huge water drinker before," he said. "I'm also eating more yogurt, since that is good for you."

Seibel can now wait three years until his next colonoscopy, since his latest tests came back all clear. He himself said he's not sure he wants to wait that long, although he would need a doctor's recommendation to get an earlier colonoscopy that is covered by insurance. Because of his contracting the cancer, his children are now supposed to get their test at age 40.



Photo by Daniel Arens

Jay Seibel (right) stands beside Sakakawea Medical Center Surgeon Michael Schmit, who helped remove a cancerous tumor from Seibel's colon in December 2018. Seibel hoped his own struggle with cancer will motivate other people to get their colonoscopy and other cancer-related tests done sooner rather than later.

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Health  
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Photos by Lynnette Laning

Students hold up signs displaying the total amount raised during the Kids for Heart fundraiser this year.

# Students raise \$15K for heart association

BY ALYSSA MEIER

For the third year in a row, Washburn elementary students have beat their previous year's fundraising total during the annual Kids for Heart event.

Over \$15,000 will be donated to the American Heart Association on behalf of Washburn Public School this year. The total amount of money, which was raised through the annual Jump Rope for Heart and Hoops for Heart fundraiser, was announced on Thursday during a presentation at the school.

It is the third year in a row that Washburn students have beat their previous year's to-

### Fundraiser total

2017 - \$11,803  
 2018 - \$13,286  
 2019 - \$14,635  
 2020 - \$15,260

tal, increasing from \$14,635 raised in 2019 to \$15,260 this year. In 2018, the school raised \$13,286 and in 2017, students tallied \$11,803.

Students celebrated the accomplishment with giant banners displaying the total and with silly string.

The money will be donated to the American Heart Association.



Washburn elementary school students celebrated raising over \$15,000 by spraying classmate Lacey Seidler with silly string in the Olde Gym on Feb. 20. (Lynnette Laning)

## RUNNING continued from page 3

day, and keep a running tally, making sure the kids are recognized for their milestones. A good chunk of wall space at the school is taken up by pictures of the runners, showing off their accomplishments.

There are about 35 kids who run pretty regularly. There is no particular goal as far as laps or miles, noted Knutson.

"It's individual for the most part. The kids are trying to beat themselves," she said - to do a little better today than they did the last time.

There is a little friendly competition between friends, she said, but for the most part the run club focuses on independent success - getting better each time.

Knutson is hoping to keep her young runners interested in the sport through their high school years and into adulthood. Aside from holding the twice-weekly run club, Knutson hopes to have the track at the school open for runners during the summer. She also hopes to have her runners participate in a 5K or two this summer in Bismarck, and maybe even one in Underwood, too.

Olivia might be up for a nice 5K this summer. She def-

initely likes run club.

"I walk two laps, then I run two laps," she said. "It's fun."

When asked what their goals are, Kannon said, "We already beat it."

Blake agreed. Yes, they both exceeded 100 miles pretty recently, so they're on to the next goal.

Since she's walking some of her laps, Olivia has a ways to go, she said. "I'd like to get to 100 - I'm at 15 right now."

Blake and Kannon typically run two or three miles a day at run club, they said, but they're lollygagging, they're doing a lot of sprinting.

Getting up a little early for run club days is fine with all of them.

Levi uses his time while running to do a lot of thinking, he said.

"It's something fun for me to do," added Olivia.

Blake even noted that he likes running because of the "runner's high" he gets, where you can just go and you don't feel tired.

They have no problem scrambling out of bed in the morning to lace up their shoes and go for a run - it's so much better than sleeping in.

Sleeping in is boring," said Kannon with a smile.

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# WHAZZ APP?

## Bullying moves online, anonymous

BY JILL DENNING GACKLE

One Garrison mom doesn't want to foist her parenting style on others. But she wants to warn others that parenting and grandparenting come with a lot more dangers today.

"We tend to parent the way we were raised," she said. "Bullying, the mean kids, boys will be boys, kids will be kids, all those cliches are still true ... but our world has changed because of the overreaching power of the internet."

Lisa Maki, a day care provider with a degree in early childhood education and a masters degree in counseling, said the bullying she experienced as a child ended when she arrived home.

"I was the butt of many jokes," she said. "But when I went home and we shut the door, it stopped. My phone was attached to a wall, my mom heard what I said, you couldn't get to me unless you came through my parents."

"This," she said, as she points to her cell phone, "right here, means you can get to me 24 hours a day."

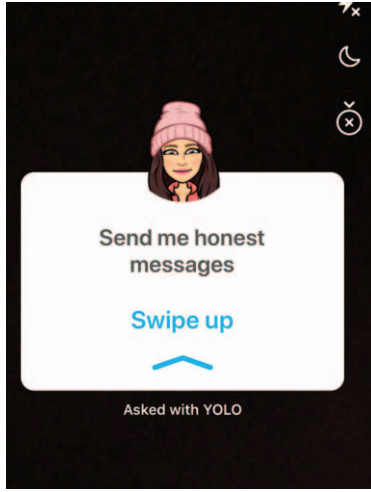
New apps like YOLO (You Only Live Once) promote themselves as an anonymous way to give "honest and genuine messages to friends." Instead, Lisa described the app as a way to bully anonymously, something which is being done here and in schools nationwide.

"The problem is the anonymity and it's usually not positive," she said.

Cell phones for teens and pre-teens started as a way for parents to keep tabs on their children.

"You start out with great intentions," she said. "Most kids don't go looking for trouble."

Instead, cell phones are now banned from the Garrison classrooms, and Lisa has frequent conversations with parents who are concerned about the access to pornography and



predators and the prevalence of bullying.

She said it's impossible to isolate children from the internet, especially since it's in the home for television access, online banking, games and businesses. Instead she's trying to educate her own children and share the information with other parents.

"As a proactive parent and you're doing everything you can do, and it still happens," she said. She said she treats internet access

as a privilege. For example, don't do a chore you were asked and agreed to do, no use of a tablet.

"We joke that we should just wrap them in bubble wrap but that's not realistic," she said. "My kids need to understand there are natural consequences for their behaviors."

Lisa, who has 22 children enrolled in her day care and is a Garrison school board member, has other concerns. She worries about how easy it is for young people to be lured by a sexual predator through the internet. She also is concerned about how easy it is for young people to unintentionally view pornography.

