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women

HOME AND LIVING

Women's Health & Wellness

Women's Health at Every Age

Jenna Micek, Kristina Olson, Sue Pinski

Your Guide to Healthy Living

3 Ways to Beat Stress

Kathy Cronkite on Depression

Complimentary

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2011

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Photo by Janet Mootz Photography

I consider myself pretty healthy.

That is, I did until I began editing this issue of *Coulee Region Women*.

It's not that I began "diagnosing" myself as I read descriptions of various health issues—though I've been known to be a little bit of a hypochondriac, and have gone to doctors for health worries that were assuaged within thirty seconds. Instead, I discovered that aspects of my lifestyle I took for granted were actually health concerns. The number one issue was stress.

Page through this issue, and you'll see a common theme: Perhaps not the most serious, but definitely the most commonly noted health concern among women is stress. This, of course, can range from the "good stress" that pushes us to perform our best to debilitating anxiety and depression. But no matter who we are—from the ingénue just starting out to the supermom (and let's face it, all moms these days are supermoms) to the

successful businesswoman, stress is a constant in our lives. And it can most certainly affect our health as well as our happiness.

There are work demands, families to nurture and homes to keep—paired with an ever-shrinking amount of time in which to do it all and increased pressure to do everything "perfectly." Which begs the question: When a woman is taking care of so many others—children, partners, parents, work responsibilities and more—who is taking care of her? We women, so ready to step up and fill others' needs, are often left with unfulfilled needs of our own—needs as basic as sleep and good nutrition; needs like enjoying quiet and taking time to think, to restore ourselves, to ponder and share what's in our hearts and on our minds, to do something just for ourselves that makes us happy and gives us the energy to keep doing what we do.

As often mentioned in this issue, we need to apply that nurturing to ourselves—and each other. We need to remind each other that we are not alone, that others are experiencing similar stressors and can offer support. In our busyness, we can't forget to reach out to friends and partners for shoulders to cry on and hands to hold. We need to let ourselves ask for help. We need to give ourselves a little grace. We need to remember that perfection is overrated.

This issue is full of women—from health professionals to therapists to ordinary women like you and me—who share their experiences, advice and medical opinions in hopes of helping other women in the area to keep themselves as healthy as possible. You'll meet women who have devoted their careers to keeping others healthy, and learn ways to improve your own health, whether through diet, exercise, stress reduction or keeping on top of the main health concerns for women today. Then, call up a friend or two for a girls' night out. For the support we give each other is just as important a key to a woman's good health.

Betty

coulee region women

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A woman with dark hair, smiling, wearing a dark blazer over a pink top and a colorful necklace. She is standing outdoors with a statue and greenery in the background.

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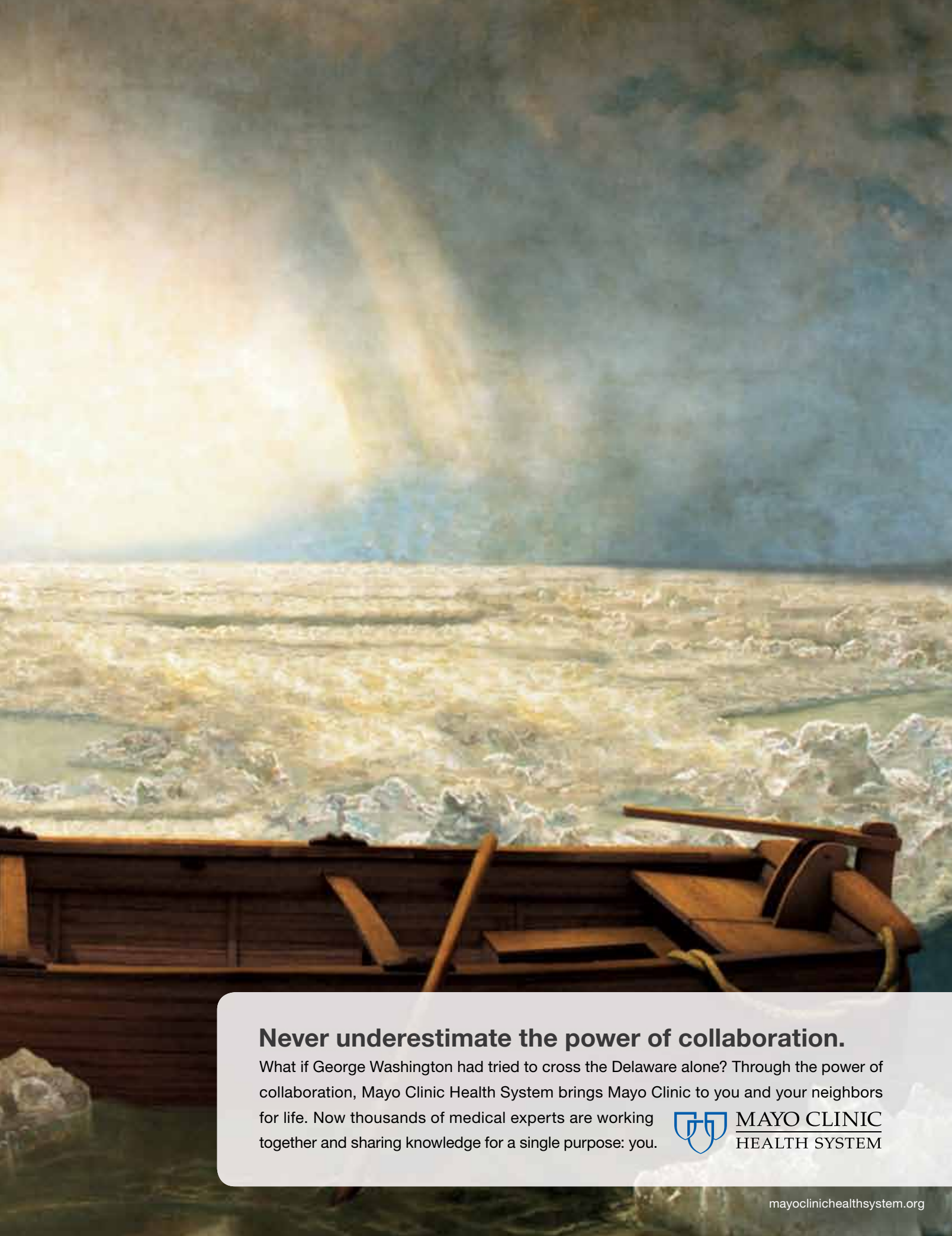
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The Women's Clothes Closet will hold their fourth annual Fashion Cornucopia Style Show and gourmet meal on Saturday, Oct. 29, at Our Savior's Lutheran Church at 612 Division St., La Crosse. Doors will open at 11:00 a.m. for the first show and at 5:00 p.m. for the second show. The style show will feature women's and men's fashions from local merchants, including Dale's, Kick, Lillian's/Moon Goon, Lark, Jo Ba Flat, Scott Joseph Menswear, Three Rivers Outdoors and Touch of Class. The event includes live music and tours of the Women's Clothes Closet. Tickets are \$30 each or \$200 for a table of eight and are on sale now with reserve seating available. Quilt raffle tickets and table wine are available for purchase. All proceeds will benefit the Women's Clothes Closet, which provides gently used clothing to low-income women who are entering or in the workforce. For tickets, call 608-782-3468 or visit www.oursaviorslutheranchurch.net.



LA CROSSE COUNTY GETS ACTIVE

The La Crosse County Health Department has taken the issue of community health to a new level with their new Get Active campaign, and exciting changes are afoot as a result.

In March 2010, La Crosse County received a Communities Putting Prevention to Work grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to expand efforts to curb obesity and improve the community's health environment, making it easier for residents to pursue a healthy, active lifestyle. "La Crosse was uniquely poised to move ahead with this initiative," says County Nutrition Manager Linda Lee, pointing out that people in the Coulee Region are already active and mindful of health, but the environment doesn't always make it easy to follow through on their intentions. The Get Active campaign seeks to create an environment that supports healthy choices, whether biking to work, walking to school, or eating more vegetables.

You may already have noticed the campaign's effects in your neighborhood, workplace, and schools. Gundersen Lutheran's 500 Club has been expanded—Kwik Trip is now a member and offers healthy options in all its stores. Complete Streets policies have been passed throughout the county, allowing for safer streets for bikers and pedestrians. Safe Routes to School programs ensure that more students can bike or walk to school safely. Farm2School programs connect schools with local farmers for fresh, locally grown produce, and healthy eating in workplaces is improved by healthier snack options in vending machines through Wellness Warriors.

That's just the beginning, says Lee. "We're finding all kinds of ways to change the environment to help people make healthy choices and change their behavior. It's really hit a chord." For more information on these and other community wellness programs, as well as recipes and information on getting involved, visit www.getactivewisconsin.org/lacrosse.

GOOD HEALTH, GOOD TIMES

Gather your friends to celebrate women's health and women's interests at the ninth annual Gundersen Lutheran Women's Expo, a free event held at the Onalaska Omni Center from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 22. The fun includes breakout sessions on healthy eating and a physician panel, a cooking demonstration by Piggy's, a style show by Herberger's, a belly dancing demonstration, and exhibits from a number of local businesses. The keynote speaker, humorist Peggy Kline, will address "Treating Yourself Like Royalty" by reducing stress and creating a "majestic mindset." For more information on the Women's Expo, call 608-775-6861 or visit gundluth.org/WomensExpo.

TINY TIM TURNS 25

The annual Tiny Tim Gala and Festival of Trees, held Nov. 18-20, is celebrating a silver milestone this year: its 25th anniversary.

The festivities begin with the Festival of Trees viewing, held Friday, Nov. 18, 4-8 p.m., and Saturday, Nov. 19, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. A free will offering is requested at the door. Get a jump on your holiday shopping at the Dickens Shoppe, open both days. The Tiny Tim Gala Benefit is held Saturday at 6 p.m., with an elegant dinner, entertainment and silent and live auctions. Reservations are required. Cost is \$75 per person.

The Jingle Bell Brunch is held Sunday, Nov. 20, with seatings at 9:30 and 11:30 a.m. Children can participate in a coloring contest and photos with Santa and Mrs. Claus. All Tiny Tim events will be held in the Cargill Room at the Waterfront Center in downtown La Crosse. Visit www.tinytimgala.org or call 608-392-9766. Proceeds benefit St. Clare Health Mission, WAFER Food Pantry, Franciscan Healthcare Foundation, Bluff Country Family Resources and Franciscan Auxiliary Healthcare programs.

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WOMEN'S *Health* AT EVERY AGE

What health issues are on women's minds? And what should be?

BY FRAN RYBARIK
Photos by Kelly Ottesen Photography

When it comes to their health, what's weighing on the minds of women in the area? We at *Coulee Region Women* picked three women—each one representing a different stage of a woman's life—to find out. Here's how they respond, and what area physicians add.

Jenna—just starting out

At 23, Jenna Micek eats healthy food and stays active because she knows that her lifestyle now will have long-term effects on her health. Having grown up in Independence, Wis., she now lives in Onalaska and works at Mayo Clinic Health System in La Crosse.

What is your primary health concern? Balancing work with an active lifestyle.

"I eat lots of fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains and lean meat," Micek says. "I run or work out most days of the week. Sometimes balancing exercise, sleep and healthy eating is difficult, because I work both day and night shifts as a registered nurse."

What are your friends' concerns? Weight.

"Everyone talks about dieting and exercise routines to help manage their weight," Micek says. "I would like women to live so they are healthy, not because they think they need to look a certain way."

How do you stay active? Running, lifting, fitness classes.

Micek runs 4 to 6 miles almost every day. "I joined the Y so I can lift weights three days a week. I attend fitness classes when I can. I also started road biking this summer—I really enjoy that!"

What is your main stressor? Time.

