



News

MAR/APR 2013



Ssssh!

Don't look now, but we may be experiencing nice weather.

"Hello spring!"

Deep breath.

Finally, spring is here and, yes, we have a health challenge.

It's called '100 Miles in 100 Days' and it came about because I had so many people telling me they missed our challenges.

I have been bombarded with emails and phone calls from employees who wanted a tracking sheet and an exercise conversion chart. That is exciting, and as I look out my window from the fifth floor HR office from time to time, especially during the lunch hour, I can see employees stretching and getting ready to put in their miles.

Having a competition makes it a little easier for people to get motivated. Everybody wants to earn that mystery participation prize and winning is just as simple as it says in the informational flyer.

Everyone who completes the 100 miles in the 100 days and returns their tracking sheet by the July 12th deadline will earn the participation gift. It doesn't get much easier than that, and the surprise participation gift makes it a little extra fun.

April also could be the beginning of another exciting new addition for Healthy Directions, as we may be starting another yoga class for those who can't make it during the lunch hour. Another instructor is willing to teach a free after-work class either Wednesday or Thursday at the Midtown campus located near the Health Center and Youth Center about 41st and Woolworth.

Right now, the staff is checking to see how much interest there would be in a 5 p.m. class. If we get the interest and secure a room space at the Midtown campus, we hope to begin the after-work yoga class by May 1st.

Look for the informational flyer and interest signup sheet that have been sent to each department. Anyone interested should sign the sheet and the county will have its third yoga class. More details will follow once the interest sheets are returned and the class is organized.

Until then, "Keep moving to a Healthy YOU!"

Kathy Adair, Healthy Directions Chairwoman

Hello Spring!



The Healthy Directions Wellness

Newsletter is brought to you by the Douglas County Healthy Directions worksite wellness committee.

Contributing editor and photographer: Phil Rooney; layout and design: Connie Lehman; distribution: Kathy Adair. We'd like to hear from you!

Send questions/comments to the committee by e-mailing chairwoman Kathy Adair at kathy.adair@douglascounty-ne.gov, drop her a note to Human Resources, Room 505, or call her at 402-444-6099.

Commit to be Fit

April is Alcohol Awareness Month

Drinking too much alcohol increases the risk of health-related problems like injuries, violence, liver disease, and some types of cancer.

If you choose to drink, have only a limited (or moderate) amount.

This means:

No more than 1 drink a day for women
No more than 2 drinks a day for men

One drink is a:

Bottle of beer (12 ounces) Glass of wine (5 ounces)
Shot of liquor (1.5 ounces)

For most adults, moderate drinking doesn't cause any serious health problems.

www.healthfinder.gov

You may have heard that regular light to moderate drinking can be good for the heart. With heavy or at-risk drinking, however, any potential benefits are outweighed by greater risks, including

Injuries. Drinking too much increases your chances of being injured or even killed. Alcohol is a factor, for example, in about 60% of fatal burn injuries, drownings, and homicides; 50% of severe trauma injuries and sexual assaults; and 40% of fatal motor vehicle crashes, suicides, and fatal falls.

Health problems. Heavy drinkers have a greater risk of liver disease, heart disease, sleep disorders, depression, stroke, bleeding from the stomach, sexually transmitted infections from unsafe sex, and several types of cancer. They may have problems managing diabetes, high blood pressure, and other conditions.

Birth defects. Drinking during pregnancy can cause brain damage and other serious problems in the baby. Because it is not yet known whether any amount of alcohol is safe for a developing baby, women who are pregnant or may become pregnant should not drink.

Alcohol use disorders. Generally known as alcoholism and alcohol abuse, alcohol use disorders are medical conditions that doctors can diagnose when a patient's drinking causes distress or harm. In the United States, about 18 million people have an alcohol use disorder.

Beyond these physical and mental health risks, frequent heavy drinking also is linked with personal problems, including losing a driver's license and having relationship troubles.

www.rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov

To learn more or receive help, visit the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, inc. at www.ncadd.org

Go For A Walk With Your Best Friend

Regular exercise with your pet is good for both you and your dog's health and can be great fun. There's nothing like an exercise partner who's waiting by the door with a wagging tail to keep you motivated!

- Aim for 30 minute walks, five times per week.
- Keep your dog on its leash in public areas, unless it's an 'off leash' zone.
- Supervise your dog around young children.
- Take a plastic bag or scoop to clean up your dog's poo.
- Make sure your dog is properly identified.
- Avoid walking in extreme heat.
- Take fresh water for you and your dog to drink.

www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au



Commit to be Fit



Escape Planning In case of a fire at home

Plan ahead! If a fire breaks out in your home, you may have only a few minutes to get out safely once the smoke alarm sounds. Everyone needs to know what to do and where to go if there is a fire. Follow these tips from the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA).