Her first grader was watching a Sponge Bob video on YouTube when he told his mom he saw something he didn't understand. Someone had sand-

"This, right here, means you can get to me 24 hours a day."

- Lisa Maki warns about bullying through cell phones

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- Rest your eyes regularly when using the computer for extended periods of time.
- Have your eyes examined every two to three years to guard against eye disease and ensure your eyewear prescriptions are up to date. If you're age 40 or older, scheduling an eye exam every one to two years is especially important to guard against age-related eye diseases and vision loss.

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**National Online Safety**  
 #WakeUpWednesday

## 12 Social Media Online Safety Tips FOR CHILDREN WITH NEW DEVICES

With Christmas only a few weeks away, many of you will be using social media to share your excitement with friends and family. Being active on social media is a great way to show others how much fun you're having, but it's important that you know how to use these apps safely and securely so that bad things don't happen. By following our safety tips below, you can make sure that your personal information stays private, your postings are positive and that your social media use overall is responsible, healthy and most of all enjoyable.

- DON'T ACCEPT FRIEND REQUESTS FROM STRANGERS**  
 Make sure that you set your profile to private so that people you don't know can't find you online. Always tell a trusted adult if a stranger or somebody you don't know sends you a message or a friend request.
- NEVER SHARE YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION WITH PEOPLE YOU DON'T KNOW**  
 Keep your personal information personal. Sometimes people online aren't always who they say they are and might ask you to share things that you don't feel comfortable sharing.
- DON'T SHARE EMBARRASSING PHOTOS OR VIDEOS OF OTHERS ONLINE**  
 This could really upset them and could get you into a lot of trouble. Always think twice before posting anything on social media and treat people online as you would in real-life.
- NEVER SEND NAKED PICTURES OF YOURSELF TO OTHERS**  
 This is illegal if you are under 18 and you could get into trouble with the Police. If you are being pressured by someone, always say no and tell a trusted adult. Even if you think it is innocent fun, the photo could be shared with other people and you won't be able to control who else sees it.
- CREATE A POSITIVE ONLINE REPUTATION**  
 Always be kind and polite when posting comments on social media and only upload pictures and videos of things you are proud of. This forms part of your digital footprint. Everything you do online can be tracked and monitored and could affect what people think of you in real-life if it is negative.
- LIMIT YOUR SCREEN TIME**  
 Social media can be addictive, and it is easy to keep checking newsfeeds or your notifications every 5 minutes which can affect your behaviour and stop you from doing other things. Remember to only use your phone at certain times of the day, turn notifications off at bedtime and go out and have as fun as much as possible. This will keep you fit and healthy and make you appreciate there's more to life than just what's on social media.
- BLOCK ONLINE BULLIES**  
 Sometimes people might say nasty things to you online or post offensive comments on your pictures or videos. If this happens, always tell a trusted adult who will help you block them from your profile and support you in taking further action.
- REPORT INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT**  
 If you see something on social media that you don't like, offends you or upsets you, you should always report it to a trusted adult. You should also report it to the social media app who will be able to remove the content if it is against their user policy and can block the person who posted it.
- ONLY USE APPS WHICH YOU ARE OLD ENOUGH TO USE**  
 Before downloading any new social media app, always check the age-rating. If you need help, ask your parent or carer to make sure that the app is safe for you to use and never download anything which you are too young for as it may contain content that isn't safe for you to see.
- ALWAYS SECURE ALL YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA PROFILES WITH A PASSWORD**  
 This will help to keep your private information safe and won't allow others to access your profiles without your permission. Make sure your passwords are memorable and personal to you but something which other people can't guess, and always share them with your parents just in case you forget them.
- ASK PARENTS TO SET-UP 'PARENTAL CONTROLS' FOR SOCIAL MEDIA**  
 When you download a social media app, you should always ask a trusted adult to help you set it up for the first time. This will help you control who sees what you post, who can contact you and make sure you are able to enjoy using the app safely and securely.
- ALWAYS TALK TO YOUR TRUSTED ADULT IF SOCIAL MEDIA IS MAKING YOU UNHAPPY**  
 Sometimes, social media can make us feel bad about ourselves or sad that we aren't the same as someone else or doing the same things as someone else. Remember, if you ever feel this way, it's really important to talk to your trusted adult(s) like your parents, carers, other adult family members or a teacher, all of whom will be able to support you and discuss your feelings with you to help make you feel better.

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wiched in a sex scene with full frontal nudity into the video and her son watched without knowing what it was.

"They weren't wrestling," he said before Lisa tried to explain what he saw in a six-year-old's terms.

Her 11-year-old had a similar unintentional incident and told Lisa, "I saw some stuff on the internet I can't get it out of my head."

Lisa and her husband, Mike, now subscribe to Bark, a pro-

gram that monitors her children's texts, internet usage, emails and social media usage for harmful action and content. Other apps allow parents to control what apps or programs particular computers can access.

"Bark is not going to replace parenting," she said. "There's no app in the world that's going to replace parenting."

She said she's grateful for her friends and neighbors who keep an eye on her children.

"I'm blessed to live in Garri-

son and have a village to help me raise my children," she said. "If one of our family friends see my kid doing something, they'll be like, 'What are you doing?'"

When the Garrison school posted a warning earlier this month about YOLO, one parent asked for a meeting with parents to help them learn more. The school responded positively, but said they continue to learn from the students about the latest apps and repercussions.

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# Retirement kept healthy under watchful eyes

By ALLAN TINKER

Years of nursing assistant care prepared Connie Werth well for the job she holds now.

She started her 21 years of work caring for patients at St. Vincent's in Bismarck; then worked at Missouri Slope Lutheran Care Center. She expanded her CNA skills at Med Center One Clinic where she did bone density testing and worked in cardiology.

Adding all her skills as the Sheridan Memorial Retirement Home manager job she is now where she can be involved three weeks out of the month with direct resident care, leaving just one week of computer work, records and bookwork to round out the month.

"We like our patients to feel comfortable here, no worries, no laundry, to cooking. They have earned this for what they have done for everyone else. Now it is their turn. They get a yearly physical, and weekly visits, from Kayla Abrahamson, a nurse from Northland Community Health Center in McClusky. They also have weekly and foot care every other month. We all, along with Missy Axt, their nurse here, keep up with continuing education classes to get help keeping the residents spirits up during the long periods of not going outside."