Since Micek's work schedule varies each week, she plans her life around work. "I graduated from Winona State University a year ago and quickly found it difficult to balance my time. After work,



The expert opinion: Lorraine M. Brimer, a nurse practitioner in Women's Health at Gundersen Lutheran Onalaska Clinic, notes that she most frequently sees women in their 20s for contraception, screening for sexually transmitted diseases or infection checks.

"The Center for Disease Control and Prevention advises all girls and women under 26 to have chlamydia screening yearly," she notes, adding that the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists

and the American Society for Colposcopy and Cervical Pathology recommend women start Pap smear screening at age 21, regardless of whether sexual activity has started, and ACOG also advises women 9 to 26 to have the HPV vaccine to help protect against the high-risk HPV types that may lead to cervical cancer. "I also provide basic health advice regarding proper diet, exercise, sleep and managing stress," Brimer says.



Kristina Olson

and smiling, and to me, that's a huge part of being healthy."

What is a key issue for women your age? Birth control.

"There's a lot of information and education available," Micek says, "but I've seen young women who are aware, but don't do anything to protect themselves—like they think nothing will happen to them."

Kristina—mothering

Kristina Olson describes her daily schedule with enthusiasm. Her four children (ages 2 to 11), husband, jobs and her newest passion—photography—keep her spinning.

What is your primary health concern? Stress.

"I work three long days a week at a dental office in Onalaska, I clean offices two nights a week, plus I just started a photography business," Olson says. "Our kids are involved in activities, and their school is in the opposite direction from my hour-long commute. My husband teaches school and has several extra jobs. Our families are both in the area, and we are active at our church. Just

keeping it all straight is challenging!"

What are your friends' concerns? Stress, cancer.

"Other people at work also have four kids, and we talk about how hard it is to keep up with their needs, especially in this economy," Olson shares. "It's nice to know you are not alone, that the way I feel is normal. My

friends and I also talk about women our age getting breast cancer."

Olson also expresses concern about skin cancer. "We live in the country, between De Soto and Viroqua," she says. "I am an outdoors girl, and I know that I have exposed my skin to dangerous levels of sun. Plus, one of my grandparents had melanoma."

How do you stay active? Walking, running, swimming.

"It's very hard for me to find the time to exercise on a daily basis," Olson says, "but when I do, it really helps."

What is your main stressor? Fast pace of life and money.

"As the kids get older, they are involved in more activities, requiring fees, equipment and transportation. It seems like we never catch up."

What do relationships offer? Fun and support.

"My husband and I want our kids to know that it is important to be part of happy relationships and to enjoy life," Olson says. "We work as a team to make every day fun, even when it feels nonstop." She adds that life is too short to stay around people who bring you down. She prefers to be with people who make her laugh, who compliment and encourage each other. She appreciates support from her "girls' night out" friends.

What is a key issue for women your age? Breast health.

Olson faithfully keeps up on her monthly breast self-exams. "Many women have so much on their plates that they don't take time to take care of themselves," she adds.

exercise and being with family and friends take priority. It's things like running errands or cooking that can be a challenge."

What do relationships offer? Happiness.

"God, my family, grandparents, boyfriend, friends and co-workers are all very important to me," Micek says. "They are there for me when I need support. They keep me laughing

The expert opinion: Joann Fouts, D.O., of Vernon Memorial Healthcare—Bland Clinic, Westby, says, "I see a lot of otherwise healthy women, particularly those who are working and have children, who are dealing with stress and anxiety. As a working mother

myself, I can tell you this is an important issue for women. We are nurturers, and working outside the home away from our children is stressful." This stress, and the depression that can follow, must be taken seriously. "I usually recommend counseling either as

a sole treatment or in conjunction with antidepressant medication." Dr. Fouts adds that reducing stress with support groups, yoga or other relaxation techniques, exercise and assistance with child care responsibilities and housework can also help.

Sue—in the “best time of life”

Sixteen years ago, Sue Pinski switched careers. The former middle school teacher became a successful Realtor in the Coulee Region, where she was born and raised. Now 50-something, she credits a positive attitude for her continued good health.

What is your primary health concern? Cancer.

“My mom died from colon cancer at the age of 56. Getting past that age without colon cancer was a hallmark for me,” Pinski says. “My husband and I have both had surgery for cancer. Last year, I had three major surgeries, and recovered well with lots of help from my faith. So much is attitude.”

What are your friends’ concerns? Weight.

“Everyone in my age group is trying to control their weight,” Pinski admits. “A few friends have also had knee, hip and shoulder surgeries. This is a great place to be sick, though—my wonderful nurse practitioner is always available to me by phone, text or appointment. That brings me great peace of mind.”

How do you stay active? Walking, swimming.

“I try to walk with friends several times a week. And I swim in our pool almost every day in the summer.”

What is your main stressor? Work.

“My work can be stressful in this economy,” says Pinski, “especially working with families who need to sell their home at a loss. Fortunately, I have a wonderful group of colleagues in the same boat, so we support

each other. Sharing our stories and our strategies helps keep my attitude adjusted.”

What do relationships offer? Happiness and support.

“My husband has always been my champion,” Pinski says. “We are a team. When he’s happy, I’m happy! We love spending time with our sons’ families. My friends, church groups and knitting group are like family, too, always there for me.”

What is a key issue for women your age? Breast health and menopause.

As a breast cancer survivor, breast health is always on Pinski’s mind. She’s diligent about self-exams. “I had surgery on a breast lump last year, so I make sure I check every month, now.”

Pinski adds that anticipating menopause was worse than menopause itself. “It ended up being a nonevent for me and for many of my friends. Any symptoms I had could be managed medically. My husband and I say we have now entered the ‘fun zone.’ We look forward to what each day brings. This is the best time of my life—so far.” 

Fran Rybarik found herself reminiscing about her life stages as she wrote this article, and realized that she’s enjoyed every phase.



Sue Pinski

The expert opinion: Margaret Grenisen, M.D., of Mayo Clinic Health System in La Crosse, agrees that weight gain is a concern among women over 50. “Changing hormones in a woman’s body affect weight and body shape,” she says, adding that risks of heart disease and osteoporosis also increase after 50. Other concerns she frequently

hears are about medications, joint pain, diabetes and obesity. “We most often talk about relationships, depression and support systems,” Dr. Grenisen says. “Some women are embarrassed to talk about incontinence issues or a lack of sex drive. I encourage my patients to tell me about those types of concerns, because help is available. In

addition, she says, “I follow the preventive care guidelines according to my patient’s age for weight, blood pressure, cholesterol and immunizations, as well as pap smears, self-breast exams and mammograms.”



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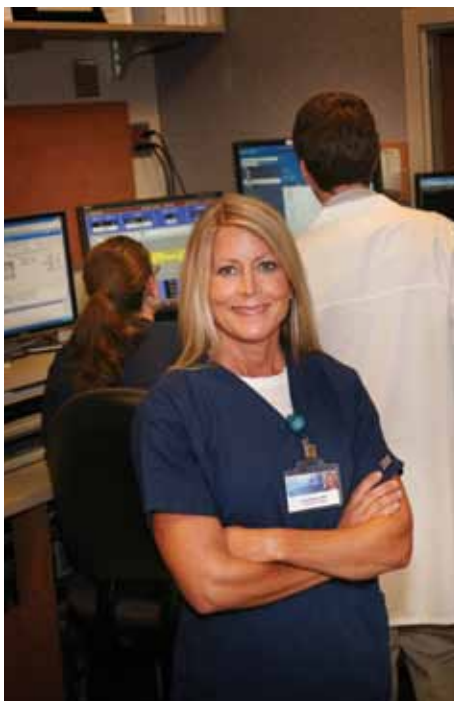


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BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE HOSPITALS

Meet the personnel who help run area hospitals, under the radar.

BY JESSIE FOSS



Hospital personnel such as (from left) clinical manager Joni Olson (Gundersen Lutheran), radiation therapist Lisa Undahl (Mayo Clinic Health System, La Crosse) and nursing practice enhancement specialist Camilla Jaekel (Mayo Clinic Health System, La Crosse) keep hospitals running and patients served.

Doctors and nurses tend to be the face of the health care industry. But working hard behind the scenes is a whole other group of medical professionals whose jobs are essential to the proper function of hospitals and clinics.

Three local women, Joni Olson, Lisa Undahl and Camilla Jaekel, all have jobs doing just that. While the essential functions of each of their jobs may differ, all three can agree on one thing. The long hours they put in all lead to the same outcome: high patient quality care and patient happiness.

People are the best part of the job

Joni Olson, a clinical manager of imaging with Gundersen Lutheran, came to her position by way of her first love, patient care. She worked as a radiology technologist for 21 years at Tri-County Memorial Hospital in Whitehall, Wis., before switching to the administrative side.

The decision to switch to an administrative job wasn't an easy one, Olson says, and while she no longer provides direct patient care, she

says people remain the best part of her job.

"My role now is to serve people that provide care to our patients," Olson says. "Every day involves decision making, collaboration, integrity and customer service, all involving others and their perspectives. All of these roll into a very fast-paced, challenging and energizing day, leaving me feeling glad I have the opportunity to do what I do."

Olson sees her job impact patients because it is her responsibility to make sure the imaging department is running smoothly so patients can receive their care.

Olson does this at her home office based in La Crosse, and also throughout the tri-state region. She travels several days a week to regional clinics that Gundersen Lutheran provides imaging services for throughout a 19-county area in Wisconsin, Minnesota and Iowa. She is also the contact for seven area hospitals where Gundersen Lutheran provides imaging interpretation services.

"Basically, I spend a lot of time on the computer, on my phone and in the car," Olson says.



From imaging rooms to labs to nurses' stations, women find careers in a wide variety of medical professions in the Coulee Region.

Olson became interested in the health care field after thinking she wanted to teach school. "My interest was science, math and biology, and originally I was planning on teaching biology, but a friend was in the field of clinical engineering and suggested radiology," Olson says. "I have never regretted the choice."

Where patients and technology meet

Having a friend diagnosed with Hodgkin's disease wasn't a high point in Lisa Undahl's

life, but the situation was also pivotal for her professionally. At the time of her friend's diagnosis, Undahl was working as a radiology technologist. But after she went to treatments with her friend, she knew she wanted a new focus in radiation therapy.

Undahl, who is now a radiation therapist at Mayo Clinic Health System in La Crosse, completed a 12-month radiation therapy certificate program offered at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn.

Radiology technology, or medical imaging, involves using methods like X-rays in a diagnostic setting, while radiation therapy involves delivering radiation to cancer patients, Undahl explains. To Undahl, the most important difference is that with radiation therapy, she gets to see the same patients over and over again.

"You really get to know the patients and develop a rapport with them. I like that aspect of it," Undahl says. "It is truly rewarding to assist patients with their cancer care journey.

Greeting them with a warm smile and giving in-depth explanations so they get a full understanding of what will be occurring means so much to them and their families."

She stays updated on advances in radiation therapy through education, meetings and seminars. "We bring back what we have learned and discuss as a group what would make sense for our practice," Undahl says.

She also has the added responsibility of working as supervisor in her department,

something she enjoys because she gets to make some decisions while remaining involved in direct patient care.

"As a supervisor, I get to help coordinate patient care," Undahl says. "Which involves making sure that the patient is well taken care of and making sure things go smoothly during their course of treatment."

A resource to the front line

With a background in nursing, Camilla Jaekel comes into her new position as nursing practice enhancement specialist with Mayo Clinic Health System with a solid understanding of what nurses are facing in their careers. Her job involves a lot of research and policy writing.

"Let's say a nurse hears about a practice. It is my job to look at the literature, see if it would be a best practice for us and then write policies," Jaekel says. "I work in the middle to tie it all together."

Jaekel has an undergraduate degree in nursing from Viterbo University, has a master's degree in nursing teaching and is working on earning her Ph.D. in nursing research with an emphasis in informatics and standardized nursing terminology systems from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

She is completing her degree completely online and loves to be able to communicate with others in the program from all over the world while staying in La Crosse and applying what she is learning.

