

STONE FOREST

Flyer

January 2014

Volume 4, Issue 1

Hello Neighbors

from your newest
BOARD MEMBER

I have yet to receive the gratuitous and some say mandatory hazing of being the new kid on the block. I will do my best to serve you all not just the nine of you that voted for me at the annual meeting...

We moved in to the neighborhood in November of 2006 in Section 4, the section that is sometimes thought to be a part of Bridgestone. My wife Rebecca and I are working on our 13th year of wedded bliss. Our kids attend Kuenhle Elementary and keep us busy with their extracurricular activities

With the Christmas Holidays now behind us I can share with you some news for the New Year.

But first, we have all been battling issues with our nonnative St Augustine grass, brown patch being one of the biggest issues. The board is well aware of how brutal it has been. We appreciate everyone's efforts in what may sometimes seem like a losing battle. The Board has informed Chaparral Management to cease all brown patch related letters for the season. All of our yards should be well on their way to hibernation for the season so the sounds of movers and blowers should be minimal until spring or the next global warning event.

We mentioned in a previous newsletter the addition of street lights on Edgewood Place. Centerpoint has been given the green light to start installation of three new street lights. The Board is also looking at options in improving our neighborhood playground and the equipment. We are meeting with vendors and will keep you all posted on our progress.

May you all have a blessed and safe 2014.
Stephan Hancock
Director at Large

A Focus on Resolutions

Resolve to be a better you

By: Concentra Urgent Care

The New Year is a great time to make healthy lifestyle changes. According to the US Department of Health and Human Services, the most common resolutions focus on losing weight, getting fit, quitting smoking, and reducing stress. These are important themes that can reduce your risk of disease. Here are ways you can achieve your goals this year.

LOSING WEIGHT

A weight loss of five to seven percent of your body weight can improve your health and quality of life. It can also help prevent weight-related health problems, like diabetes.

Changing your eating habits and increasing your physical activity are keys to successful weight loss and help to maintain optimal weight for the rest of your life. Create a plan for healthy eating and increased physical activity, while taking in fewer calories than you use. Your healthy eating plan should include:

- Taking into account foods you like and dislike
- A focus on fresh fruits, vegetables, and whole grains
- Consuming fat-free or low-fat dairy products such as yogurt, cheese, and milk
- Protein sources such as lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts
- Avoiding saturated and trans fats such as animal fat, butter, and hydrogenated oils
- Staying away from foods high in sodium and added sugars

For more information on weight management and improving nutritional practices, visit the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases at www.win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/for_life.htm.

GETTING FIT

Regular physical activity for at least 30 minutes each day, or broken up into several shorter periods of 20, 15, or 10 minutes, can help you

(Continued on Page 2)

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(Continued from Cover)

lose weight, keep it off, and stay fit. It can also improve your energy and mood and lower your risk for heart disease, diabetes, and some cancers. Try some of these physical activities:

- Walking (15-minute miles or 4 miles per hour)
- Biking
- Tennis
- Aerobic exercise classes (step aerobics, kickboxing, dancing)
- Yard work or house cleaning (gardening, raking, mopping, vacuuming)

Taking the first step can be the hardest part. Start slowly, at a level that is comfortable for you and add activity as you go along. Sometimes, it helps to have a friend or activity buddy when you start out. It is recommended that adults get at least two and a half hours of moderate physical activity each week. Strengthening activities, such as pushups, sit-ups, or lifting weights, at least two days per week are also encouraged. For more information on getting fit, visit the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports at <http://fitness.gov/>. Happy New Year from Concentra Urgent Care!



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GOOD NEIGHBORS CAN BE GREAT FOR STRESS LEVELS

Do you live in a neighborhood where you feel safe and connected to others, or do you feel overcrowded, threatened, and otherwise unsafe in your surroundings? This, and other aspects of neighborhood life, can impact both your level of happiness and stress.

