

Starting Nov. 1, men with the Laramie General Motors Auto Center and Laramie Junior High School started 30 days of growing their beards. Often called "Movember," the promotion was part of the Wyoming Comprehensive Cancer Control Consortium and promotes cancer awareness. At the end of November, the money earned through the promotion stayed local. According to a news release, the Prostate Cancer Foundation received \$750, the Meredith and Jeannie Ray Cancer Center at Ivinson Memorial Hospital received \$500, and \$300 went to an employee at the auto center who was battling cancer.

HEALTH BRIEFS



Albany County Public Health to offer flu shots

Flu shots are available at Albany County Public Health's office, 609 S. Second St., according to a news release. Shots will be available for \$30 or \$15 for uninsured children, the release states.

Public Health can bill Medicare (Part B), Medicaid, Cigna and Kidcare CHIP.

Hours are 7:30-11:30 a.m. and 1-4:30 p.m. Mondays-Fridays as long as vaccines are available. Call 721-2561 for more information.

UW to offer free internet programs focusing on health

"The 2015 Geriatric Health Internet Series" is a series of free internet programs focusing on health care to individuals with Alzheimer's disease and their caregivers, according to a new release. The program is set to be offered from 5-6:30 p.m. every Tuesday through March 10 at the University of Wyoming in Room 427.

The Wyoming Geriatric Education Center (WyGEC), located at UW, is partnering with the Northwest Geriatric Education Center for the weekly presentations. Presenters are nationally and regionally recognized faculty from the University of Washington.

The series is sponsored by WyGEC, the UW Family Medicine Residency at Casper and the Cheyenne Regional Medical Center. Contact the WyGEC office at 766-2829 or wygrec@uwyo.edu for more information.

The rest of the series continues as follows: **JAN. 27:** After the Diagnosis: Maintaining Quality of Life and Coping with Early Stage Issues. **FEB. 3:** Middle and Later Stages: Supporting Caregivers and Coping with Challenging Behaviors.

FEB. 10: Dementia: End of Life Symptom Management.

FEB. 17: Sleep and Dementia.

FEB. 24: Building on Family Dynamics in Coping with Dementia.

MARCH 3: Caring for the Alzheimer's Caregiver. **MARCH 10:** Ethical Dilemmas in the Care of Older Patients with Cognitive Impairment.

ACUPUNCTURE

Group offers free acupuncture clinics at Peak Wellness Center

By **CHILTON TIPPIN**
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Once or twice a week, Mike Garrett gets a few needles in each ear and goes in his mind to his favorite place on Earth.

"I go sit on the banks of Libby Creek," the Laramie resident said. "I've got one particular spot, and I watch the water. I can get myself so I can hear the water. I've been taught to put my worries on a twig or a leaf. Allow those to float by on the stream. Just let them float."

Sitting in the acupuncture clinic Friday, Garrett wore overalls, a button-down shirt and jeans. He closed his eyes for half an hour, listened to the room's trickling fish tank, the ambient seconds tick by on the clock.

By his own admission, Garrett was initially dubious about the treatment. What could tiny needles possibly do for his stress?

"I'd heard about acupuncture," he said. "I wasn't afraid of it, but I was very skeptical. I'm kind of old school."

Nowadays, however — after having taken the treatment for about six months — it's difficult for him to imagine living without it.

"It really frees things up," he said. "I can literally feel stress leaving my body."

Garrett is one of several residents who take free acupuncture treatments, offered from 11-noon Friday at Laramie Peak Wellness Center, 1263 N. 15th St., and from 10-11 Saturday at Laramie Fire Station No. 2, 1558 N. 23rd St., in the community rooms.

Health providers trained in National Acupuncture Detoxification Association protocols offer the treatment to any Laramie residents who care to drop in.

NADA also offers local trainings to teach people how to administer the NADA protocol, which consists of inserting needles into specific points in patients' ears, said Sara Bursac, the newly appointed NADA executive director in Laramie.

The next training is scheduled for Feb. 6-8 at Peak Wellness.

Call 460-2771 for more information on the clinics or trainings.

Those who get the treatment report a



Connor Novotny steadies his head as National Acupuncture Detoxification Association Executive Director Sara Bursac places three acupuncture needles inside his ear during Peak Wellness Center's free stress clinic Thursday. JEREMY MARTIN/Boomerang photographer

variety of benefits, Bursac said, including better sleep, kicking bad habits, higher motivation and stress relief.