Werth added, "Carrie Foley does exercises with them two times a month where they play kickball and leg exercises while seated. The residents are encouraged to walk about whenever they can. They do crafts, painting and spend many hours on these. They also crochet, embroider, and keep their hands moving on quilting and making decorations for the seasons and holidays.

In nice months, they have an outside Yahtzee set with a large bucket, if they are able to do this game. They can garden too, if they wish. Some help pull weeds and others plant the seeds and seedlings and some do both.

"At all times of the year, the residents enjoy playing Uno and pinochle. This gives them a chance to be socially active and some games have new twists to them. They also like music bingo and if they guess the song, they get to cover the space. When all the spaces are covered, there is a winner.

"On Tuesday, it is 'don't mess doing anything else that day' as it is Bingo. Faye Stein started the games some years ago and they play for basic necessities, along with a snack favorite, puffed cheese corn. The prizes are usually donated by families, friends and members of the communities from which the residents



Two large tables are full of Uno and Pinochle players at Sheridan Memorial Home. Home Manager Connie Werth stands at the back left of photo. Some in the group are visitors, along with several residents.

come.

"One resident received a cake baked as a toilet bowl for his 69th birthday. We try to do something special for birthdays and holidays for those who do not go out. We have special meals for them. For Valentine's Day, they had a variety of mini-cheesecakes. They like sweets.

"A real favorite is when the elementary school kids come by to present a program. Ruth Roubal sings with a group from Drake and the residents appreciate this and any kind of singing, or singing together.

"Menus are provided by a

dietician or U.S. Food Services. We serve three levels of diet: regular, diabetic and a limited portion. The residents usually need protein and we provide three ounces of meat or other protein, one-half cup vegetables and try to limit starches to one-third cup or so.

"We have to serve at least that much to each resident; it is required by the ND State Health Department. We can work with the source of these requirements, as people have different tolerances. They like southwest chicken or baked chicken.

"We also try to make the plates as colorful as possible. Snacks include a lot of good stuff. There are yogurts, granola bars, string cheese, Fiber One bars, fruit cups, and a variety of fresh fruit. Bananas are a must here. We also offer sugar-free items to accommodate those on a diabetic diet."

With all that must be watched over, Werth's favorite thing to do is taking time to visit with a resident, or maybe play along with them at games and craft creations. Everyone seems happy here and they all get along, she added.



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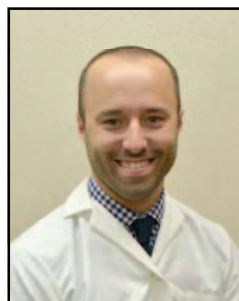
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- Swing Bed • Respite Care • Adult Day Care



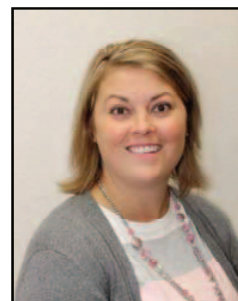
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# Health & Wellness

## Second Section

### Area responds to blind baby's needs

By JILL DENNING GACKLE

At Leland Johnson's three month appointment, his doctor noticed the brunette's blue eyes weren't tracking like expected.

His mom, Briana, had suspicions but it wasn't until Dr. Forrest Hirsch brought it to her attention that she began to seek further help.

Briana, the daughter of Eden and Sylvan Brunzell of Garrison, took him to his pediatrician to explain that besides his eyes, his motor and development skills were lagging.

After an MRI, the doctor told her Leland had numerous ailments including total blindness from an underdeveloped optic nerve.

Briana, 26, took the news like many of a sick baby would: "It was pretty scary. I didn't know what to think or feel. I was very overwhelmed being a single mom, working, going to all these doctor's appointments, traveling. I'd never heard of his conditions before."

Leland was diagnosed with an underdeveloped optic nerve, pituitary gland that wasn't working and the absence of the mid-line part of his brain. He's blind, developmentally delayed, has a weakened immune system and his body temperature can't be regulated. He has daily injections and takes oral medication.

In November he had a surgery to correct a tethered spinal cord, which was causing scoliosis and severe headaches. That surgery helped his motor skills, allowed him to be more active and he doesn't appear to have the debilitating headaches.

Today at 18 months old he was in the hospital at least seven times for two to five days each time. During his short life, he was often sick or lethargic with everything from pneumonia and respiratory viruses.

It's taken a village to battle life threatening illnesses.

Briana, who lives in Garri-

“It's unbelievable how everybody cares. It's so thoughtful. Everybody just comes together to help. It leaves me speechless.”  
- Briana Johnson about the fundraising for her son Leland.

son, had to miss work because of appointments or his illness. She is a CNA at the Garrison hospital, and had to drop out of the LPN training program because of her schedule.

She said, "They're very cooperative, they know what he has and how he gets sick so easily. They work with me very, very well."

Her parents and Leland's godmother, Gabriel Dove, a registered nurse, do much of the babysitting while Briana is at work. And since the initial diagnosis, they were all there at her side whenever Leland underwent any procedure.

Briana, who also raises six-year-old daughter Ezra alone, said they've learned together how to communicate with Leland and how important it is for him to hear their voices.

"She's a little mother hen to him," she said.

But Briana and her family couldn't go it alone and she learned to reach out to others for help.

She said, "I'm not a huge person who asks for help. I've rather do it on my own."

Benefits started in August with her friend Allie Hedstrom, who organized a horse ride near Ryder. Then the Sakakawea Fence Stretchers had a fun run Feb. 8 and there is a benefit breakfast March 1 at the Garrison City Auditorium.

"It's truly unbelievable, the amount of love and support I get," she said. "In the beginning, I did feel very alone. It was scary, and then the horse

benefit ride, the Sakakawea Fence Stretchers run and the benefit breakfast coming up, it's unbelievable how everybody cares. It's so thoughtful. Everybody just comes together to help. It leaves me speechless."

The support is overwhelming, but so are Briana's days.

"I kind of take it day by day," she said. Leland's steroid medication keeps him from sleeping and Briana fights the fatigue.

She has a positive attitude about Leland's future, but she had to work at it.

"I was negative. I thought why me. But then I've come to realize that just because he has all these conditions he's still a happy baby. He doesn't know any different," she said. "This is all normal for him. I looked at it as me being selfish for acting the way I was. So I changed my attitude. And you know what? There's no reason for me to be negative when he's not."

Leland will continue to have medical appointments. Another MRI on the spinal cord will be after he's three years old.

