

B E Y O N D 6 0

A C T I V E L I V I N G

Weld County Area Agency on Aging
Assistance • Advocacy • Answers on Aging

MARCH-APRIL 2019

Activities Calendar

march 15

Irish Lunch. Noon-1 pm at The Bridge at Greeley 4750 25th Street. It's your lucky day! You're invited to celebrate the Irish heritage with delicious traditional food and Irish entertainment. Call (970)-339-3322 to RSVP by March 11.

march 16

Walk with a Doc. A walking program for everyone interested in taking steps towards a healthier lifestyle. While you walk at your own pace you'll have the opportunity to have questions answered by local physicians. Greeley Mall-Meet inside the South East Doors. 8 am.

april 4

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Education and Resource Fair. Session topics include Complex Family Relationships, Kinship Services, and Financial Assistance for Kinship Families and learn about other resources. First United Methodist Church, 917 10th Ave., Greeley 9:00-1:30 pm. RSVP by March 29, 2019 by calling 970-400-6952.

Beyond 60, Active Living is sponsored by the Weld County Area Agency on Aging. If you have a story idea or something to share, please contact us at (970) 346-6950 or hdarby@weldgov.com. All content is subject to editing and/or approval by Weld County.

SENIOR HEALTH & Fitness

Stress Busting Workshop:

Learn new stress management techniques, relaxation, and coping skills. The evidence-based workshop is for family caregivers (only) who provide care to a loved one. Workshop meets once a week for nine weeks. FREE but registration is required by calling 970-400-6130.

Wednesdays 3/20/19 to 5/15/19 from 9:00- 10:30 am: Cornerstone Church (Greeley)

SLEEP LIKE THE ANIMALS

by Bill Crabbe

All animals have to sleep, even if humans seem to be the only species that will willingly go without it. In fact, we humans spend about one third of our lives doing it. While humans are thought to require about 7 to 8 hours of sleep a day, the sleep requirements of other animals vary widely. At the low end are some species of frogs that can go for months without sleeping, while koalas log about 15 hours a day, probably partly because their diet leaves them semi-stoned on a continual basis. But the anti-insomnia award has to go to the large hairy armadillo that spends 20 hours a day sleeping, and possibly more during presidential campaign years. Elephants and giraffes tend to sleep in 30-minute increments,

somewhere between 2 to 4 hours a day. In fact, the normal pattern for most animals is to sleep in installments throughout the day, something that is very familiar to anyone who has ever owned a cat or dog, or raised a teenager.

Regardless of species, safety during sleep is important and various animals have developed interesting techniques. Horses and other large mammals lock their legs so they don't fall over. However they don't enter REM sleep in that position so when they want to dream about winning the Kentucky Derby they have to lie down. Otters have put a very romantic twist on the sleep process by holding hands so they don't float away from each other. Awww. Presumably if one develops a significant snoring habit,

there is the added benefit that the other can just let go. Dolphins and some birds sleep unihemispherically, letting one side of the brain run the show while the other checks out.

But my hat goes off to the walrus. Not only does the big guy fill air pouches in his body so that he can float comfortably while asleep, but he hangs onto the ice with his teeth while doing so. And when the pole becomes ice free? An insomniac walrus would probably be best avoided.

As to dreaming, it's something we all do, even if there are those who will swear that they don't. Some people simply don't remember them. Humans run a sleep cycle that includes REM about every 70



to 100 minutes and do so 4-5 times a night. That's peanuts compared to some lizards whose cycles last 80 seconds and who have 350 of them a night.

So tonight when you climb into bed try to remember to lock your legs, latch onto the side of the mattress with your teeth, grab your partner's hand, and feel free to dream like a lizard.



Queen of the Underground Railroad

By Dick Williamson

One of the most intriguing characters in American history is one of the least known. Recently I polled several people as to whether they had ever heard of, or studied, the life of Harriet Tubman. About half

had never heard of her, about a third had a vague idea of who she was and about one tenth knew her story well. Yet Harriet Tubman stands tall among the great Americans of the 19th century. Who was she?

Harriet was born into slavery about 1820 on a Maryland plantation. Because of the cruelty she endured, Harriet desired to somehow escape from bondage and free other slaves as well. She would later recall, "I had seen their tears and sighs, and I had heard their groans, and would give every drop of blood in my veins to free them."