Jaekel's number one priority is to be a resource to the nurses working on the front line.

"I'm going to be there [for the nurses]," she says. "I know nursing well enough, and I'm passionate about it."

While Jaekel hasn't been in her new position for long, she is looking forward to the challenges the job will present.

"I am excited that this role is going to bring together various disciplines on future projects to enhance intercollaborative practice," she says. "This type of practice will only improve the patient care that is provided throughout our health care system." **(crw)**

Growing up, Jessie Foss always thought she would work in the medical field. Instead, she spent six years in college trying a little bit of everything and eventually graduated with a degree in journalism.

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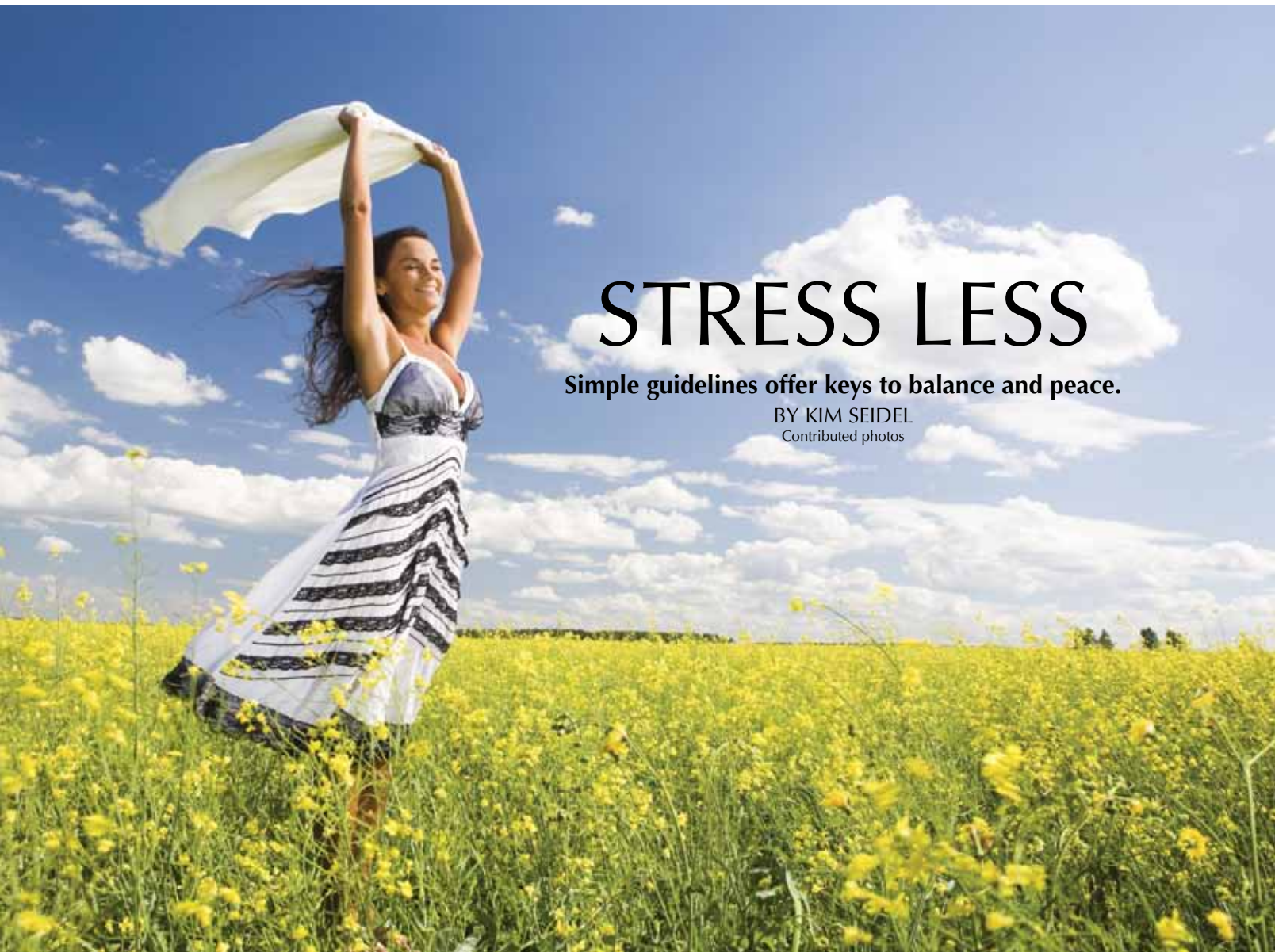
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STRESS LESS

Simple guidelines offer keys to balance and peace.

BY KIM SEIDEL
Contributed photos

Women hold more power to make choices in their personal and professional lives than ever before. While that may be a positive outcome of the fight for more equality throughout past generations, today's women—with too much to do, too many options and too much stuff—often struggle to find balance and peace.

This creates stress, simply defined as mental, emotional and physical tension; it feels like internal pressure. Excessive stress creates havoc mentally, emotionally and physically, too.

Many women have “unrealistic expectations” when they try to do too much, and to do everything in their lives perfectly, says Marilyn Franzini, a licensed marriage and family therapist and licensed psychologist with more than 30 years of experience. “I often hear women say they feel guilty when they're at work, and

they feel guilty when they're at home with their children,” says Franzini, who owns a private practice in Onalaska. “Women can feel this struggle less by keeping in mind that yes, they can do it all, just not all at once.”

Left unchecked, stress can cause many problems, including anxiety, depression, eating disorders, low self-esteem, alcoholism and many other issues that can negatively impact life. It pays off to lower your stress levels. Women don't need an expensive massage or a shopping spree to decrease stress; they can integrate many stress relievers into their day for little or no cost, says Pamela Radosen, a master trainer and energy healer who began a private practice in energy medicine in La Crosse more than 15 years ago. She maintained a psychotherapy practice for more than 20 years.

1. Set priorities

One vital key for women to combat stress from too many demands is to discern what they value, and then place those things at high priority, Franzini says. For example, when mothers sign up their children for activities, they can consider how much time they want to spend driving them around. If a woman places a high priority on family dinners or quiet time in the evenings, she may want to cut back on her kids' sports and other recreation.

Taking the time to determine values relieves stress in itself, because women need to slow down to discern, rather than race through their day, Franzini says. Women who run through their schedules often make hasty decisions—such as saying yes to another activity—without thinking about the extra stress it may cause.

2. Make self-care a priority

In her practice, Radosen sees many women who know how to care for themselves, but don't do it. "Out of habit, we don't prioritize our own needs," she says. "We are wired to look after our families and others, and we give them our time and energy first. By taking good care of our self, we have more for those we love. When we eat right, get enough sleep and exercise, we are more calm, balanced and effective at home and at work."

Start your day with the intention to be harmonious and balanced, Radosen says. Attitude is important. Plan to eat well. "Sometimes it is the simple things that make a difference in our stress," she says. "For example, wearing comfortable clothing in colors that feel right for the day can support the positive flow of energy."

Exercise is always an excellent tool to boost your energy levels and reduce negative feelings. Prayer and meditation are other ways to decrease stress. In stressful situations, taking deep breaths gives our body the opportunity to calm down. Radosen personally benefits from spring forest qigong, which focuses on breath and movement, and she teaches classes twice a year.

During the day, it's also important to keep stress at bay by monitoring self-talk, those voices in women's heads that

can be negative, saying things like, "I have to get everything done on my list," says Franzini. Try to stop those demands with more positive talk, including "Good enough"; "Easy does it"; and "One thing at a time."

3. Live in the moment

Having a disciplined mind not only eases stress and produces gentle self-talk, but it also keeps people in the present moment. When women are stressed, they are most likely thinking about the past or the future. "Practice being in the here and now," Franzini says. "It is so fundamental to being happy and warding off stress."

Being in the here and now is also known as "mindfulness." Franzini recommends women to make a list of "mindfulness practices," ways to enjoy the present and enhance health. These tools will vary from woman to woman.

Kept in a simple notebook or a special journal, the list can include a healthy diet, exercise, enjoying pets, body work, energy healing, prayer, meditation and hobbies. The activities are enjoyable; make a point to do many of these throughout the day. Savoring a piece of chocolate and reading a few pages of a novel only takes a few minutes, but it can improve one's attitude and energy for the rest of the day.

"Women need to make sure they are getting enough 'Vitamin P'; the 'P' is for 'Pleasure,'" Franzini says.

Be sure to update your mindfulness practice list, as it will change with the ages of children and times of the year. With Christmas just around the corner, continue to practice mindfulness and discern what's most valuable this season, Franzini says. Rather than attend every holiday party, focus on what's pleasurable, such as baking with your children or decorating your home.

Prepare for stressful times like holidays by making a reasonable plan and keeping it simple, Radosen says. "Consider making one family favorite instead of trying to do it all," she says.

For more information about Marilyn Franzini, contact her at 608-385-4383, or visit www.marilynfranzini.com. For more information about Pamela Radosen,



Marilyn Franzini



Pamela Radosen

contact her at 608-787-1865, or visit www.pamelaradosen.com. 

Kim Seidel is a busy wife, mother of two daughters, and owner of Seidel Ink LLC, a writing and editing business based in Onalaska. She's continually trying new ways to reduce stress and create more positive energy in her life.

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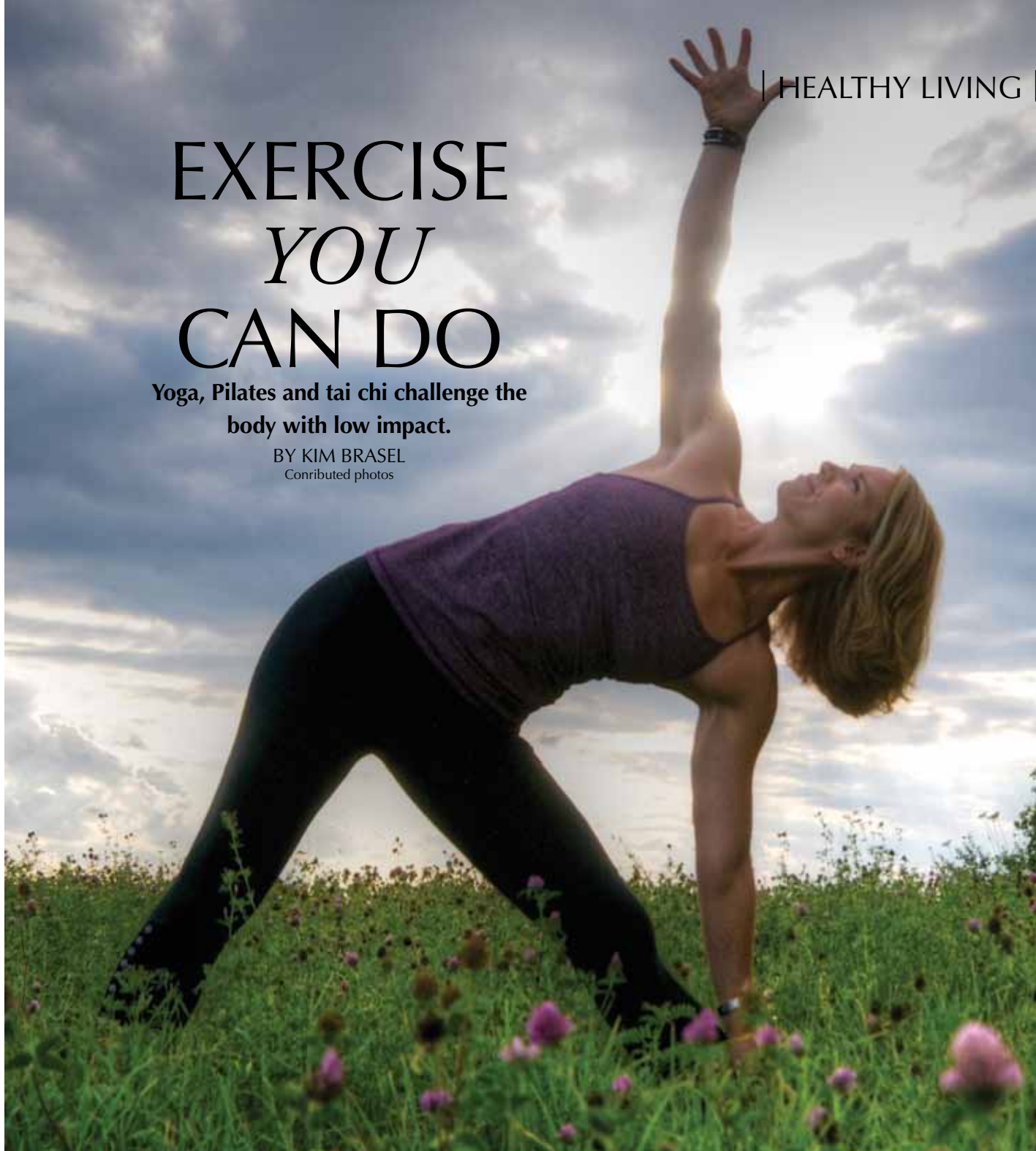
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EXERCISE *YOU* CAN DO

**Yoga, Pilates and tai chi challenge the
body with low impact.**

BY KIM BRASEL
Contributed photos



A good workout doesn't have to involve endless reps of weights, complicated routines or miles of pounding the pavement. Yoga, Pilates or tai chi may provide just the workout you need, and all can challenge your mind as well as your body.