Until then, Briana and her family soldier on with an army of supporters.



Leland Johnson with his mom, Briana.

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# Generation Anxiety

By JILL DENNING GACKLE

Anxiety in children and youth is a real thing.

That's what Darren Dobrinski, a school psychologist, from Minot and the family farm at Makoti advises.

Dobrinski spoke to Max teachers at a recent in-service about how to identify anxiety, a condition that experts say affects one in three youth.



"Every third child has some type of anxiety disorder," he said.

He reviewed the signs of anxiety and made suggestions on how to help students cope.

"Mental health isn't like you're taking an X-ray and finding out you have a broken wrist," he explained. "It's a lot more complicated than some of the other health issues."

He said it's hard to know the cause and the reasons, but he said the prevalence of anxiety has gone up and it's real.

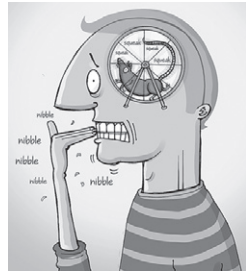
"The body is telling us that there is something in the environment that we need to change to get past that," Dobrinski said. "Is it going up or are we getting better at identifying some of those things? That's a question that we haven't been able to answer yet."

He said the signs include inability to concentrate, worried feelings, over sensitivity to environment, withdrawing, difficulty sleeping or stomach aches. Social anxiety is another issue among youth.

"If you're feeling anxious, you're going to constantly think you're not going to be able to concentrate in school," he said. "You're going to have difficulty problem solving,

## Anxiety Answers

According to the National Institute of Mental Health: "Occasional anxiety is an expected part of life. You might feel anxious when faced with a problem at work, before taking a test, or before making an important decision. But anxiety disorders involve more than temporary worry or fear. For a person with an anxiety disorder, the anxiety does not go away and can get worse over time. The symptoms can interfere with daily activities such as job performance, school work, and relationships."



Symptoms of General Anxiety Disorder are:

- Feeling restless, wound-up, or on-edge
- Being easily fatigued
- Having difficulty concentrating; mind going blank
- Being irritable
- Having muscle tension
- Difficulty controlling feelings of worry
- Having sleep problems, such as difficulty falling or staying asleep, restlessness, or unsatisfying sleep

you're going to have worries and being oversensitive to your environment. You might

*"We don't want to protect them from normal developmental situations. We want them to experience those things that are scary and anxiety causing, because they're going to get through them. If we remove them, we won't help them learn to overcome those things."*

Predictable routines and setting clear guidelines are a couple of the suggestions he gave teachers.

"I think what we do as parents or teachers is we try to protect them," he said. "When are children are feeling down, we remove them from the situation that causes them anxiety. That isn't helping them get through those situations."

He advised: "We don't want to protect them from normal developmental situations. We want them to experience

those things that are scary and anxiety causing, because they're going to get through them. If we remove them, we won't help them learn to overcome those things."

He said parents and teachers shouldn't set them up to fail, but instead children and youth should be encouraged to take calculated risks.

"Help them come up with strategies to overcome those situations," he said.

Dobrinski said it's hard to know why youth are experiencing anxiety. He said school is considered the number one anxiety provoker.

"There's just a lot of pressure," he said. "We're putting a lot of pressure on kids."

He said many schedules in-

### ANXIETY

continued on page 13



## Amazing facts about honey

Honey is perhaps best known for its sweet taste. But beneath that sweetness is a complex, healthy food.

Bees produce honey from the pollen of plants through a complex enzymatic process, turning it into the beloved golden nectar.

Many properties make honey a unique food that is not just tasty, but also quite healthy. Here are some facts about honey that might get you buzzing.

- When stored in an airtight container, honey can last indefinitely. The substance is naturally acidic and low in moisture, which means it is an inhospitable environment for bacteria. There are small amounts of hydrogen peroxide in honey as well, inhibiting the growth of microorganisms. (Source: Tin Roof Teas)

- Honey has antibacterial properties, so it has been relied on as a health food and topical treatment. Burns, cuts, infections, stomach ailments, and more have been treated with honey. (Source: National Center for Biotechnology Information)

- Honey is the only food source produced by an insect that humans eat. (Source: Peace Bee Farmer)

- Mead is a fermented beverage that is made from honey. It has a storied history as a beverage of choice in many different cultures. (Source: Hidden Legend Winery)

- Honey is the only food that includes all the substances necessary to sustain life. This includes enzymes, vitamins and minerals. It also contains pinocembrin, a unique antioxidant associated with improved brain function. (Source: Sirhowy Valley Honey)

- A honey bee produces roughly 1/12 of a teaspoon of honey over the course of its life. Bees are not the only insect to make honey, however. The honey wasp, native to Mexico, also can produce honey. (Sources: Golden Blossom Honey and Inverse)

- Honey will take on the flavor of the nectar from which it was made. This nectar also will affect the color and the consistency of the honey. (Source: National Honey Board)

- Honey has a sweet and rich history. At times honey has been referred to as "the nectar of the gods," and it is still enjoyed for pleasure and medicinal reasons today.

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# Thinking about Health

## Narrow networks limit patient choice

BY TRUDY LIEBERMAN,  
Community Health  
News Service

The next time you hear someone – likely a politician or spokesperson for a medical special interest group – argue that America's health insurance arrangements are fine because they offer lots of choice for patients, don't take them seriously.

What choice are they talking about? Almost anyone navigating the health system over the last decade knows that insurers have limited where they can go for care and whom they can see.

The concept of limiting patients' choice of doctors, hospitals, and other medical services like radiology practices or speech therapy began a few decades back with HMOs. The health management organizations argued that, to assure quality, they were allowing their insured patients to see only the best providers.

The theory sounded good, but in practice the health providers squawked, and networks gradually became more inclusive. That changed again as costs continued to rise and insurers started to choose only doctors who accepted their fee schedules. Things got kind of muddy for patients because they didn't know for sure whether a doctor was in the network because they charged low prices or because they offered superior care.

The way networks operate has gotten even more opaque and manipulated, according to new research from Penn State assistant professor of public policy Simon Haeder and his colleagues. Their research tells us more about how insurance carriers are limiting patient choice.

Do insurers deliberately exclude doctors offering certain specialties in the hope of forcing out the "lemons" among their insured patients – those likely to be sick? Haeder told me that may be happening.