She escaped in 1849 via the "Underground Railroad" and made her way to freedom in Pennsylvania. That "railroad" had no tracks, engines or cars. Rather, it was a network of secret routes and safe houses used by slaves to escape into free states

and Canada. Harriet became a "conductor" on the railroad and helped lead many slaves to freedom.

Slaves traveled at night, about 10-20 miles to each station. They rested, and then a message was sent to the next station to let the station master know the runaways were on their way. When the Civil War broke out in 1860, Tubman joined the Union army as a nurse, but also acted as a scout and spy behind enemy lines. Following the war she became an activist in the causes of black rights and women's suffrage.

Harriet Tubman died in 1913 in a home she had founded for indigent Negroes, but her legacy lives on. Schools and museums bear her name and her story has been revisited in books, movies and documentaries. A WWII Liberty ship was named after her, and in 2016 the

United States Treasury announced that Harriet's image will replace that of former President and slaveowner Andrew Jackson on the twenty-dollar bill. She was buried with full military honors at Fort Hill Cemetery in Auburn, New York.

NEXT WEEK'S SENIOR NUTRITION LUNCH MENU:

mon 3/18

French Dip with Au Jus Cup, Oven Brown Potatoes, Creamy Coleslaw, Strawberries and Bananas, Milk 1%

tues 3/19

Beef Tips, Mashed Red Potatoes, Gravy, Green Beans and Mushrooms, Pumpkin Roll, Butter, Pineapple-Grapes, Milk 1%

wed 3/20

Meatloaf, Italian Vegetable Medley, Apple Waldorf Salad, Wheat Biscuit Butter, Cherry Crisp, Milk 1%

thurs 3/21

Green Pepper Casserole, Scalloped Potatoes, Mint Cucumber/Tomato Salad, Orange Slices, Rice Krispie Treat, Milk 1%

fri 3/22

Roast Beef, Brown Gravy, Baked Potato, Sour Cream, Butter, Brussels Sprouts with Malt Vinegar, Wheat Roll, Butter, Butterscotch Pudding, Milk 1%

Did you know?

In 1939 two homemakers, Mildred Day and Malita Jensen invented Rice Krispie treats to sell because their Campfire Girl troops needed to make money for meetings.



By Whitney Janzen-Pankratz

I don't know about you, but my mind is often a jumbled mess of to-do lists, imagined problems looming around the corner, worries about that thing I forgot to do last night, followed by a nagging jab of what I think my

life "should" be. Exhausting, right? In fact, thought patterns like this make us more likely to experience stress, anxiety, and symptoms of depression. This realization left me looking for a reset button, namely mindfulness.

Mindfulness is a type of meditation in which you focus on being intensely aware of what you're sensing and feeling in the moment, without interpretation or judgment. Jon Kabat-Zinn, creator of the Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction Program says, "It's not really about sitting in the full lotus, like pretending you're a statue in a British museum, it's about living your life as if it really mattered, moment by moment by moment by moment." Here are a few ways to start:

- Focus on your breathing. When you have negative thoughts, try to sit down, take a deep breath and close your eyes. Focus on your breath as it moves in and out of your body. Sitting and breathing for even just a minute can help.
- Set aside time to notice—really notice—what you're sensing in a given moment, the sights, sounds, and smells that ordinarily slip by without reaching your conscious awareness.

Recognize that your thoughts and emotions are fleeting and do not define you; acknowledge them without judgement. This is an insight that can free you from negative thought patterns.

Tune into your body's physical sensations, from the water hitting your skin in the shower to the way your body rests in your chair.

Mayo Clinic reports that meditation has been studied in many clinical trials as effective for stress, anxiety, pain, depression, insomnia, and high blood pressure. If practiced regularly over time, research also shows that mindfulness can increase density of gray matter in brain regions linked to learning, memory, emotion regulation, and empathy. It also boosts the immune system's ability to fight off illness. All this good comes from training your brain. Could be worth it, right? So try... "living your life as if it really mattered, moment by moment by moment by moment..."

Sources: <http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/topic/mindfulness/definition>, <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/consumer-health/in-depth/mindfulness-exercises/art-20046356>