The intensity of yoga, Pilates and tai chi varies depending on the form or style practiced. Some forms are more fast-paced and exerting than others, but most are gentle and suitable for everyone regardless of age or physical ability.

Yoga

Yoga is considered a mind-body practice that brings together physical and mental disciplines to achieve peacefulness of body and mind through a series of poses.

Yoga instructor Mandy Roush (pictured above), who is opening her own yoga studio in La Crosse's Old Towne North on Caledonia Street in November, says she tried yoga and loved that it didn't hurt, even when she was overweight. "Yoga is great because it doesn't discriminate in terms of size or ability," she says.



Heather Wicks of The Pilates Studio asserts that Pilates offers benefits for body and mind.

At her new studio, Root Down Yoga, Roush will offer Baptiste Power Vinyasa Yoga, which utilizes a heated room. “Practitioners of heated yoga (90 to 95 degrees with 50 percent humidity) experience even greater flexibility of the ligaments, tendons and muscles due to the increased temperature and the warming of the bodily tissues,” Roush says. “The heart rate and respiration rate are also elevated, providing additional cardiovascular benefits, and increased perspiration allows toxins of the body to be released, helping improve immunity.”

There are many other types of yoga, including Hatha, Iyengar and Restorative. Roush encourages her students to “try on” all styles of yoga to find the right one for them.

Hatha yoga is a general term that can encompass many types of yoga. It’s generally slower-paced and gentler and provides a good introduction to the basic yoga poses. Iyengar yoga is based on the teachings of B.K.S. Iyengar and focuses on bodily alignment. In yoga, alignment describes the precise way the body should be positioned to obtain maximum benefits and avoid injury. An Iyengar yoga practice usually emphasizes holding poses over long periods versus moving quickly from one pose to the next. In Restorative yoga classes, props are used to support the body, allowing for passive stretching; poses are also held longer and are usually adapted from supine or seated yoga poses.

The numerous physical and psychological benefits of yoga include

increased flexibility, improved posture, muscle strength and conditioning, stress reduction, improved concentration and decreased irritability.

Tai chi

If you’re looking for another way to reduce stress, consider tai chi (pronounced TIE-chee). Originally developed in ancient China for self-defense, tai chi evolved into a slow, graceful exercise that’s now used for stress reduction and to help with various health conditions. It is a noncompetitive, self-paced system of gentle physical exercise and stretching that consists of performing a series of postures or movements that flow into one another, and it is meant to enhance relaxation skills, mental focus and physical alignment. Poses help build leg strength, endurance and stability.

There are several different styles of tai chi and variations within each style. Some may focus on health maintenance, while others focus on the martial arts aspect of tai chi. All forms include rhythmic patterns of movement that are coordinated with breathing to help participants achieve a sense of inner calm. “The concentration required for tai chi forces you to live in the present moment,” says Jenelle Lee, who teaches tai chi through the La Crescent-Hokah Community Education program.

Tai chi emphasizes technique over strength, and because it is low impact, it’s a great activity for older adults who otherwise may not exercise. Tai chi can also be

appealing because it’s inexpensive, requires no special equipment and can be done indoors or out, either alone or in a group.

Pilates

Pilates is a method of exercise that consists of low-impact strength and endurance movements that also promote flexibility. It emphasizes use of the abdominals, lower back, hips and thighs and is named for its creator, Joseph Pilates, who developed the exercises in the early 1900s.

Heather Wicks, co-owner of The Pilates Studio, LLC, in Onalaska, says Pilates is a great form of exercise because it doesn’t require any special equipment, can be done by anyone and is as good for the mind as it is for the body. “You have to think and be aware of what your body is doing. There’s no zoning out, which can be as challenging for some people as the physical workout,” she says.

Wicks’s clients range from an 81-year-old woman who had knee replacement surgery to a high school football player. Pilates can be adapted to provide a gentle strength training and stability program or a challenging workout for seasoned athletes.

“It’s a great way to improve strength, core, flexibility and range of motion and can help you be more efficient in other sports,” says Wicks. “By practicing Pilates regularly, you can achieve a number of health benefits, including improved core stability, posture and balance, and flexibility, and it can help with the prevention and treatment of back pain.”

Although you can learn yoga, Pilates or tai chi from books and videos, beginners usually find it helpful to learn with an instructor who can provide guidance on correct form. Classes also offer camaraderie and friendship, which are important to overall well-being.

As with any exercise program, check with your physician before beginning and listen to your own body for signs of injury or overwork. If you have any special considerations, talk to the instructor before class so they can offer modifications. **(crw)**

Freelance writer Kim Brasel enjoys various types of activities and looks forward to adding one or all of these to her weekly workout.



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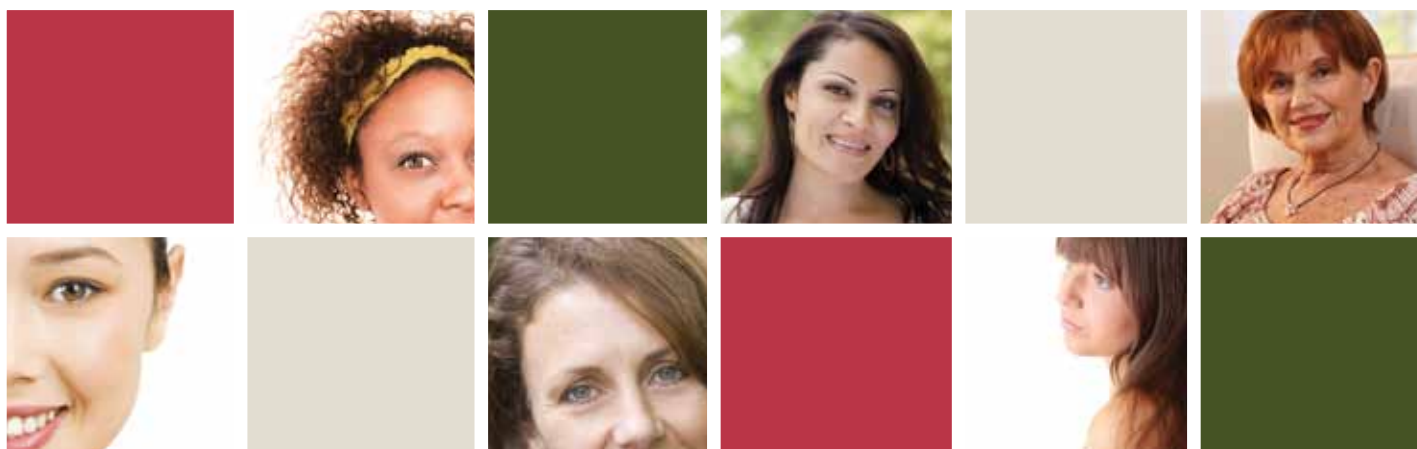
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A WOMAN'S GUIDE TO *Health Concerns*

Should you get that symptom checked out? Let this guide help you decide.

BY SUSAN C. SCHUYLER

When it comes to health care, women are different. We use health care services more often than men do and make about 80 percent of health care decisions for our families, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Also, women are more likely to be the caregivers when a family member becomes ill.

Our relationship with health care providers also is unique. "I think women tend to be more narrative about their stories than men," says Margaret Grenisen, M.D., one of the founders of the Center for Women's Health at Mayo Clinic Health System in La Crosse. "Women want to put [medical concerns] in the context of what's happening in their lives."

Lisa Veglahn, M.D., in the Avery R. Gundersen Center for Women at Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center, encourages women to create that important relationship with a health care provider by just talking. "Have a conversation," she advises. "Come with a list of questions."

Take some time to review the following descriptions of common women's health concerns and their symptoms. Note that some symptoms in women often present differently than in men. Knowing this could save your life.

Breast cancer

Other than skin cancer, breast cancer is the most common cancer in American women. It also is the second-leading cancer killer of women, after lung cancer.

Symptoms

- A lump or thick tissue in or near your breast or under your arm.
- A change in the size or shape of your breast.
- Nipple discharge.
- Nipple changes, such as a nipple that turns inward (inverted) into the breast.
- Changes to your breast skin, areola or nipple, such as itching, redness, scaling, dimpling or puckering.

Risk factors

- Risk increases with age.
- Women who have had breast cancer in one breast are more likely to get it in the other breast.
- Having a mother, sister or daughter who has had breast cancer.
- Never having children or having children after age 30.
- Using menopausal hormone therapy containing both estrogen and progestin for more than five years.
- Women who breastfeed have a lower risk of breast cancer.**

Cardiovascular disease (CVD)

CVD is the leading cause of death in women and includes coronary heart disease (CHD), which is manifested by heart attack, and cerebrovascular disease, which is manifested by stroke.*

Heart attack symptoms

- Unusually heavy pressure on the chest.
- Sharp upper body pain in the neck, back and jaw (more common for women).
- Severe shortness of breath.
- Cold sweats (not menopause related).
- Unusual or unexplained fatigue.
- Unfamiliar dizziness or light-headedness.
- Unexplained nausea or vomiting.**

Risk factors

- Personal history of CHD or peripheral artery disease.
- Age over 55.
- High LDL and/or low HDL (cholesterol).
- Family history of premature CHD (close male relative under 55 or a female under 65).
- Diabetes.
- Smoking.
- Hypertension.*

Cervical cancer

Most cases of cervical cancer are caused by the human papillomavirus (HPV), which is transmitted through genital contact.

Symptoms

Early cervical cancer is frequently asymptomatic, emphasizing the importance of screening. The most common symptoms are abnormal vaginal bleeding (including postcoital bleeding) and vaginal discharge.

Risk factors

You are more likely to get HPV if you have multiple partners, but any woman who has ever had genital contact with another person can get HPV. Most women infected with HPV will not get cervical cancer. You are more likely to develop cervical cancer if you smoke, have HIV or reduced immunity or don't get regular Pap tests.**

Depression

Women are nearly twice as likely as are men to struggle with depression at some point. Depression can occur at any age, but it is most common in women between the ages of 25 and 44.

Symptoms

- Ongoing feelings of sadness, guilt or hopelessness.
- Loss of interest in things you once enjoyed.
- Significant changes in your sleep pattern.
- Fatigue or unexplained pain.
- Changes in appetite leading to significant weight loss or weight gain.
- Feeling as though life isn't worth living, or having thoughts of suicide.