Socializing: With our busy schedules, we don't always see friends as often as we'd like. For a bit of socializing that takes only minutes out of your day, it's nice to stop and chat with people for a few minutes on your way out to your car. And the more people you have available for shared social support, the better, generally speaking.

Pooled Resources: I know people in some more-friendly neighborhoods who share dinners, minimizing the effort it takes to cook. Others trade fruit from their trees. A neighbor who borrows a few eggs may come back with a plate of cookies that the eggs helped create. Knowing your neighbors increases everyone's ability to share.

Security: Knowing the people around you can bring a sense of security. If you need something—whether it's a cup of sugar when you're baking cookies, or someone to call the police if they see someone lurking outside your home—it's nice to know you can depend on those around you and they can depend on you.


Home Pride: Knowing the people who live around you provides a strengthened sense of pride in your home and neighborhood.

Coming home just feels nicer. While you may not be able to change the neighborhood in which you live, you can change the experience you have in your own neighborhood by getting more involved with those around you and taking pride in the area in which you live. The following are some ideas and resources that can help you to feel more at home in your neighborhood:

Get Out More: If you live in a generally safe area, I highly recommend taking a morning or evening walk. It's a great stress reliever that also allows you to get to know many of your neighbors, get an understanding of who lives where, and feel more at home in your surroundings.

Smile: It's simple enough, but if you're not in the habit of smiling and giving a friendly hello to the people you encounter in your neighborhood, it's a good habit to start. While not everyone will return the friendliness immediately, it's a quick way to get to know people and build relationships, even if you've lived close for years and haven't really said much to one another.

Talk To Your Elders: The more veteran members of the neighborhood often have the inside scoop on the neighborhood. You may be surprised at how much you can learn if you stop to take the time to talk to the sweet old lady at the end of the block.



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THYROID CONDITIONS ON THE RISE IN THE U.S.

Take this True/False Quiz to Learn More About the Thyroid

JANUARY IS THYROID AWARENESS MONTH

Tired? Sluggish? Unexplained weight gain or weight loss? It could be your children wearing you out, or the natural effects of aging--or it could be a treatable condition caused by the thyroid. Approximately 27 million Americans suffer from thyroid diseases, and the vast majority of them are women.

"We're diagnosing more thyroid disease now than 20 years ago," says Dr. Tira Chaicha-Brom, an endocrinologist with Texas Diabetes and Endocrinology. The thyroid is a small, butterfly-shaped gland at the base of the neck that regulates metabolism. When it's not working properly, the symptoms often mimic other conditions, and thyroid problems can go untreated. Take this True/False quiz now to find out how much you know about the thyroid.

1. *The symptoms of the two main types of thyroid disease are the same. T/F?*

FALSE: The two major types of thyroid disease are an overactive thyroid, called hyperthyroidism, and underactive thyroid, called hypothyroidism.

"If you have an overactive thyroid, you have an increased metabolism," explains Dr. Chaicha-Brom. "You may have heart palpitations, excessive sweating, diarrhea, anxiety, insomnia, and even unexplained weight loss."

The other type of thyroid disease – an underactive thyroid or hypothyroid – causes symptoms including fatigue, dry skin, unexplained weight gain, constipation, and increased sensitivity to cold.

2. *Medication is the main treatment for thyroid disease. T/F?*

TRUE: The main treatment for hypothyroidism is thyroid medication. Levothyroxine, the medication used for hypothyroidism, is the third most commonly prescribed medication in the US. Hyperthyroidism can be treated with

medication, surgery, or radioactive iodine.³ *Thyroid cancer is on the rise in the United States. T/F?*

TRUE: Not only is thyroid disease being diagnosed more often, thyroid cancer is on the rise. The American Cancer Society estimates that 60,000 new thyroid cancer cases will be diagnosed in 2013. The chance of being diagnosed with thyroid cancer is now more than twice what it was in 1990. Some of this is due to increased detection with thyroid ultrasound, which can detect small cancerous thyroid nodules that might not have been found before.