For example, diabetics need to see endocrinologists periodically to help manage their disease, but if the insurer constructs a network with no or few endocrinologists, patients may be forced to seek care elsewhere or pay out of pocket. Such a strategy, says Haeder, allows an insurer "to offload costs" they don't want to pay.

It's even harder to find doctors in fields where there are fewer providers such as cardiac surgeons, podiatrists, and in some cases obstetricians and gynecologists. The problem is even greater in rural areas where it's common for patients to drive many miles to find a practitioner to treat them.

Haeder and colleagues also found that the problems with network adequacy also applied to coverage offered through Medicare Advantage (MA) plans. Sales presentations for MA plans often omit the fact they restrict choice through narrow networks.

Haeder's study examined MA plan networks in California and found that seniors may have trouble accessing care. His research showed that large numbers of them might have to travel 30, 60, or even 120 miles to find a higher quality doctor.

Furthermore, he noted, an analysis of coronary stent procedures in New York State showed that provider networks might be more restrictive for Medicare Advantage plan members than for those who get coverage from poli-

cies sold in the Affordable Care Act marketplace.

Inaccurate and out-of-date directories also limit patient choice. If directories report that certain specialists for treating kidney problems are located nearby, but when you call for an appointment you find they are no longer practicing, what do you do? Go without care? Pay out of pocket? Or search far and wide for someone who takes your insurance?

When the Affordable Care Act first went into effect and for a few years after that, the media and advocacy groups did point out that many plans had few providers and others offered directories that were out of date. They singled out those plans.

There's not much of that kind of reporting or outrage these days. Maybe it should come back to highlight the significant barriers to care Haeder uncovered.

"We thought if we gave people insurance everything would be great," he told me. "But there's a difference between having insurance and having access to care."

The focus of advocates, policymakers, and even some insurers became the premium people would pay. But the premium is only one element of a policy that determines the final bill to the consumer. Co-insurance, copays and deductibles, all of which have risen astronomically in the last few years, are equally important and are contributing to the rising medical debt.

Knowing which providers are in a network is important. So is understanding the games insurers play to do what insurers always do: limit their risk of paying out money for sick people.



## 20 warning signs of stress

Stress affects so many people and infiltrates so many parts of daily life that it can be tempting to write it off as harmless or just a normal part of being human. But the negative effects of stress are significant, and persons who can recognize that are in a good position to find healthy ways to cope with their stress.

The American Psychological Association notes that stress can take a considerable toll on a person's mind and body. Chronic stress, which is a constant stress experienced over a prolonged period of time, can increase the risk of hypertension, heart attack or stroke. In addition, the APA notes that chronic stress causes the muscles in the body to be in an essentially constant state of guardedness, which can potentially contribute to tension-type headache and migraines. And these are just two of the many ways the body is adversely affected by stress, which the APA says also has been linked to problems with the gastrointestinal system, nervous system and reproductive system.

Since stress can contribute to such unpleasant and potentially life-threatening side effects, it's important that people from all walks of life learn to recognize the warning signs of stress. The American Institute of Stress lists the following among its 50 most

common signs and symptoms of stress.

1. Frequent headaches, jaw clenching or pain
2. Gritting, grinding teeth
3. Stuttering or stammering
4. Tremors, or trembling of lips or hands
5. Neck ache, back pain and/or muscle spasms
6. Light headedness, faintness and/or dizziness
7. Ringing, buzzing or "popping" sounds
8. Frequent blushing or sweating
9. Cold or sweaty hands, feet
10. Dry mouth and/or problems swallowing
11. Frequent colds, infections and/or herpes sores
12. Rashes, itching, hives, and/or "goose bumps"
13. Unexplained or frequent "allergy" attacks
14. Heartburn, stomach pain and/or nausea
15. Excess belching and/or flatulence
16. Constipation, diarrhea, loss of control
17. Difficulty breathing and/or frequent sighing
18. Sudden attacks of life-threatening panic
19. Chest pain, palpitations and/or rapid pulse
20. Frequent urination

Stress is a part of daily life. Learning to recognize signs of stress can help people overcome it and reduce their risk for various conditions.

## Guide to popular herbal teas

Tea is a healthy beverage. Black, green and oolong teas get their fair share of health-boosting attention, but a grouping of teas, which technically are not true teas at all, also can be a boon to the body.

Herbal teas come in various flavors. The following are some of the more popular herbal teas and their potential health benefits.

### Chamomile tea

Chamomile is best known for its calming effects, and it is sometimes used as a mild sleep-inducer. A study of 34 patients with insomnia found marginal improvements in waking up during the night, time to falling asleep and daytime functioning after taking chamomile extract twice a day, as published by the National Institutes of Health's PubMed Central. Some studies suggest that chamomile can reduce symptoms of premenstrual syndrome, and it may have anti-inflammatory and antibacterial properties as well.

### Peppermint tea

Those who enjoy peppermint tea often do so to soothe an upset stomach. Nutritionist Dr. Simran Saini from Fortis Hospital in India says that peppermint tea also can promote weight loss and reduce heartburn and may help people relax.

### Turmeric tea

Turmeric tea has anti-inflammatory properties that may be beneficial for anyone who has an autoimmune disease like arthritis and fibro-

myalgia. The anti-inflammatory properties also can help with symptoms of migraines and other minor aches and pains.

### Ginger tea

A 2012 study from researchers at Columbia University who examined 10 overweight men found that drinking hot ginger tea increased the men's feelings of fullness and reduced hunger. Ginger also may improve blood sugar control for people with type 2 diabetes.

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# Living well with Wellborn

By ALLAN TINKER

There are some rules to follow if you live with Wellborn Majors, or if you just want some advice on how to have a happy and long life.

There are ten rules and his wife Sheila says they follow them every day they can.

Be thankful is the first. Sleep well, eat anything, leave it to God, and keep busy are next.

A nap in the afternoon is Wellborn's favorite, do not argue with your wife, love your family, laugh, and when all else fails, lie about your age.

This seems to have worked well in the Majors' house, as they have been married nearly 54 years (November 2020 will make it officially 54). They have two children Gyneth (Jim) Williams and grandson Ian, and Andrew (Tina) Majors and granddaughter Aubrey.

Wellborn was born on January 14, 1941. When he was two years old, the family moved from farm to town. Then when he was 12, they moved back to the farm again. His parents were Edgar Wellborn Majors and Lavina Majors. He has a brother David who is two and one-half years younger.