Risk factors

- Inherited traits/family history of depression.
- Hormonal changes with puberty, PMS, pregnancy and menopause.
- Hormonal changes accompanying childbirth, and related stress (postpartum depression).
- Unequal power and status, including poverty.
- External stressors, such as work overload.
- Sexual or physical abuse.***

Diabetes (type 2)

In the United States, the lifetime risk of developing diabetes (type 1 or type 2) for individuals born in the year 2000 is 33 and 39 percent for males and females, respectively.

Symptoms

Before diagnosis, most people have no symptoms at all. In those who do have symptoms, the most common include frequent urination, thirst and blurred vision.

Risk factors

- Close family member with type 2 diabetes or related medical conditions, such as high cholesterol levels, high blood pressure or obesity.
- Environmental factors (diet, inactivity) combined with genetic causes.
- Having had gestational diabetes during pregnancy.*

Fibromyalgia

Fibromyalgia is a disorder that causes aches and pain all over the body. About 80-90 percent of people with fibromyalgia are women.**

Symptoms

- Widespread musculoskeletal pain; may initially be localized, often in the neck and shoulders.
- Pain predominantly occurs throughout the muscles and joints.
- Numbness, tingling, burning, or creeping or crawling sensations, especially in arms and legs.*

Risk factors

The causes of fibromyalgia are not known. Fibromyalgia can occur on its own, but it has also been linked to family history or being exposed to stressful or traumatic events or illnesses.**

Hypertension

The treatment of hypertension (high blood pressure) is the most common reason for office visits to physicians in the United States and for use of prescription drugs.*

Symptoms

Hypertension usually has no signs or symptoms. You can have HBP for years without knowing it. The condition can damage your heart, blood vessels, kidneys and other parts of your body.**

Risk factors

- Family history of hypertension.
- Excess alcohol intake.
- Obesity.
- Physical inactivity.
- May be more common with certain personality traits, such as hostile attitudes, time urgency and impatience.*





Obesity

More than 60 percent of U.S. adult women are overweight. One-third of those women are obese.

Symptoms

- People with a body mass index (BMI) of 25 to 29.9 are considered overweight. People with a BMI of 30 or more are considered obese.

Risk factors

- Behaviors, such as eating too many calories or inactivity.
- Environment and culture.
- Family history of obesity.**

* Adapted from *UpToDate*, edited by D. S. Basow (Waltham, MA: UpToDate, 2011).

** Adapted from www.womenshealth.gov.

*** Adapted from www.mayoclinic.com.

Sexually transmitted diseases

Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) are a major public health problem. Complications of untreated STDs include upper genital tract infections, infertility, cervical cancer and enhanced transmission and acquisition of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

Symptoms

Symptoms may include vaginal discharge, urethral discharge and pelvic pain. However, many patients don't experience symptoms, which increases the risk of complications and transmission.

Risk factors

- Young age (15 to 24 years old) and unmarried.
- New sex partner in past 60 days.
- Multiple sexual partners.
- History of a prior STD.
- Illicit drug use. (crw)

Susan C. Schuyler is a freelance writer and UW-L instructor who made a couple of important lifestyle changes after conducting research for this article.

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ACUPUNCTURE FOR ALL

Sister Eileen McKenzie heals with needles.

BY SUSAN T. HESSEL
Contributed photo

Along with the very fine acupuncture needles that Sister Eileen McKenzie gently implants in her patients, comes serenity.

“Acupuncture is not a magic bullet, but a way to stimulate the body’s own subtle, natural healing process,” she says.

McKenzie offers her service in groups, including the FSPA (Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration) Community Acupuncture Center in Jackson Plaza in La Crosse.

Serving six to eight patients at a time makes it more accessible and, along with a sliding scale, affordable. “Being quiet in a supportive environment with others whose intention is healing has an effect. It is similar to when people meditate together or sit quietly together and focus on life.”

Caring is central to her life

McKenzie, a Southern California native, first practiced nursing caring for AIDS patients and later trauma patients. She then had a “life-altering experience” serving in the African nation of Cameroon as a lay nurse with the Lay Mission-Helpers Association and the Tertiary Sisters of St. Francis.

There, she experienced culture shock. In Shisong, Cameroon, during the 1990s, “high tech” meant two oxygen tanks. Supplies and medicines were so limited that what is thrown away in a single day in a U.S. hospital trauma unit was more than they had in the best hospital in Cameroon.

Slowly, McKenzie began to appreciate the fact that patients she assumed had no chance for survival with their limited resources sometimes did—thanks in part to nursing care provided by family members in the hospital and community support.

McKenzie felt drawn to religious life in Cameroon, and came back home to make sure her vocation was genuine. “Church had always

been a really important part of my life, but being born in 1969 after Vatican II, I didn’t know sisters other than by the stereotype,” she says.

Through visiting a Cameroonian sister studying at Viterbo University in La Crosse, McKenzie found the FSPA. “They are wonderful women who are doing progressive things in the world,” McKenzie says.

Over a nine-year process, she became a sister of the FSPA and earned a master’s degree in Chinese Medicine from the Northwestern Health Sciences University in Bloomington, Minnesota. From there, she accepted a call to practice acupuncture in La Crosse.

An age-old method of healing

She knows acupuncture is not for everyone—some will never be comfortable with it. But some skeptics find it beneficial during treatment for cancer and other diseases.

So much more needs to be learned about acupuncture’s benefits despite it being a 3,000-year-old practice. Not only did McKenzie participate in research while she was studying at Northwestern, her work at the cancer center is the subject of a multi-year study about its effects on quality of life.

McKenzie knows that she, too, feels the benefit of the peace, calming and quiet that occurs during community acupuncture sessions. “Going to work,” she says, “is never stressful.”

McKenzie can be reached at emckenzie@fspa.org, or www.fspacommunityacupuncture.com. 

Susan T. Hessel, a writer and personal historian, never expected to have acupuncture but appreciated it during her treatment for breast cancer two years ago.

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Kathy Cronkite is a popular writer, journalist, and public speaker. As one of the millions who suffer from clinical depression, she has become a tireless champion for mental health. As an advocate, Cronkite delivers a clear message: "Depression must be accepted as the medical condition it is in order to combat the stigma attached to it and to make help available for those who suffer from it."



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THE SIMPLE ACT OF *Relaxation*

Brilliant Bodywork promotes a healthy well-being, inside and out.

BY MICHELLE BYOM
Contributed photo

Kids. Careers. Households. Your head swims with a to-do list that grows by the hour. Life can be a whirlwind and—let's face it—time scheduled for you ranks pretty low on the list.

Stephanie Andresen-Stevens of Brilliant Bodywork in Onalaska knows how downtime, a caring touch and kind words can make a difference in people's lives. Her business features body wraps, massage therapy, skin therapy and spiritual wellness, the types of services that make us slow down, take a deep breath and remember who we are. "We live in a society where everything is rushed," says Andresen-Stevens. "So many people struggle with the simple act of relaxation."

She shares a story of when she was a student and practicing her techniques. During one session, a client burst into tears. "It had been so long since she had experienced a caring touch," she says. "I knew then I had to carry this on, to take better care of myself but also to care for others. Not just physically, but emotionally and spiritually, too."

Detoxification, luxuriously

One service at Brilliant Bodywork is the M'Lis Body Contour Wrap. Andresen-Stevens explains that the wrap works with one's lymphatic systems to detoxify. "It's complete body detoxification and permanent inch loss of 4 to 14 inches per wrap," she says. The M'Lis Body Contour Wrap was originally developed to encourage circulatory and lymphatic flow in patients such as diabetics. This cleansing of the tissues also caused healthy inch loss through internal cleansing. Today, the wrap is not only noted for its ability to assist in inch loss and cellulite reduction, it is considered relaxing, luxurious and sanitary.

Wings of Hope Oncology Service

Andresen-Stevens is a certified medical oncology aesthetician, and she is pleased to provide cancer patients and survivors with the Wings of Hope Oncology Service through Brilliant Bodywork. "Wings of Hope was inspired by a dear friend, Paula Tower, who lost her battle with breast cancer," she explains. Wings of Hope offers a variety of services designed for cancer patients. Facials, warm stone body treatments and aromatherapy are just some of the services available in a spa setting, providing the client with a sense of normalcy and comfort.

Spiritual wellness through Reiki

When it is time to nourish your spirit, visit Brilliant Bodywork for Reiki sessions. Reiki is a Japanese technique for stress reduction and relaxation, and it also promotes healing. Brilliant Bodywork offers Reiki—a "laying on hands" technique to regular and health-challenged clients. "It's pleasant and relaxing," Andresen-Stevens says.



Stephanie Andresen-Stevens was the winning bidder on Coulee Region Women's pies at the YWCA Celebrity Pie Auction.

You can learn about all these services at www.brilliantbodywork.com. Call 507-450-7429 for an appointment. 

Michelle Byom is a Holmen writer who is trying harder to make her health and well-being a priority. She thinks Reiki sounds like a good start.

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WHERE THERE'S **HELP**, THERE'S **HOPE**

Kathy Cronkite speaks the truth about depression.

BY KRISTY WALZ
Contributed photo

Kathy Cronkite is compassionate, self-assured and humble as she speaks about her personal struggle with depression. An acclaimed author and sought-after speaker on the topic of depression, Cronkite will share her message with the Coulee Region at the Women's Fund of Greater La Crosse Fall Luncheon on October 20, 2011.

CRW: *Your presentation is titled "Erasing the Stigma of Mental Illness." What might we expect to hear?*

KC: A lot of the problem facing people with depression is the stigma. If you don't have depression, it's easier to get a job, there are no questions about insurance coverage ... those issues stem directly from the idea that mental illness is different than other illnesses. Stigma keeps people from getting lifesaving help. Stigma kills.

CRW: *What are the biggest myths about depression?*

KC: One is that you have any kind of will over it. People will say, "Snap out of it" or "You can do it if you want to." Related is that depression is not a real illness or that it's treatable through self-help. One of the symptoms (of depression) is self-blame. You blame yourself, so you say, "If I got myself here, I can get myself out."

CRW: *How can you tell the difference between "going through a rough patch" and depression?*

KC: If you experience symptoms that get in the way of your normal life for two weeks or more, you need help.

CRW: *Help in what sense?*

KC: It is scientifically proven that most people have the best results with medication and talk therapy. Medicine changes your brain chemistry and therapy works on the cognitive piece—what you tell yourself about what you are feeling and what you can and can't do.

CRW: *You suffered from depression. What was the turning point? How or when did you know that you would be okay?*

KC: (Starting) medication was the first time I felt hope. Hopelessness is a symptom (of depression) like fever with the flu. When I got on medication, I felt a return of a sense of hope. I believed if I felt a little better, I could feel much better. When you catch yourself smiling when you haven't smiled in a long time, it gives you hope that things will be better.



Kathy Cronkite

CRW: *What's the best thing to do if you have a friend you think may be suffering from depression?*

KC: Very often, when you are depressed, you don't realize it. Your friend might be full of self-blame and shame. You can say, "I'm worried, I care. Here are some of the things I've noticed ... I'm concerned you might have an illness, and I would like to help you get help." It's important to remember that depression is a real illness and people can't help themselves.

CRW: *What's the most important message you can share with any woman who thinks she may be suffering from depression?*

KC: Get help, get help, get help, get help. If you think you need help, you need help. **(crw)**

Kristy Walz is looking forward to hearing Kathy Cronkite, daughter of anchorman Walter Cronkite, speak at the Women's Fall Luncheon.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Gundersen Lutheran Resident Joins Medical Staff

A native of La Crosse, Lisa Veglahn, M.D., knew she wanted to pursue a career at Gundersen Lutheran after completing her Internal Medicine residency there. With special interests in women's health, prevention of chronic illness and osteoporosis prevention and treatment, Dr. Veglahn is now pleased to be caring for patients at Gundersen Lutheran's Avery R. Gundersen Center for Women in Onalaska.