SAFETY TIPS

- » **MAKE** a home escape plan. Draw a map of your home showing all doors and windows. Discuss the plan with everyone in your home.
- » **KNOW** at least two ways out of every room, if possible. Make sure all doors and windows leading outside open easily.
- » **HAVE** an outside meeting place (like a tree, light pole or mailbox) a safe distance from the home where everyone should meet.
- » **PRACTICE** your home fire drill at night and during the day with everyone in your home, twice a year.
- » **PRACTICE** using different ways out.
- » **TEACH** children how to escape on their own in case you can't help them.
- » **CLOSE** doors behind you as you leave.

IF THE ALARM SOUNDS...

- » If the smoke alarm sounds, **GET OUT AND STAY OUT**. Never go back inside for people or pets.
- » If you have to escape through smoke, **GET LOW AND GO** under the smoke to your way out.
- » **CALL** the fire department from outside your home.



Your Source for **SAFETY** Information www.nfpa.org/education
NFPA Public Education Division 1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169

FACTS

- ! According to an NFPA survey, only **one of every three** American households have actually developed and practiced a home fire escape plan.
- ! While **71%** of Americans have an escape plan in case of a fire, only **47%** of those have practiced it.
- ! **One-third** of American households who made an estimate thought they would have at least 6 minutes before a fire in their home would become life-threatening. The time available is often less. And only **8%** said their first thought on hearing a smoke alarm would be to get out!



THE NFPA RECOMMENDS YOU TEST YOUR SMOKE ALARM MONTHLY.

**BEEP!
BEEP!**

Are you at risk for glaucoma? It's an eye disease that gradually causes blindness. People at increased risk include those of African, Asian and Hispanic descent; older than age 60; with hypertension or high nearsightedness; or with a family history of the disease. The best way to protect your sight from glaucoma is to discover it early. Get tested routinely, especially if you have increased risk. www.personalbest.com

Commit to be Fit



The County Wellness Bicycling Corner

There is a great song by Fleetwood Mac with lyrics that go: “Don’t stop thinking about tomorrow!”

That really describes what this spring has been like in respect to outdoor sports and exercise. When will it really warm up to the 60’s and 70’s and when can we get out on that bike and enjoy the warmth?

You just have to keep looking to tomorrow. It will be here, you need to get ready and watch the weather forecast and plan for getting out when we get the 50-to-55-degree plus temperatures.

For those of you who are beginners at bicycling, this is the best time to get started because there is plenty of motivation out there. The trees, grass and shrubs will soon start turning green, and the time to burn off those winter “lbs” is now! Best of all, some great bike rides are just beginning.

This is the perfect time to start making that New Year’s resolution to get in shape and enjoy life more happen. There are several bike shops that sell used bikes and you can ask them to help you find one that fits your size. My recommendation is that you get a hybrid, which is a cross between a mountain bike (fat tires) and a road bike (skinny tires), a light, an all-purpose bike. Another way is to get started it to find a family member or neighbor who has a bike they don’t use and borrow that until you get into bicycling.

If you have been biking off and on for a while, set a goal by picking an upcoming ride, then plan on doing it by yourself or with friends. This will provide motivation to get you started. A bonus that comes with biking is that people who bike are some of the friendliest people you will encounter and you can easily make new friends.

Bicycling is not about racing or winning or being first: it is about exercising – either alone or with a group of friends - and enjoying the great outdoors. That is what makes biking a great exercise that is easy on the feet, knees, and other body parts, and can be done almost any time of the year.

Here is a list of upcoming rides with a variety of distances:

- **Omaha Health and Wellness and Fitness Expo Bike Ride - April 14**
- **Spring Fling at Louisville - April 20**
- **The Great American Pie Ride - May 18**
- **Tour de Cure, Springfield. – June 1**
- **Bike Ride Across Nebraska (BRAN) - June 2 - 8**
- **RAGBRAI - starting in Council Bluffs - July 22-27.**
- **Corporate Cycling Challenge - August 11.**

Check out the Omaha Pedalers Bike Club website for more information about different rides and various distances.

www.opbc.clubexpress.com

Now that the biking season has arrived, it’s time to make plans to participate. Remember, if you have questions about biking, you can always give me a call. Anything is fair game, from how to go about getting started to riding various distances, and even how to make plans for riding with a group of your fellow county employees.

You Can Do It!

Lee Lazure

Douglas County Human Resources-Civil Service
402/444-6123

Cycling Lingo 101

Big ring: The largest gear in the front set of gears, best for going downhill (the opposite of which is the small ring).

Brain bucket: A helmet.

To crank: Pedal like your life depends it – or to squeeze out some serious distance on a ride .

Drafting: A technique for saving energy and staying out of the wind by staying in the slipstream behind another rider (or being “on their wheel”).

In the zone: The euphoric state all riders strive to achieve while riding; biking Zen.

Wonky: Something strange on the bike or in the group dynamic (aka, “My tire feels wonky,” or “Ralph is acting wonky today... did he get any sleep last night?”).

www.experienceplus.com/blog

Commit to be Fit



From Left to Right, back to front the people are: Joe Evans (black shirt far left), Mark Thurber (Public Works), Tim Phelan (Public Works), Steve Cacioppo (Douglas County GIS), Dave Schreiner (LRC), Craig Carsley (City Planning), Autumn Anderson (Public Works), Shannon Phelan, Kelsey Phelan. Not pictured-Derek & Sarah Miller and Cindy & Joe Johnson

City and County Team Trek up the First National Tower **870 STEPS TOTAL!**

It was not your everyday workout.