Wellborn was not quite a statement on how he was born, as he had a narrowing in his stomach, which had to be repaired. At first, the doctors had thought he would not live past five years of age. But, he thrived as well as anyone from that point on after the surgery.

From his earliest, he said, "I always kept busy; it was hard not to do something."

Here, Sheila volunteered that Wellborn had recently completed building a 12 by 24-foot garden shed and put the heavy metal roof on by himself. She is looking forward to raising plants in the building. With a glance at the clock, Wellborn was out the door, leaving to pick up a prescription she needed from the drug store before it closed.

During the interview, family dropped in carrying back some pans that Sheila had

sent food over in, though she was recovering from some medical issues from this past summer. Shortly Wellborn was back, handing the medicine to Sheila.

The "love your family" rule was being used a lot by both of them.

A high school graduate, college was replaced with Wellborn enlisting in the Navy then training at Port Hueneme in California, where he went quickly from truck to operator of dozers after initial training in explosives in Indianhead, Maryland.

After four years of Navy duty, which included pulling trees with steel cables in the Seabees, he transferred to the Corp of Engineers, later working on the John T. Meyers Locks and Dam, after working on maintenance pipeline at Newburgh, Indiana on the Ohio River.

There he worked until he retired at age 64 from being head lockman at the Myers site. Sheila noted he had come home one day with the surprise announcement that he had just retired.

Still he worked in the locks some summers off and on, one helping to install two cranes. Each big (battleship gray) crane carried 600 tons of weight.

His work ethics and willingness to work hard earned him respect at his job. Sheila added, "He still gets calls, cards, and even a meal, from those who work or worked at the Dam and Locks, whenever we go back to visit."

Wellborn once saved a fellow's life that had gone past the warning sign to go no farther into the locks. The man was pulled into the gate and his boat's motor quit.

Wellborn was in charge of lowering the gate and helped get the motor started for the man. He first had sent another man to the boss as he went to the rescue to tell the boss what was going on.

The gates are 34 feet high and 110 feet long. He and the other fellow had gone out on a boat to help retrieve the man. The water was dropping one



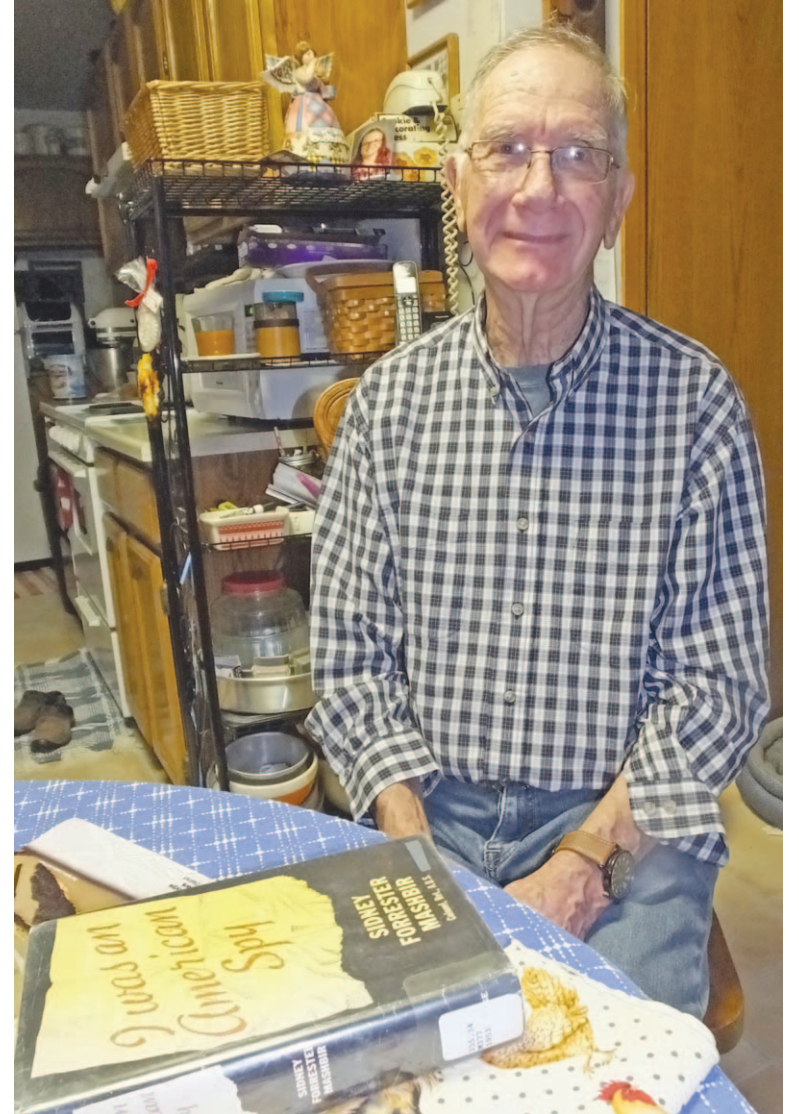
Wellborn as he looked as head lockman for the John T. Meyers Dam and Locks before his retirement.

foot per minute when the fellows boat had hit the gate. The force as the water drops creates a huge pull.

He noted, "I received \$200 for my rescue effort."

He said many people lost their lives by ignoring the signs, which are hard to miss. They have red flashing lights on the ten gates and the sign is 200 feet back, the length of two football fields. He also noted, with a slight smile, that lockmen saw many people in these boats as they worked, often in many stages of undress.

In the last few months, when Sheila needed to travel back and forth for treatments, the couple chose to come back to care for their pet instead of having someone else take care of it. It is part of their happy life to make sure that even the pets that depend upon them



Wellborn Majors as he is now, carefully taking care of his wife who has had some medical issues in the last few months, which included many trips for treatments back and forth to Bismarck.

for their care, receive it.

Wellborn is often helping family in the summer months, and assists Sheila with the heavier loads at the Food Bank at the Sheridan County Courthouse. She has been the manager there since Reverend George and Ladora Schuessler moved away. La-

dora had been Food Bank manager while George served as pastor in McClusky Grace Lutheran Church and the two couples were friends.

The Majors follow their ten life rules and seeing happiness is an understatement for all who stop to visit at their home.



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Washburn elementary students have started to use drums that were purchased through a music education grant this fall. The grant allowed for 13 drums to be introduced into the elementary music room.