Dr. Veglahn completed her medical degree at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health, and looks forward to meeting new patients in the year ahead. For more information or to schedule an appointment with Dr. Veglahn, call 608-775-8181.



Mayo Clinic Health System Cardiologist Named Fellow of the American Society of Echocardiography

Monique Freund, M.D., Mayo Clinic Health System cardiologist, has been designated a Fellow of the American Society of Echocardiography. The Fellow designation recognizes those members who have fulfilled both the training and performance requirements that are necessary for certification through their respective subspecialty Board Association.

"Attainment of this important standard of practice recognizes that Dr. Freund is committed to continued excellence in the field of Echocardiography, as it applies to diagnosis and management of cardiovascular conditions," says Ahmed Aslam, M.D., Chair, Department of Cardiology.



Meet Mrs. Oktoberfest 2011: Florence Aliesch

Florence Aliesch has been named the 2011 Mrs. Oktoberfest. The title honors a La Crosse-area woman who has impacted the community in her profession and as a volunteer.

"I am deeply humbled and honored to become part of the Oktoberfest Royal Family," says Aliesch, who is director of Creative Services at UW-La Crosse. A dedicated volunteer, Aliesch has contributed her time and talents to Oktoberfest, Rotary Lights and Neighbors Helping Neighbors. Professionally, she is a graphic designer, and she marries her two passions in her Oktoberfest slogan, "Art of Volunteering." She is married to Mike Aliesch.



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J.Hilburn Men's Clothier Comes to La Crosse

Now available: custom-made men's clothes, the affordable, no-hassle way. Jonella Rademacher from JoBa Flat and Andrea Fisher from LARK have teamed up to bring J.Hilburn, Custom Men's Clothier, to La Crosse. Rademacher and Fisher are excited to introduce this fine menswear collection, created solely on the specific measurements of each client, ensuring a tailored fit at a surprisingly fair price, starting at \$89.00.

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Coulee Region Women Editor Writes Again

Coulee Region Women editor Betty Christiansen is proud to announce the release of her second book, *Girl Scouts: A Celebration of 100 Trailblazing Years*, with a foreword by Michelle Obama. Published by Harry Abrams, the book was written to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Girl Scouts of the USA in 2012 and to launch a yearlong celebration of Girl Scouts history.

This decade-by-decade retrospective of the organization is accompanied by iconic photographs, documents and letters from its vast archives that honor the unique sisterhood of Girl Scouts. Christiansen is also the author of *Knitting for Peace: Make the World a Better Place One Stitch at a Time*.

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FOR HEART HEALTH

The American Heart Association
tackles heart disease in women head-on.

BY LINDSAY BONNAR
Photos by Kelly Ottesen Photography



Julie Wypyszynski, RN, (left) goes red with cardiac arrest survivor Kelly Flaschberger.

In 2004, American Heart Association statistics showed that cardiovascular disease was claiming the lives of nearly 500,000 American women each year. Knowing that women were not aware of this risk, the organization decided to tackle heart disease head-on. The AHA created Go Red for Women, a cause designed to raise awareness and get information about heart health to women.

“Most women think that cancer is the leading cause [of death], and it’s not,” says Renee Davis, a youth market director for the AHA.

Because men had been the primary subjects of past heart disease research, they became the foundation for setting guidelines and treatments. Unfortunately, this led to an oversimplification of the information about heart disease in women, an issue that was initially overlooked.

“We try to focus on warning signs, and the warning signs are different for women than men,” explains Ann Casey, another of AHA’s youth market directors. “Know your numbers, and really make it a point every year to go to the doctor and have those numbers checked.”

The “numbers” to know are your blood pressure, blood cholesterol levels, height, weight and waist circumference (see www.goredforwomen.org/know_your_numbers.aspx for more information). Keeping these numbers at healthy levels involves a good diet, regular exercise and no smoking. The AHA has found that making these healthy decisions can prevent 80 percent of cardiac events in women.

Warning signs for women

Knowing and watching for the warning signs of heart attacks and strokes can help save lives. Signs of a heart attack can be more subtle than the severe chest pain often associated with the condition, and women are more likely to show these subtle symptoms than men.

“Statistically and anatomically, women are different than men,” says Julie Wypyszynski, an RN in the cardiology department at Gundersen Lutheran. “Women’s symptoms can be vague; only 28 percent of women present with chest pain versus 60 percent of men.”

Wypyszynski explains that women often show symptoms of a

heart attack with shortness of breath, neck or jaw discomfort, shoulder pain, teeth pain, nausea/vomiting, lightheadedness or cold sweats. The Go Red for Women website lists sudden numbness on one side of the body, confusion, trouble speaking or understanding, dizziness or sudden trouble walking, or sudden severe headaches as signs of a stroke.

Today, heart disease is still the number one killer of women, claiming one in three women each year (in contrast, one woman in 30 will lose her life to breast cancer). With a mission to "build healthier lives, free of cardiovascular diseases and strokes," Go Red for Women and the AHA incorporate making heart-healthy choices to help prevent cardiac episodes as part of their goal.

With the help of fund-raisers, donations and sponsorships, Go Red for Women hopes to reduce death and disability from heart disease and strokes by 20 percent, and improve the heart health of all Americans by 20 percent, by the year 2020.

Get your red dress on

The red dress was introduced as a symbol for awareness of heart disease in women by the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute in 2003. Soon after, it was adopted as a unifying symbol for the different organizations working to raise awareness of heart disease, including Go Red for Women. February is American Heart Month, and the first Friday of every February is National Wear Red Day.

"Nationally, you'll see a lot of things 'go red,'" Casey says. "Even the Empire State Building goes red."

"Once you're aware, you'll start to notice," says Davis. "Once you're looking for it, it's everywhere."

Davis and Casey work directly with many school districts in the state, conducting fund-raisers such as Jump Rope for Heart and informational campaigns to raise awareness. They have found that a career based on collecting donations for a cause is both difficult and rewarding.

"You're asking people for money, but

you're doing it for a cause, and the Heart Association uses their donor dollars really well," Casey states. "Eight percent always goes back to the community."

The latest available AHA statistics (2007) show that 32.2 percent of all deaths in the state of Wisconsin that year were from cardiovascular disease. In La Crosse County, 27.9 percent of all deaths that year were from cardiovascular disease.

In July, Casey and Davis hosted the first La Crosse Go Red for Women Luncheon. At that initial event, 160 people attended, and \$20,000 was raised. They are already looking forward to the 2012 event on July 25.

To make a donation or find out more information, go to www.heart.org or www.goredforwomen.org, [\(crw\)](#)

Lindsay Bonnar finds the Coulee Region a great place to maintain heart health. She enjoys the fresh produce the local farmers' markets provide and running as much as possible on the state trails.

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DETOX YOUR HOME

Curtains, carpets and cleaning products can keep your home healthy.

BY JULIE NELSON
Contributed photos

Sheryl Rupprecht of Hidden Valley Designs, an interior design company in Holmen, shares the story of a client with a unique need: She was the mother of a 32-year old son with multiple sclerosis who wasn't able to take his wheelchair outside much, especially in the winter. The client knew the sunshine was important for his emotional and physical health, but when the days are short, he felt vulnerable with the curtains open and the lights on inside. The MS prevented him from

closing the curtains himself.

Advanced Multimedia Solutions, of La Crosse, had a similar problem. Employees are happier when they can see the sun and the outdoors while they are at work, but when the sun moves to the west side of the building, computer screens are difficult to see and eye strain is common.

In both cases, the solution was one that addressed the health concerns and offered energy savings, to boot. Motorized curtains, on timers. They

go up when you want them up and come back down when you want them down, thereby letting in the sun's warmth when you want it, whether you're home to open them or not. And as energy costs go up, they can help you play an important role in energy savings.

Designed with health in mind

Having the curtains drawn or open at the right time of day is one of several health- and energy-conscious factors to keep in mind when designing or upgrading your home. Insulating properties are another. "The new thing in window treatments is the Architella brand," says Rupperecht. She explains that a good insulating product has an R value (the measure of a product's ability to resist heat flow) in the high 5s. "Architella is taking that to almost 8." Rupperecht pulls out a catalog showing the other appealing factor of these energy-saving curtains: They are designed for style. Among the styles are curtains with opacity. (pictured on the facing page) This means you can have the curtains closed—blocking out blinding sun, UV rays that will fade your furniture and carpet and torment your skin—and yet still be able to see outside.

You can also select curtains—or window treatments, as Rupperecht professionally calls them—that do not contain allergens, are made of a fabric guaranteed to last in a window for five years or more, can be repurposed, are machine washable (no harsh dry cleaning chemicals needed) and have a Confidence in Textiles seal indicating they have been tested for harmful substances.

There are also curtains that break down bacteria, especially useful in hospitals and nursing homes and valuable in homes where allergies are an issue. "I have asthma and tons of allergies," says Rupperecht. "Using the Ado brand of window treatments that breaks down bacteria is another way I can combat the irritants to my system."

Purer products, healthier home

Since most people spend 90 percent of their time indoors, finding products that help the indoor air quality is a feature worth considering. Carpeting, for example, often uses formaldehyde, a chemical that just sounds awful to be taking into your lungs. Rupperecht says to look for products that are Greenguard certified. This means the carpeting (or countertop, or paint,

or door) has been tested for more than 10,000 chemicals to make sure it is safe for a healthy indoor environment. Carpeting can even be designed with the health of the planet in mind; look for those made from recycled plastic.

When it comes to wood flooring, Rupperecht says socially conscious shoppers will want to consider how long it takes the wood to grow. Bamboo is becoming more common as a floor choice because it grows fast and is a renewable product.

For those who prefer laminate flooring, look for products that are well made and will not need to be replaced in just a few years. Again, Greenguard certification indicates fewer chemicals will seep into the air that you breathe. Flooring Interiors, Coulee Carpet and La Crescent Tile are among some of the local flooring companies that feature environmentally friendly (and thus health-friendly) flooring and tile products for your home. For example, Mohawk Smartstrand carpet is made from corn. Porcelain tile is naturally eco-friendly because it lasts so long that you don't have to replace it. Porcelain tile also resists stains, releases no toxins and absorbs nothing so people with allergies can feel safe.

A natural approach to cleaning

Once you have your health-friendly products in place, you'll want to clean them. And while green products abound, local experts say this is one area where you can be

good to your health and actually spend less.

Elly Griswold is the owner of Mrs. Green Jeans, a cleaning company she founded that uses nontoxic, environmentally friendly products. The biggest weapons in her arsenal? Baking soda, borax and distilled white vinegar. She uses them for just about everything. "There are all sorts of nasty chemicals out there that simply are not necessary," she says. She's found that nontoxic cleaners are just as effective as those containing harmful chemicals, whether she is cleaning mirrors, mopping a floor, wiping a kitchen counter or scrubbing a toilet bowl.

Griswold says many of her clients are parents of small children, pet owners or living with health issues such as cancer, and all benefit from a toxin-free environment. "Pretty much everything I use wouldn't hurt me a bit if I got some in my mouth," she says. "If the label has a warning telling me to keep this out of reach of pets and small children, I don't buy it."

Norwex, sold by local independent sales consultants like Karla Collins, is an environmentally friendly company that features products such as microfiber cloths, organic cleaning products and kitchen cleaning products. All are designed to improve your quality of life by reducing the use of chemicals in your home. **(crw)**

Julie Nelson is the Public Relations Director for The Salvation Army.



