



S.H.A.P.E



April 2012 Issue

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Upcoming Events...

SAVE THE DATE

2nd Annual Livingston County 5K Walk/Run

May 5, 2012



Interested in joining Weight Watchers?

To enroll in the Weight Watchers at work contact Karriann Edwards at the IT Department by email kedwards@co.livingston.ny.us or by phone 243-6911.

The Livingston Arts Center has a variety of fitness, art and music activities. Please visit their website for specific information

www.livingstonartscenter.org

THE RESULTS ARE IN !

In January, the SHAPE Committee requested you complete a survey to evaluate the success of the program. The committee would like to share some of the results:

⇒ Employees mostly participated in the following SHAPE programs: Step-Up, 5K walk/run, zumba, weight watchers and chair massage.

⇒ The SHAPE program has helped employees:

- Eat healthier** 65.4%
- Exercise more** 45.7 %
- Start walking or running** 31.3%
- Participate in SHAPE activities** 39.5%
- Lower stress** 22.2%



⇒ The top 5 reported activities employees would like to see this year are: 5K walk/run, walking/hiking tours, chair massage, yoga and exercise equipment to utilize on campuses.

The complete SHAPE survey results can be found on the [County Intranet](#).

"A diet is the penalty we pay for exceeding the feed limit."
~Author Unknown



Managing Stress with Exercise

Stress can make you feel drained, anxious, even depressed. While there are several ways to manage runaway stress, none is as enjoyable and effective as a regular exercise routine.

Exercise releases endorphins which eases pain and produces a sense of comfort and euphoria. The U.S. Surgeon General's Report on Physical Activity and Health recommends 30 minutes of activity on most, if not all, days of the week.

Controlling stress ultimately comes down to making time to exercise. Physical activity provides an enjoyable and effective way to cope with life's troubles as it promotes lasting strength and empowerment. For more information see www.theeap.com.

Family Geocaching

As kids and now as parents of two young boys ages 12 and 7, my husband and I have always enjoyed a good game of hide and seek. Now that our kids are a little older, we decided to build upon this experience through the world of geocaching.

Geocaching is an outdoor treasure hunting adventure that is played throughout the world using a handheld GPS (Global Positioning System) device. A geocacher will place or hide a container with a “treasure” (also known as a “geocache”) in a spot and mark the position with their GPS receivers. Geocaches are concealed at various points along trails or other locations. The coordinates of the container’s position are then posted on internet sites- the most popular site being www.geocaching.com. Other geocachers then enter the container’s coordinates into their own GPS receivers and seek the container. When found, they sign the logbook, and place the container with a new item (the policy is if you find a treasure- you leave one!) back into its original hiding spot and share their experience and photos online.

We enjoy geocaching because it is an outdoor recreational activity that encourages hiking and biking, and it provides an opportunity for us to teach our kids about the natural environment and historic development of our communities. On our own geocaching adventures we found things close to home that we never knew existed.

If you are looking for an excuse to walk during the lunch hour, there are quite a few caches just within walking distance! For more information visit

http://cacheopedia.com/wiki/geocaching_websites

~ Angela Ellis, Planning Director



At Work?.....Do Chair-Robics!

Set a timer to ring hourly. When it goes off stand up, sit down slowly four times. This will boost circulation and give you a nice stretch, and you’ll be doing 4 squats an hour, or 32 a day. That’s a great way to strengthen your lower body.



Accomplishment Corner



SHAPE News Exclusive Report

Keith Mitchell, Director of Workforce Development and Youth Bureau Director recently lost over 20 pounds in six months using the Weight Watchers program! SHAPE news reporter Ashley Scutt sat down and asked him some questions on how the program has helped him succeed in losing weight:



What made you decide to join Weight Watchers?

A number of staff joined Weight Watchers in the first phase of meetings and were really having a lot of success. I thought I would give it a go to see if the plan would work for me.

What specifically about Weight Watchers helped you?

I think it gave me a better idea, through the tracking and the daily points total, of how much food I needed on a daily basis as opposed to eating till I was full, which is long past the time you should stop. The other important point is learning what you can substitute for high fat foods. Fat-free half and half in coffee tastes just as good and for Weight Watchers purposes it's zero points. It's also good in creamy soups.

What foods if any did you cut out?