## Drumming up positivity

BY ALYSSA MEIER

Washburn elementary students got their hands on some new instruments recently, as drums ordered through an enrichment grant arrived at the school.

Washburn Public School is one of over 150 recipients of the Music Education Grant, which elementary music instructor Tracy Minh said went to adding a little percussion to the classroom.

"I have wanted to add more drums to the classroom since I started and this was a way to make that happen," Minh said.

In total, Washburn received \$2,159 through the grant, which was announced in late 2019. Minh used the money to purchase 13 drums for the

school, which will incorporate the new equipment in elementary music lessons.

Minh said research has shown that group drum sessions are beneficial for mental health and socialization, as it allows students to let out energy and requires them to work together.

"It's another way for them to express themselves while learning more about music and collaborating with their classmates," Minh said.

Minh said incorporating this kind of attention to mental health in early years will hopefully foster healthier and happier students for years to come.

"I'm excited to see the effect on the students as we introduce the drums," Minh said.

The Music Education Grant,

allocated through the N.D. Department of Public Instruction, distributed \$800,000 to school districts in the state. The funds are to be used during the 2019-21 biennium and are to target behavior and mental health among kindergarten through fifth-grade students.

All grant recipients are required to file a report with the DPI by June of 2021 with information on the effects of the grant allocation.

## The dangers of added sugars

Sugar is often seen as a guilty pleasure that's only to be enjoyed on rare occasions. But that reputation is not entirely accurate, as sugar is naturally occurring in many healthy foods, including fruit.

Naturally occurring sugars do not pose a threat to overall health. However, added sugars, which the American Heart Association notes can be found in soft drinks, candy, pies, and fruit drinks, can contribute to weight gain. Obesity is a risk for cardiovascular disease, which means that added sugars can adversely affect heart health.

One of the difficulties with added sugars is that they are often present in foods and beverages generally considered healthy. Fruit juice, for example, seems like a healthy addition to any diet. However, the AHA notes that many juices contain added sugars from fruit juice concentrates. Such juices may not be seen as such, but they can be as compromising to one's overall health as soft drinks or other beverages generally considered to be unhealthy.

The AHA acknowledges that part of the difficulty with navigating one's way through added sugars is that these unhealthy additives go by many names. The Harvard Medical School notes that added sugars are not currently listed on Nutrition Facts labels, though they are listed among the ingredients on food packaging.



Both the AHA and the HMS recommend scanning ingredients lists for words that end in "ose," such as fructose, dextrose, glucose, and maltose. Those are some examples of added sugars, as are high fructose corn syrup, molasses, corn sweetener, syrup, and honey.

The AHA recommends limiting consumption of added sugars and offers guidelines for both men and women. Men should limit their added sugar consumption to a maximum of nine teaspoons per day, while women should not consume more than six teaspoons per day.

Understanding the dangers of added sugar can help men and women protect their overall health and lower their risk for cardiovascular disease. More information is available [www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org).



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## ANXIETY continued from page 10

clude school hours that sometimes surpass adult work hours, couple hours of homework and a variety of activities.

"The expectation is that they should be doing well in all of them," he said. "They have a lot of expectations on them. They get stressed."

Dobrinski gives the message to teachers and parents that anxiety is real.

Mental health ailments are as well as physical conditions, he said.

"The body is telling us we need to do something," he

said. Ignoring the mental health symptoms may later impact physical health.

He said social media doesn't cause anxiety, but it is probably a factor. He said students may experience social anxiety when their posts on social media don't get the attention that others' posts may get. But he said students who struggle socially, social media can be an outlet.

"There are pros and cons of it," he said about social media. "Like anything else, moderation is probably the best guide."

# Cancer warning slips by tests

“

He got cancer, so I wouldn't."

**Connie (Fetzer) Busch says of brother Allan who died July 9 of complications from chemo treatment after a January 2019 diagnosis of breast cancer.**

”



Connie Busch

By JILL DENNING GACKLE

One day, Connie Busch was imaging women's breasts at Trinity Health in Minot in the hopes of detecting cancer early. Four days later she was having her own healthy breasts – free of cancer – removed.

Connie, who grew up in Max as Connie Fetzer, has a family tree laced with cancer, and many times it was breast cancer. The double mastectomy is a preventative step, just like the removal of her ovaries last fall. Despite tests at two labs three decades ago that said she did not have the gene mutation that leads to breast cancer, new testing shows she has an 85 percent chance of developing the disease.

In the mid 90s, Connie in her 20s, decided she wanted to have genetic testing to determine if she would inherit breast cancer. Of the 12 siblings of her dad, eight had some kind of cancer. Four sisters and two brothers battled breast cancer. Only two of his sisters have survived the harsh cancer treatments.

Connie was tested at Creighton University in Omaha, one of the few genetic testing options available at the time. The research facility was looking for the BRCA1 or BRCA2 gene mutation that leads to breast cancer.

She tried to convince her three brothers, Allan, Kelly and Mark, to do the same.

They declined because she thinks they feared it would show up as a pre-existing condition with their health care providers. (Currently under the Affordable Care Act, coverage cannot be canceled because of a pre-existing condition.)

"I'd like to think I could have convinced my broth-

ers," Connie said. "They just thought they didn't need to get tested."

Allan was diagnosed in January 2019 with breast cancer. He chose to take chemotherapy as a preventative measure, she said, and was hit with a deadly infection when his immune system was at its lowest. He died in July.

When he was diagnosed, Connie said she had a strong feeling she should be tested again.

"I'm not a doubting person," she said. "I just knew I had to have another test."

She was tested by Invitae and this time the test came back positive for the gene mutation.

Connie, a mammographer at Trinity Health who spends her days hoping to prevent cancer in others, immediately contacted Creighton University. The university defended its practices but later told her they would contact all the people who participat-

ed in the earlier study.

"They're really dragging their feet," she complained.

The facility still has Connie's blood, so she is asking for it to be retested. She wants to know if her blood was mixed up with someone else's blood. Bottom line, she doesn't want anyone else to go through what she went through.

Connie said that the research process has changed dramatically since she was first tested. Today the tests determine thousands of mutations, far more than they did initially.

The experience led her to develop a friendship with a woman who had an opposite experience. Maureen Boesen of Kansas City tested positive for the gene mutation in a Creighton study and had a radical mastectomy, only later to learn she did not have the BRCA 1 or 2. They were both recently featured on the Today Show after finding each other online.