The treatment consists of anywhere from one to five needles in each ear, depending on the patient's comfort level, she said. Residents can also elect to trigger the points with magnetic beads instead of needles.

Each point targets particular functions of the patient's mind and body.

For example, one needle is "related to disruption in both sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems," according to a January article published in the Journal of Nursing.

Another point, called the ShenMen, regulates "excitation inhibition of the cerebral cortex and can produce sedation."

Often, the NADA Protocol is used to help treat those fighting addictions, Bursac said.

"Research and experience have found that the protocol helps reduce cravings for drugs and alcohol, especially right in the beginning of recovery," she said.

The treatment also allays withdrawal symptoms, Bursac added, and has numerous other benefits.

Shiloh Bayne, NADA membership coordinator, said acupuncture can help reduce cravings for cigarettes and quell

anxieties for those suffering from post traumatic stress disorder.

Gary Engen, Peak Wellness therapist and acu-detox provider, said several patients report benefits from the magnetic bead therapy as well.

"One patient said it brought her anxiety down to where it was manageable," he said. "She could tell within 40 minutes of when one came out. She would start to feel her anxiety rise again."

Resident Alissa Schwartz said the needles feel like "tiny pinches" when inserted in the ear.

The treatments have helped engender a relaxed state in Schwartz, she said. She feels less anxious. She has more energy.

Much of the credit goes to the needles, Schwartz said, but she doesn't discredit the meditative aspects of the treatment as well.

"The idea is to feel the energy going through your body and just really being able to sit with yourself without having to do something — without having to speak, without having to be entertained," she said.

"Just being with 'you.' Sometimes that's tough, because we don't do that in our culture. We don't take time to just sit, reflect on what's going on inside your body, what's going on in your thoughts."

HEALTH COLUMN

Setting health and fitness goals



RACHEL CARR
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The start of the New Year is a great time to develop or re-work a plan for your physical fitness. The most important part is figuring out why you want to become more fit. It sounds simple but it's actually a critical piece of your success.

If weight loss is your goal you could have a slightly different plan than someone whose goal is to build strength or endurance. Once you know what you want it becomes much easier to determine what you need to do to achieve it. If re-working last year's goal(s) is in order, now is the time to look back on what worked, what didn't and what you can do in 2015 to achieve better results.

SET LONG-TERM GOALS
Be specific. Write out exactly what you want. If weight loss is your goal; how much? If getting stronger is your goal, how are you going to do it? If you want to improve on a specific skill such

Exercise is good for everybody

Exercise isn't just for athletes. It's for you. It's for everyone. It help people boost energy, get fit, lose weight and even sleep better. A few minutes a day is all it takes. Combine both strength and aerobic focused work for efficiency. Follow the "FIT" formula to set a plan and keep focused:

"F" for Frequency: Or how many times a week you exercise. Build strength and endurance working out 3-5 times per week.

"I" for Intensity: Or how hard you work during your exercise session. A workout should challenge you, raise heart rate and increase body temperature.

"T" for Time: Workout times might vary by intensity level. Mix in longer and shorter duration workouts with both strength and aerobic components to get the most out of your time and effort.

as biking, skiing, swimming, running, etc.; what precisely are you going to do to achieve the desired outcome? Knowing what you want in the long term will help you set up a program to achieve your goals and provide the motivation to get there.

SET WORKING GOALS
If your long term goal is to lose 20 pounds, set short term goals as smaller steps to get there.

These smaller steps should specify what, how much, when and how often you will do the things that will get you closer to your long-term goal.

For example, a smaller step might be to attend an exercise class three times a week after work for a minimum of four weeks. Each time you attend, you've taken one step closer to your goal. If your goal is to increase how much weight you can lift, your steps will revolve around progressively increasing your weight lifted until you build up to your desired amount.

KEEP TRACK
The best way to remain committed to your plan is to record what you're doing. Track your accomplishments,

failures, trials and tribulations. They're all important for seeing the bigger picture. Write down specifics of what, when, where and for how long you worked out. Record comments about how you felt before and after. Was eating lunch before the workout a good idea? Did the late night out make it challenging or impossible to get out of bed the next morning? Keep notes about your progress and use the information as motivation to stay the course or change tactics.

ACHIEVING YOUR GOAL
Long-term goals can be easy to lose track of. Setting shorter term, working goals and using the steps to get there will help keep your goals in sight. By writing down exactly what you want, setting well planned smaller steps, you'll find what once seemed impossible is the inevitable successful result of a series of hard earned achievements — ones you planned for and executed.

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