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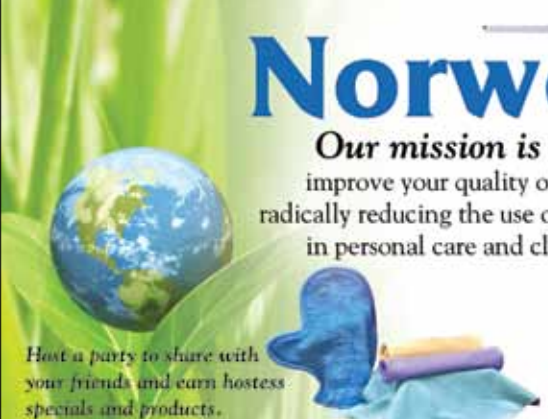
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BEYOND THE BAKERY AISLE

Eating gluten-free is key to health for individuals with celiac disease.

BY SHARI HEGLAND

Contributed photos

Recipes analyzed by Gundersen Lutheran registered dietitians

For nearly 20 years, Mary Lou Balts has lived without wheat, rye, barley or any of their derivatives. It can be a difficult undertaking, but it is becoming easier as grocers and restaurants meet the needs of the growing population who must avoid gluten—a protein found in those popular grains.

It took months for the La Crosse nurse and her doctors to find the cause of her drastic weight loss, lethargy and embarrassing symptoms that required being near a bathroom at all times. The diagnosis: celiac disease, an autoimmune disorder in which the body's reaction to gluten damages the lining of the small intestine, responsible for nutrient absorption. "Basically, I was starving to death. I was malnourished," she says.

A "huge challenge"

Discovering the cause was a relief, but it also offered a huge challenge. The only treatment for celiac disease is complete avoidance of gluten. Sound easy? "I went through the grocery store for three hours," Balts says, "and picked up six items."

"There is so much hidden gluten, we get to be very good label readers," she says. While wheat is sometimes clearly identified on food labels as a possible allergen, rye and barley are not always as easy to spot,

and oats may be cross-contaminated during harvesting and processing. Wheat turns up as coatings on medications and in modified food starch used in many processed foods. And, of course, it is the primary flour in breads, cakes, cookies, cereal, crackers and pasta.

Research and creativity

In the last two years, Tracie Happel and her two teenagers are also becoming masters at reading ingredient levels, but they don't let their gluten-free diet keep them from being active. "All it is, really, is getting rid of bread and pasta products, so we eat more vegetables and fruit and chicken," she says. Of course, there are also times when gluten turns up in the most unexpected places. The Onalaska teacher, who competed in her fourth Ironman triathlon in September, has learned the hard way, midrace, that some flavors of Gatorade contain gluten in the form of modified food starch.

"I know within 10 minutes if I have something with gluten," she says, due to swelling in her fingers and toes and a tingling feeling.

While a growing selection of gluten-free products is available from local grocery stores and specialty shops, it can be a challenge to make the transition. Happel and her children have yet to find "sandwich-worthy" bread for their lunches or her favorite workout treat of peanut



Mary Lou Balts



butter and marshmallow fluff on soft bread.

With research and creativity, though, Balts says you can eat well and live well on a gluten-free diet by keeping a few tricks in mind.

“Gluten-free baked goods don’t have as much fiber,” she says, so consider adding flaxseed meal or even something as unusual as the black beans in her brownie recipe, which she’s shared here. You can also keep your fiber intake high by focusing on whole foods such as fresh vegetables and fruit with the skins on. Experiment with other grains: quinoa, brown and wild rice, buckwheat (not a type of wheat) or amaranth. Fruits, vegetables, nonmarinated meats and dairy products are all naturally gluten-free.

The number of people eating gluten-free, by choice or by necessity, presents an ever-growing market. The local celiac support group includes more than 200 members today, who share recipes, tips on which gluten-free products taste best and justify the increased cost, and what restaurants are “gluten-free friendly.” The number continues to grow as doctors learn more about the disorder, which can cause a host of symptoms, from the classic symptoms Balts experienced to anemia, fatigue, skin rash or the tingling Happel describes. The National Institutes of Health estimates that nearly 1 in 100 Americans has celiac disease.

For more information about celiac disease or gluten-free eating, contact Mary Lou Balts through the La Crosse Area Celiac Support Group’s website at www.lacrosseareaceliacs.org. 

GLUTEN-FREE, DAIRY-FREE BLACK BEAN BROWNIES

Serves 12.

- 1 15-oz. can black beans, drained and rinsed, or $\frac{3}{4}$ cup dried black beans
- 3 eggs
- 5 T neutral-tasting oil (canola or grapeseed oil)
- 1 cup sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup bean flour or other gluten-free flour

- 1 tsp. xanthan gum or guar gum
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. baking powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. cayenne or chili powder (optional)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped walnuts (optional)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup dark chocolate chips (optional)

If using dried black beans, soak them for several hours and cook them until very tender, about 60 minutes.

Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease an 8-inch square baking pan and set aside. Add black beans to a bowl of a food processor and process until a paste forms. Add eggs, oil, sugar, cocoa, flour, xanthan gum, vanilla, baking powder and chili powder, if using. Process until smooth and well combined. Add walnuts, if using, and process until walnuts are mixed in. Spread batter evenly into prepared pan. Top with chocolate chips, if using. Bake in preheated oven for about 30 minutes or until an inserted tester comes out clean.

210 calories, 12g fat, 45mg cholesterol, 35mg sodium, 25g carbohydrate, 3g fiber, 14g sugar, 5g protein.

GLUTEN-FREE MEATBALLS

Serves 6-8.

- 1 lb. ground beef
- $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. Jimmy Dean sausage
- 1 cup finely chopped onion
- 1 tsp. Tabasco sauce
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup Worcestershire sauce
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 cup gluten-free breadcrumbs (either from your saved gluten-free bread, or available in the gluten-free aisle)
- 1 egg, well beaten
- 2 tsp. garlic powder

Moisten hands and mix well, using all ingredients. Form into

1-inch diameter meatballs. Brown for about 20 minutes at 325°F. These can be used with spaghetti sauce, barbecue sauce or any other recipes you have that call for meatballs.

90 calories, 5g fat, 30mg cholesterol, 105mg sodium, 4g carbohydrate, 0g fiber, 1g sugar, 6g protein.



BANANA MUFFINS

Serves 18.

- 2 cups gluten-free flour mix
(such as Bob's Red Mill All-Purpose
Gluten-Free Baking Mix)
- ½ cup sugar
- ½ cup flaxseed meal
- 1½ tsp xanthan gum
- 1 tsp baking soda
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ cup milk
- 1 tsp. lemon juice
- 3 medium overripe bananas, mashed
- ½ cup unsweetened applesauce
- 2 eggs
- ½ to 1 cup chopped nuts or chocolate chips (optional)

Preheat oven to 350°F. Prepare 18 muffin cups (grease tins or use paper muffin cups sprayed with nonstick spray). Mix dry ingredients well in a large bowl with a whisk or sift to break up any clumps in the gluten-free baking mix. Create a well in the center. Put lemon juice in ½ cup of milk and let stand a few minutes to sour. Then combine milk, mashed banana, applesauce and eggs in a separate bowl, mixing well. Add to dry ingredients to the large bowl and stir just enough to evenly moisten. Stir in nuts or chips if desired.

Fill muffin cups ⅔ to ¾ full. Bake approximately 20 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Store in the refrigerator or freeze.

170 calories, 5g fat, 20mg cholesterol, 150mg sodium, 30g carbohydrate, 4g fiber, 10g sugar, 4g protein.

Recently diagnosed with celiac disease, Shari Hegland is grateful that the list of naturally gluten-free foods includes fruits, veggies, steak and most important, chocolate and wine.

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BY AMY BATTERAM

Photos by Kelly Ottesen Photography



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JOURNEY TO THE WILD, WILD WEST

In Wyoming, the cowboy spirit still has giddyup and go.

BY CHARISH BADZINSKI

Photos by Charish Badzinski

The shop was draped in western wear: chaps with soft fringe, vests with silver studs and, to the right, an entire wall loaded with cowboy hats. The salesman peered down at me from under his tan leather cowboy hat with a kind smile as I tried on my tenth hat. Gone were the hard sell and pushiness you might expect in some towns that depend on the tourist dollar. In its place: a welcoming spirit, a genuine warmth and an authenticity I assumed had gone the way of John Wayne. Here, locals still wear Wrangler jeans (without irony), men still rope cattle or climb aboard an angry bull to earn their pay and everyone welcomes you to their town as if they expect you to stay for life. Welcome to Cody, Wyoming. Welcome to the wild, wild West.

Rodeo Capital of the World

Billed as the “Rodeo Capital of the World,” Cody hosts rodeo competitions several nights a week year-round, and tourists lucky enough to visit over the Fourth of July weekend can nab a ticket to the Buffalo Bill Cody Stampede, as we did. But before heading to the rodeo, visitors can embrace the spirit by buying a cowgirl hat from one of the charming cowboys working in the shops downtown. Though you might be judged as being odd among the downtown La Crosse crowd, you’ll blend in anywhere around Cody.



Top: The author descends a mountain atop her faithful steed. Above: A sea of cowboy hats fills the stands at the Buffalo Bill Cody Stampede.



Scenic lookouts offer motorists the chance to appreciate the beauty of the region on the drive from Cody to Yellowstone National Park.

The Stampede, as locals call it, draws some of the best cowboys in the nation, if not the world. For the price of entry, you will enjoy cattle ropin', buckin' bronco riding, bull riding and, lest we consider the rodeo sexist, barrel racing for the "pretty ladies," as the announcer called them. The ladies emerged from their competition in dusty pink chaps, largely unscathed, while the cowboys—particularly the bull riders—frequently limped their way out of the ring. Don't feel too bad for them; at this level, cowboys make hundreds of thousands of dollars for just a few seconds of work.

Seeing the West on horseback

Dressed in the appropriate gear, baptized in rodeo dirt and inspired by the fearlessness of the cowboys, the next logical step is to try your hand at riding off into the sunset. Several companies offer trips for riders of all levels, from one hour to a full day or more on the trails. We booked a two-hour ride through Bill Cody Ranch, located about 20 minutes west of Cody in the Shoshone National Forest in the Absaroka Mountains. Per usual, I requested the "slow old horse who likes to stop and eat a lot." In reality, I got the slow, clumsy horse, who tripped on every stone on the narrow path—but only when there was a steep dropoff to my side.

As he casually practiced his roping technique, our guide wondered aloud if we

would run into any bears, then took us up a steep hillside, or, as I like to call it, a mountain. Once cresting the top, the pathway down was so steep it vanished, while the valley opened up in front of us, giving way to a view well worth the quiver in a tentative rider's knees. I, of course, initiated a death grip on the saddle horn with one hand, grabbed the top of my cowgirl hat with the other, and let out a spirited yet ladylike expletive.

Back at the ranch, we ordered some thirst quenchers and gathered 'round a fire pit while cold settled into the bones of the valley. We roasted marshmallows, made s'mores and shared stories of our trail ride with campers anticipating their ride the following morning. The Shoshone River glittered with the promise of diamonds that would disappear by day.

Yellowstone National Park

Little can be said about Yellowstone National Park that hasn't been said already, and to try to summarize it serves only to minimize the wonder of it all. It is bigger and more stunning than can be put into mere words. The drive from Cody to Yellowstone on the Chief Joseph Highway, which connects to the Beartooth Highway, is breathtaking and, if you're a nervous passenger, a white-knuckler. But the eastern gateway offered us a smooth entry with only a short wait at the gate. Be sure to pack a lunch, ample water



Old Faithful spouts off regularly at Yellowstone National Park.

and maybe even dinner—a trip to the park is a full-day adventure and food inside the gate can be expensive.