Before finding each other, Connie said, "I felt like I was the only one." Today, Connie said about Maureen, "She's like a sister now." The two keep in touch regularly, supporting each other in their journeys.

Connie and her husband Damon were in New Orleans recently at a private hospital that specializes in this procedure and reconstruction. Their three children will be tested in the near future. Many other relatives had or will have genetic testing.

## Here are Connie's tips:

- If you were tested previously for the BRCA1 or BRCA2 gene, which increases the chance of developing breast cancer, get a second test.
- If you have not been tested and breast cancer runs in your family, ask your doctor about gene testing. It is a blood test that costs as little as \$250 and some insurance companies cover it. The testing covers other genetic conditions, too.
- Follow the suggestions for mammograms. The Center for Disease Control recommends women aged 50 to 54 years get mammograms every year. Women aged 55 years and older should switch to mammograms every 2 years, or have the choice to continue yearly screening. Screening with mammography and clinical breast exam annually. For women aged 50 to 69 years, screening with mammography is recommended.



## Healthy eating options for seniors

"Let food be thy medicine" is a quote attributed to Hippocrates, the ancient scholar considered to be the father of modern medicine. The saying relates to the notion that what people put in their bodies can heal and/or prevent certain conditions.

For seniors with medicine cabinets full of over-the-counter and prescription medications, the idea of relying predominantly on food to promote optimal health may be tempting, and various foods can be particularly useful to the 50-and-over demographic.

According to the World Health Organization, poor diet is a major contributor to many of the diseases that affect older people. Poor diet has been connected to the development of diabetes, and degenerative diseases such as osteoporosis also may be linked to the foods ones eat. The National Council for Aging Care says micronutrient deficiency is often a problem among the aging due to factors like lack of variety in diet and reduced food intake. Eating a variety of foods can provide all of the nutrients people need to stay healthy as they get older. Certain foods may be particularly helpful.

- **Brain-friendly foods:** Foods such as avocado, leafy vegetables, sunflower seeds, blueberries, and salmon are good sources of vitamin E, antioxidants, omega-3 fatty acids, and other nutrients that may help ward off dementias like Alzheimer's disease, advises Sonas Home Health Care.

- **Anti-inflammatory foods:** Foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids may help prevent inflammation that can cause cancer and rheumatoid arthritis. Aging.com says foods that are high in omega-3 fatty acids,

like salmon, should be consumed at least twice per week.

- **Fruits and vegetables:** Fresh, canned or frozen produce tend to be high in micronutrients, including a variety of important vitamins that are essential for all components of health. The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics advises eating dark green vegetables, such as leafy greens or broccoli, and orange vegetables, such as carrots and sweet potatoes.

- **Energy-boosters:** Choose whole grains that can provide sustained energy by way of healthy carbohydrates over processed grains.

- **Bone-friendly foods:** Calcium-rich foods, such as milk, yogurt and cheese, can prevent calcium from being leached from the bones, which contributes to conditions like osteoporosis.

- **Digestive system-friendly foods:** The digestive system slows down as the body ages, as the walls of the gastrointestinal tract thicken and digestive contractions that push waste along may slow down and become fewer. Foods rich in fiber can promote proper digestion by moving food through the digestive tract more easily. High-fiber foods also may help naturally reduce blood cholesterol levels.

- **High-iron foods:** Without enough iron in the body, a person may feel tired and lethargic from a reduced production of hemoglobin, which carries oxygen in the blood from the lungs to the rest of the body. A lack of oxygen in body tissues from anemia can be serious, says the National Council for Aging Care. Tofu, spinach, lentils, pumpkin seeds, and fortified breads and cereals are high in iron.

Smart food choices can help seniors live long and healthy lives.

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# BSC increasing capacity on campus while reaching out to rural communities

North Dakota's need for healthcare professions is, to borrow from the state's tagline, legendary. Not only are there plenty of openings, employers offer hiring incentives, flexible schedules and more to entice qualified applicants to join their teams. Bismarck State College's (BSC) health science programs boast 100% job placement rates for graduates and job growth of around 10% or higher. BSC's Health Sciences programs include:

- Nursing
- Surgical Technology
- Paramedic Technology
- Emergency Medical Technician
- Certified Nursing Assistant
- Medical Laboratory Technician
- \*\*New in Fall 2020 – Diagnostic Medical Sonography

To ensure more students can pursue careers in this vital industry, BSC opened a new health science building on the campus in 2019. The 30,000 square foot virtual hospital training facility includes an ambulance bay, exam rooms, simulation labs and surgical suites. The hospital-like setting provides state-of-the-art training.

And that training is highly affordable according to BSC Health Sciences Department Chair Mari Volk.

"BSC is an educational leader in high-tech, hands-on learning. Our health science

students gain the needed skills in two years or less and help to fill the big gap in our workforce with exceptional skills. They also earn high salaries, with less debt than students attending four-year institutions."

Marlee Mohn, a surgical technology student from eastern North Dakota, is thrilled to have found a major so suited to her interests. "I've always loved watching shows like 'Grey's Anatomy', and I find the human body so fascinating. But I knew being a nurse wasn't for me. Surgery always intrigued me. Friends who'd been through this program, said it was everything I was interested in."

Mohn says her professors are outstanding, and she's completely confident in her career path. "I learn new things about the body every day. I love coming to class."

Mohn lives in Bismarck so attending classes on campus is easy. That's not the case for those place-bound by family or vocation in rural areas. To address access challenges, BSC has established five satellite nursing locations, as well as distance options for both the Medical Lab Technology and Paramedic programs.

BSC nursing students in Garrison, Ashley, Hettinger, Hazen and Harvey attend classes in internet-connected classrooms at their local healthcare center, learning



from instructors across the state. They do the hands-on learning needed for their degrees in a roving simulation lab that travels between sites.

BSC's Paramedic and MLT programs offer all but the lab classes online. Students need only get to campus once a week to participate in the required labs.

According to BSC Current and Emerging Technologies Dean Carla Hixson, future health science programs at BSC will be designed similarly to ensure that people in North Dakota's rural communities have every opportunity to develop their careers in their hometowns. "Our goal with these programs is to create greater access so rural communities can grow their own healthcare workforce whenever possible," she says.

For more information about BSC Health Science programs visit [bismarckstate.edu/academics](http://bismarckstate.edu/academics).



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