I haven't really cut any foods out. There may be low or no fat substitutes in them now but I'm also not a martyr and there is flexibility in the plan for those outings when one might overindulge. The key is portion control; eat what you want just not as much. Restaurants think they are doing us a favor with the large portions but it is really a travesty how those large portions contribute to the overeating epidemic.

How do you stick with it?

This is where Weight Watchers may be the most helpful, because no matter where you go you find others in the program and there is an instant bond between participants and the support from friends, co-workers and family can be very beneficial to meeting weight loss goals. I also think you have to have a real desire to lose weight and take the process seriously and religiously for it to work. It's not easy but when the clothes fit better and there is more of a spring in your step, it's worth it.

Great Job Keith!!



Walking the Dog

Not very long ago, my parents were reaching their 70s. All kinds of health issues started coming up. It was disconcerting to watch these vibrant people fade. I thought about the genes I had inherited. All of them had ended up with rather sedentary lives. I wondered if that would happen to me. What had my life choices been lately? I was energetic and active, but was I healthy? Was going to work every day, keeping up with my children, and a little gardening going to prevent me from becoming frail at 70? I was in shape...wasn't I?

Then two big things happened: we got a new puppy, and I got a big project at work. The puppy had to go out and run. The project made me run. Stress set in.

I decided to start walking. How hard could that be? It would make the dog happy and give me a little alone time out in the fresh air. The first day was great. I went about a mile - I thought. The second day I measured how far I had gone...not even a half mile! I was really out of shape. Those first weeks were hard, and I felt like I was walking through concrete. I stretched before I left home, but it still hurt. I kept walking. I deliberately chose a route that took me away from home so I had to walk back. When it got colder and the snow started, I dressed for the weather and kept going. I started a mantra, "One step, one block, one mile, one walk." The walks got longer. I went out as often as I could, striving for five times each week. I got to one mile, then two, then two and half, and then three. It took months, but I kept at it. The dog LOVED it!

I walked at night, after dinner. It was always dark outside, but it was comforting especially during a light snow when it was quiet and peaceful. I spent my time talking to my dog and reflecting on work, family and friends. I prayed, thanking God for my life, my health and the free will to make a change for the better. It was healthy therapy.

Weeks turned to months, seasons passed, and I kept walking. I felt better, I lost the stress, and I lost some weight. It doesn't hurt any more. It just feels good.

~ Diane Deane, Social Services

WHAT A PAIN!

Did you know that back pain is one of the most common complaints of Livingston County employees and one for which they most often seek medical treatment? It is, and you may well be suffering from back pain now. Even if you aren't, it's good to know what you can do avoid this problem in the future.

Back pain can be mild, moderate or severe. In its worst forms, it can be debilitating. When you have back pain, it's difficult to live your life normally. Therefore, avoiding or treating back pain is very important.

Exercise is one way to avoid or reduce back pain or help you recover faster and prevent re-injury. So long as you don't have acute pain, you may be ready for gentle strengthening exercises for your stomach, back and legs, and perhaps even some stretching exercises. Exercise should always be done with the approval of your doctor who knows best what you can tolerate and what will be beneficial for you.

Over the next few issues of the SHAPE newsletter, we will be including exercises that can be beneficial for those suffering from back pain, as well as for those who want to avoid it. Be sure to look for them beginning with the July issue. In the meantime, talk to your doctor about appropriate exercises for you.

Simple back stretching exercise
(Maybe this works if you're a horse. Otherwise, we don't recommend it.)



PRIDE GOES BEFORE THE FALL

I used to work at a health food store in Philadelphia called Center Foods. The people I worked with were really into healthy eating, and all of us prided ourselves on our willingness to try new health foods. One day I found a food product called Natto. In Japan, Natto is a popular soybean based food that is fermented in bacterium and is often eaten for breakfast. We decided to give it a try. After it was cooked and served, we all stared at the gooey, sticky mass on the plate that smelled like Limburger cheese, and looked at each other grimly as if asking, "Are we really going to taste *THAT*?" Our gaggle of gourmets soon gagged and retched realizing we had finally met our match. While it may be good for you, I don't think Natto will be taking the place of bacon and eggs on the American breakfast menu anytime soon!

Andrew Timm, Social Services

Reminder!

Please send your newsletter contributions to Jackie Small at jsmall@co.livingston.ny.us