“Leap A Tall Building” was the theme for this year’s Trek Up the Tower. The challenge is a serious one, with a 40-story hike up the 870 steps to 633 feet in the air, scaling the tallest building between Chicago and Denver.

Altitude Sickness was our favorite team – a daring crew made up of competitors from Douglas County and the City of Omaha, making their appearance for the third straight year.

This stellar crew finished third in the Community Challenge with an average time of 7:05 minutes for the top five co-ed participants. This year’s theme of “Leap A Tall Building” was embraced by many participants who dressed as comic book super heroes.

Autumn Anderson from Omaha Public Works placed third in her age group – she’s a young one - with a time of 7:02! Steve Cacioppo of Douglas County GIS finished in the overall top 50, coming in 47th in the field of 1,585 racers.

The squad was boosted by some individual members who made a marked improvement in their times. Participating for the third time each, Cacioppo came in at 6:14 this year, 55 seconds better than his very respectable first-year time of 7:09. Dave Schreiner cut 1:13 off his first-year time of 8:50 and came in at 7:37. Derek Miller has improved to 7:40, a big 1:22 step from the 9:02 of his first year.

The team and their times:

Steve Cacioppo	6:14 *
Craig Carsley	6:20 *
Autumn Anderson	7:02 *
Dave Schreiner	7:37 *
Derek Miller	7:40
Joe Evans	8:02
Shannon Phelan	8:08 *
Cyndi Johnson	8:13
Joe Johnson	8:14
Tim Phelan	8:23
Kelsey Phelan	8:47
Sarah Miller	11:39
Mark Thurber	12:22

Times with * indicate participants used to determine co-ed team time.



Community Gardens Grow Healthy Food and Strong Neighborhoods

Community Garden; a piece of land shared by friends and neighbors for growing produce and flowers and providing opportunities for positive social interactions, recreation and education.

Why Belong to a Community Garden?

- Improves the quality of life for people in the garden
- Provides a catalyst for neighborhood and community development
- Beautifies neighborhoods/reduces crime
- Creates opportunity for recreation, exercise, therapy and education
- Provides nutritious foods and a connection to the environment while reducing family food budgets

Benefits of fresh fruits & vegetables

- Fruits and vegetable consumption is critical to promoting good health
- Eating a diet rich in fresh fruits and vegetables as a part of a healthy diet can reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and certain cancers
- Fruits and vegetables are excellent sources of potassium, fiber and vitamins A and C

Interested in joining or starting a garden in your neighborhood?
Log on to www.douglascounty-ne.com.



For a list of Farmers Markets in Omaha, log on to:
www.douglascounty-ne.gov/gardens/farmers-markets

Markets start in May!

Commit to be Fit

Tennis Players!



The Wellness Committee is considering organizing a competitive tennis tournament and/or league for Douglas County employees. However, before it can happen, we need to determine whether enough employees would participate in a tournament and/or league. If you are interested, please notify Larry Miller, 402-444-6780, and let him know in which of the events you would participate - tournament, league, or both. If there is enough interest, we'll begin organizing the event(s).

Relax at work? YES!
Enjoy the relaxing, healing
power of

Yoga



Civic Center • Every Monday at noon
Every Thursday, 7:00 - 7:45 A.M.

- Taught by a trained yoga instructor
- Held in the Treasurer space on the Harney Level of the Civic Center

FREE!

It's easy to get started!

E-mail Kathy at kathy.adair@douglascounty-ne.gov to say you'd like to join the class then just show up for any or all the classes!

Please wear workout clothes and bring a yoga mat/rug or towel.

Need help quitting smoking?
Visit www.epa.gov/smokefree

FYI: Mammograms are paid 100%
by United Healthcare.

If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence, please contact the YWCA of Omaha's 24-hour hotline at **402-345-7273** or YWCA Omaha office at **402-345-6555**.

Live Smoke-free!

Would you like to learn more about **Smoke-free multi-unit housing?**

Contact: **Aja Anderson, BS, Douglas County Health Dept.** at aja.anderson@douglascounty-ne.gov.

Rejuvenate and de-stress in the middle of the day!



Join us for the **FREE**
PILATES
AT LUNCH CLASS!

Every Tuesday at Noon
Old Harney Street
Treasurer's Office
Questions?
Call Kathy Adair
at 402-444-6099



Considering Weight Watchers?

Contact Gail Knapp at gknapp@ci.omaha.ne.us or call Gail at (402)444-5190

DC YOUTH CENTER: P90X CLASSES

Are you up to the challenge?
Call Daniel Archie at 402-444-1892

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

is available to all Douglas County employees. EAP's trained staff can help with problems that affect your personal or professional life. Services are provided to employees in a confidential manner and there is no charge to the employee for up to three counseling sessions. Call 402-391-2477 for an appointment or e-mail familyenrichmentomaha.com.

Commit to be Fit