4. *Thyroid surgery is always necessary for thyroid nodules or lumps. T/F?*

FALSE: Thyroid nodules, (thyroid lumps or growths), are common and are often benign or non-cancerous and may not require removal. But nodules should be checked since thyroid nodules can sometimes be cancerous.

"Up to 40 percent of the population will have thyroid nodules at some time, and most are non-cancerous," says Dr. Chaicha-Brom. "The size of the nodule, how it looks on ultrasound, and the patient's risk factors for thyroid cancer all determine how physicians treat the nodule."

HOW DID YOU SCORE?

Don't worry if you didn't know all the answers. Not that many people understand this unusual gland. But it's important to talk to your physician about any troubling symptoms. Not only do patients feel better after treatment, they also can prevent long-term damage to their bodies due to untreated thyroid disease. Obesity, eye problems, heart disease, high/elevated cholesterol levels, and an enlarged and painful thyroid called a goiter may occur without treatment.

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Mood changes triggered by menopause

Because hormones influence mood, perimenopause, or the transition period prior to menopause, can be an emotional time for women.

According to Dr. Britta Ostermeyer, associate professor in the Menninger Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at BCM, perimenopause occurs at the same time as other life changes, such as children moving away for college, leaving behind an "empty nest."

It's important to encourage someone with menopausal mood changes to stay involved, whether it's through work, social activities or exercise. Scheduling an appointment with a primary care physician or OB/GYN can also be helpful.

The most common type of mood disorder that can occur during perimenopause or menopause is depression. The symptoms include:

- A depressed mood that occurs most of the day, nearly every day
- A decrease in interest or pleasure from daily activities
- Weight loss or gain
- Insomnia or hypersomnia
- Feeling restless or fatigued
- Feelings of worthlessness or guilt
- Diminished ability to think or concentrate
- Thoughts of suicide

Ostermeyer recommends seeking help from a health care provider as soon as possible if symptoms of depression occur.

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STONE FOREST FLYER

Wash Your Hands

Reducing Spread of Disease While at Home and Work

By: Concentra Urgent Care

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) say that nearly 90,000 patients die in U.S. hospitals each year due to a preventable disease – many could be avoided if everyone properly washed their hands.

From germs on office equipment to sick colleagues who decided to come into work anyway, people face the same dangers in the workplace. The same simple fact holds true: Washing your hands regularly is an effective way to prevent yourself from catching or spreading a preventable disease or illness.

WHEN TO WASH YOUR HANDS

The CDC recommends washing your hands every time you:

- Prepare or eat food
- Use the restroom
- Tend to someone who is sick; both before and after
- Blow your nose, cough, or sneeze
- Handle garbage
- Treat a cut or wound
- Change a diaper or clean up after children
- Handle an animal or animal waste

HAND WASHING BASICS

The CDC has issued specific guidelines about effective hand washing:

- Wet hands with water
- Use plain bar or liquid soap
- Create a lather by vigorously rubbing hands together for 15-20 seconds—about the amount of time it takes to sing “Happy Birthday” twice
- Be sure to wash palms, back of hands, fingers, and nails (clean nails by gently scratching nails down your opposing soapy palm)
- Rinse off soap under a stream of water

WHAT ELSE CAN YOU DO?

- Focus on hand washing in the lunch and/or break room
- Be careful when using sponges and dish towels. These are ideal sites for bacterial growth. Always wash your hands after using these items.
- Maintain a clean work area; regularly clean any office equipment, especially shared items such as phones and keyboards.
- Remind your colleagues of the importance of hand washing, particularly when you witness someone neglecting to wash his or her hands.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To learn more about how washing hands regularly can help prevent disease, ask your health care provider, or visit the CDC’s creative Web site dedicated to raising awareness of the importance of hand washing at www.henrythehand.com.



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