Yellowstone is enormous, encompassing more than 3,400 square miles and fully half of the world's geothermal features. Those features include hot springs, 300 geysers (among them the world-famous Old Faithful), geothermal pools and bubbling mud pots. The park is rimmed by mountain ranges, creating picture postcards everywhere you look. Wildlife are so abundant, they will often stand near the road—particularly bison. Have your camera ready and watch for crowds gathering on the roadside, a sure sign something photo-worthy is nearby. Keep in mind, these aren't trail horses; take care not to get too close to the animals. They call it the Wild West for a reason.

Should you go hiking in Yellowstone or really anywhere in Wyoming, consider bringing "bear spray," just in case you come between a mother and her cubs. An unfortunate hiker did just that only three days after we were in the park on a trail we had intended to hike; he did not survive the attack.

To drive through Yellowstone with stops for major sites and meals takes the better part of a day. Yet as the sun sets over Yellowstone Lake, keep watch for animals; we saw our only bear of the day at dusk. Thankfully, she was a good distance away, so we could appreciate her majesty safely, from afar. **(crw)**

Like a good cowgirl, Charish Badzinski came home with a turquoise-embellished cowgirl hat, which she proudly wears in downtown La Crosse, just for the fun of it.



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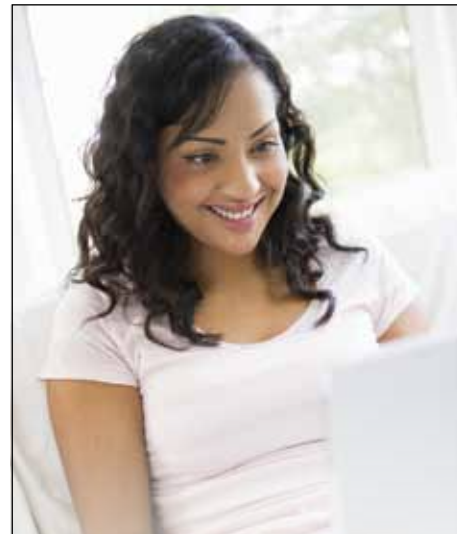
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MIND YOUR HEALTH CARE MANNERS

What are we supposed to talk
about during Pap smears?

BY HEIDI GRIMINGER BLANKE



What do you say to someone, besides your spouse or an infant, who cups your breast in their hand? I think there ought to be some kind of etiquette manual for those of us on the receiving end of a variety of women-specific health procedures.

Mammogram manners

Take mammograms, for example. There I am, standing with a flimsy hospital gown balanced on one shoulder, edged up against a cold and inflexible machine, with someone I hardly know manipulating a nude quartile of my body. Do I make pleasant conversation as the skin between my collarbone and lower rib is condensed into something as flat as a piece of paper?

“So, read any good books lately?”

Instead of talking, perhaps I should stare silently ahead, even though the exam gown is slipping to my elbow, exposing my entire upper half. It’s bad enough that mammograms require armpits to go au naturel, eschewing anything more than a wet washcloth for odor control until after the exam; I also have to wonder if I remembered to shave them.

Search the Internet as you may, there are no references to mammogram protocol anywhere.

Pap smear propriety

Pap smears pose the same dilemma, but with a few added stressors. First, I wonder if I should lie perfectly silently or, at the other extreme, babble on about the day’s occurrences as if it were totally natural to lie flat on my back, feet in stirrups, waiting for the sound of the speculum to open, then close. Then, I wonder if I shaved my legs to competitive swimmer level, or if I’ve remembered to shave anything at all above

my knees. I try to convince myself that my doctor couldn’t care less if my toenail polish is peeling or if my socks, if I’ve left them on, have holes, but I nevertheless harbor all kinds of thoughts that reflect my poor grooming habits.

Poundage practices

While mammograms and Pap smears harbor their own unique predicaments, I think women’s health issues are cause for concern 30 seconds after one’s name is called for an annual physical. That’s when we weigh in. I always slip my shoes off, just for the extra 12 ounces that might be deducted, wishing I could slide them back on in order to add an inch or two to my height. One of these days, I am going to shift my well-check from the winter to the summer months, just so I can wear clothes less likely to up the poundage.

Cause for concern

Menstruation, pregnancy and menopause all harbor their own unique health dilemmas. From cramps to morning sickness to hot flashes, women claim exclusive rights to any number of gender-specific discomforts. Google “women’s health,” and you’ll get three times as many hits as “men’s health,” 99 billion to their 33 billion. If that’s not enough to prove women have some unique health concerns, I don’t know what is. (crw)

Heidi Griminger Blanke, Ph.D., is the Executive Director at WAFER Food Pantry and who, despite this article, is extremely grateful to all health care professionals.

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

ONGOING EVENTS

American Association of University Women (AAUW)

2nd Sat. of each month (Sept.-May), 9:30 a.m., 608-788-7439, www.aauw-wi.org.

Business Over Breakfast La Crosse Area Chamber of Commerce

4th Wed. every month, 7:30-8:45 a.m. Preregister 608-784-4807, www.lacrossechamber.com.

Children's Museum of La Crosse weekly programming:

Save-On-Sundays \$1.00 off admission every Sun., noon to 5 p.m.

Mt. LeKid Climbing Wall open every Sat. 11 a.m.-4 p.m. and Sun. 12-4 p.m.

Wee Move for ages 1-4 with parent, every Fri., 10:30 a.m.

Little Learners for ages 1-4 with parent, every Thurs., 10:30 a.m.

Coulee Region Autism Society for family members, friends and professionals who care for someone on the autism spectrum. 3rd Wed. of each month, Chileda Habilitation Institute, 1825 Victory St., La Crosse. 6:30-8:30 p.m. Child care available, call 608-519-0883. lax-autismgroup@centurytel.net or autismfyi-lacrosse@yahoo.com.

Coulee Region Professional Women (CRPW) meets the 4th Tues. of each month, Nell's City Grill, 1111 3rd St. S., La Crosse, 5:30 p.m. Madalene Buelow, 608-791-5282.

La Crosse Area Chamber of Commerce monthly breakfast meeting. 2nd Mon. of each month, 7 a.m., Radisson. Admission is \$5 and includes breakfast. www.lacrossechamber.com.

La Crosse Noon Wisconsin Women's Alliance meets the 2nd Thurs. of each month, noon. Dawn Harris, 608-782-4133, dawn@dmharrislaw.com.

MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers) meets the 1st Monday of each month, Olivet Lutheran Church, 6:15 p.m. Holly Zeeb, wxyzeeb@centurytel.net, www.olivetlutheran.org/small-groups/mops.

Valley View Kiddie Crew meets the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month, Valley View Mall Food Court, 10:30-11:30 a.m., with fun and education experiences for children and parents. www.myvalleyview.com.

WAFER Food Pantry, Mon.-Fri. 10 a.m.-12:45 p.m., Mon., Tues., Thurs. 4-8 p.m. 608-782-6003. www.waferlacrosse.org.

Women in Networking and Support (WINS) meets the 2nd Wed. of each month, Piggy's, noon-1 p.m. Kay Buck, 608-791-9253, kay.v.buck@wellsfargo.com.

Women of Worth (WOW) meets the last Wed. of each month, Boot Hill Pub, noon. Debbie Lee, 608-784-2775, debbie.lee@westlandinsurance.com.

CALENDAR EVENTS

Oct. 4, New Horizons Annual La Crosse County Candlelight Vigil for Domestic Violence, 5:30-6:30 p.m., UW-La Crosse Clocktower.

Oct. 6, New Horizons Annual Trempealeau County Candlelight Vigil for Domestic Violence, 12:15-1:30 p.m., gazebo on Main St., Whitehall, Wis.

Oct. 6-9, *Playboy of the Western World*, 7:30 p.m. Thurs.-Sat., 3 p.m. Sun., Page Theatre, Saint Mary's University, Winona.

Oct. 7, Coulee Region Job Fair, Center Court, Valley View Mall. www.myvalleyview.com.

Oct. 7-9, Pieces in Time Quilt Show, New Albin Community Center, New Albin, Iowa. Call Lisa at 563-544-4325 for more information.

Oct. 8, Historic Downtown La Crosse Day.

Oct. 14, Night (Out) at the Museum, 5:30-8 p.m., Children's Museum of La Crosse. Preregistration and prepayment required. www.funmuseum.org.

Oct. 14-16, *The Sound of Music*, 7:30 p.m. Fri. and Sat., 2 p.m. Sun., Fine Arts Center, Viterbo University.

Oct. 14-15, Fall Home & Lifestyles Show, Valley View Mall. www.myvalleyview.com.

Oct. 14-23, *The Farnsworth Invention*, 7:30 p.m. Thurs.-Sat., 2 p.m. Sun., Toland Theatre, Center for the Arts, UW-La Crosse.

Oct. 21, Willy Porter, 7:30 p.m., Pump House, La Crosse. www.thepumphouse.org.

Oct 21 and 28, Children's Museum Boo-seum Non-Scary Halloween Party, 5:30-7:30 p.m., preregistration required. www.funmuseum.org.

Oct. 22, Women's Expo, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., Onalaska Omni Center, www.gundluth.org/WomensExpo.

Oct. 22, La Crosse Symphony Orchestra, 7:30, Fine Arts Center, Viterbo University. www.lacrossesymphony.org.

Oct. 23-24, Sports Card Show, Valley View Mall. www.myvalleyview.com.

Oct. 28-Nov. 12, *Leaving Iowa*, 7:30 p.m. Thurs.-Sat., 2 p.m. Sun., La Crosse Community Theatre. www.lacrossecommunitytheatre.org.

Oct. 29, medication collection, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Onalaska Police Department. Bring unused or expired prescription and over-the-counter medications for safe disposal. Contact Officer Jasson Jobe, 608-789-7228.

Oct. 29, Fashion Cornucopia, 11 a.m. and 5 p.m., Our Savior's Lutheran Church, La Crosse. www.oursaviorslutheranchurch.net.

Oct. 29, Halloween Trick-or-Treating, downtown La Crosse.

Oct. 30, Halloween Trick-or-Treating, 3-5 p.m., Valley View Mall. www.myvalleyview.com.

Nov. 5, countywide medication collection, 9 a.m. to noon, three locations: Viterbo Fine Arts Center, Onalaska Police Department and La Crosse County Waste Facility. Bring unused or expired prescription and over-the-counter medications for safe disposal. Contact Officer Jon Wenger, 608-789-7228.

Nov. 9-13, *From Up Here*, 7:30 p.m. Wed.-Sat., 2 p.m. Sun., Toland Theatre, Center for the Arts, UW-La Crosse.

Nov. 11, Holiday Open House, downtown La Crosse.

Nov. 11, Night (Out) at the Museum, 5:30-8 p.m., Children's Museum of La Crosse. Preregistration and prepayment required. www.funmuseum.org.

Nov. 11-13, 18-20, *Last Letters from Stalingrad*, 7:30, Pump House, La Crosse. www.thepumphouse.org.

Nov. 12, *Cinderella*, Missoula Children's Theatre, 1 and 4 p.m., Fine Arts Center, Viterbo University.

Nov. 12, Santa's Magic Arrival, 10 a.m., Center Court, Valley View Mall. www.myvalleyview.com.

Nov. 17-20, Holiday Fair, La Crosse Center, www.lacrossecenter.com.

Nov. 18-20, Tiny Tim Gala Benefit, Tiny Tim Festival of Trees and The Jingle Bell Brunch, www.tinytimgala.org.

Nov. 19, La Crosse Symphony Orchestra, 7:30, Fine Arts Center, Viterbo University. www.lacrossesymphony.org.

Nov. 21 and 28, Pet Photos with Santa, 6-8 p.m., Valley View Mall. www.myvalleyview.com.

Nov. 25, Black Friday Kickoff Event, 5 a.m., Valley View Mall. www.myvalleyview.com.

Nov. 25-Dec. 31, Rotary Holiday Lights, 5-10 p.m., Riverside Park, La Crosse, www.rotarylighs.org.

If your organization would like to be included in our Community Calendar, please contact us at editor@crwmagazine.com or call 608-783-5395.

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