Myths about senior falls don't stand up

Don't let myths about falls keep you from seeking help

By Cheryl Batterman
North/Eastside Senior Coalition

Unfortunately, 35-40 percent of people age 65 and over who live in their own homes fall each year. Senior adults who fall once are likely to fall again within a year. Of those who suffer serious injuries in a fall, 40 percent end life in a nursing home.

"Falling is one of the most unexpected things that can happen to a person, especially as they age. I didn't think my fall was significant and didn't seek treatment until my husband insisted. It turned out I needed immediate treatment." - Dr. Virginia Henderson, speaker at Safe Communities Falls Prevention Summit

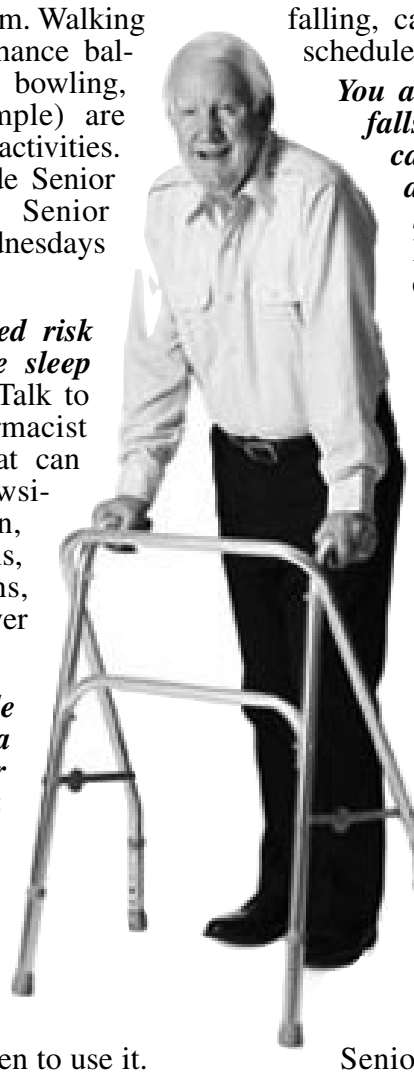
The good news is—falls are preventable! Seeking help from your doctor about how to avoid falling is the best way for a senior adult to avoid injuries. Staff at North/Eastside Senior Coalition is committed to helping you stay independent, so call us if you are concerned about falling. Don't let these following myths keep you from getting the help you need!

Falling is just a part of aging. There is nothing you can do about it. You just have to accept it. **FALSE**. Falls can be prevented! Ask your doctor about how to avoid falls and call the North/Eastside Senior Coalition (243-5252) about programs that can help.

Good lighting in the home can help prevent a fall. **TRUE**.

It is possible to fall so you don't get hurt. **FALSE**. Don't count on it! There are truly effective ways to prevent injuries from falls–worrying about how to fall "correctly" isn't one of them.

Certain types of exercise can help prevent a fall. **TRUE**. Regular activity is key to falls prevention, but talk to your doctor before starting in on a new program. Walking and exercises that enhance balance (Tai Chi, dance, bowling, ping pong, for example) are good falls prevention activities. Join the North/Eastside Senior Coalition's FREE Senior Yogacise Class on Wednesdays at 10:30 am as a start.



You are at increased risk for a fall if you use sleep medications. **TRUE**. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about medications that can cause dizziness, drowsiness and confusion, such as sleeping pills, allergy medications, antidepressants and over the counter sleep aids.

If you have trouble with balance, using a cane or a walker should help prevent a fall. **TRUE**. Assistive devices (walkers, canes) can be beneficial if fitted by a physical therapist and the person using the device correctly trained in how and when to use it.

The best kind of shoes for falls prevention is thick-soled sneakers with deep tread so you don't slip. **FALSE**. Indoors–tie or Velcro, smooth, thin soles are desirable; avoid bare feet or slippers. Outdoors–find a good walking shoe with traction; obtain shoes with larger toe box if need.

You are at higher risk for a fall when you are feeling sick or have just come out of the hospital. **TRUE**. People just released from the hospital or recovering from an illness are a higher risk of falling due to dehydration, muscle weakness, poor nutrition, and/or other causes that arise from illness.

Paying more attention and being careful should help prevent a fall. **TRUE**. But fear of falling is an indication you may be at risk for falls. If you're concerned about falling, call your doctor to schedule an appointment.

You are not at risk for falls if you have a cataract in one eye and see fine out of the other. **FALSE**. Ask your doctor and seek treatment for cataracts. In addition, they may recommend replacing bifocals/multifocals with single vision lenses, especially if you are tripping. Regular eye exams and following advice you receive from your optometrist / ophthalmologist is important if you want to avoid falling.

The North/Eastside Senior Coalition staff can help you reduce your chances of falling and help you stay healthy and at home. We can arrange home safety checks, installing grab bars in your home, and help connect you with a health care provider if you need one.

You can take action to prevent falls and to remain independent. For more information about how to prevent falls, visit www.safercommunity.net or call us at the North/Eastside Senior Coalition (243-5252). You can also call the Falls Prevention Helpline at United Way 2-1-1 for help.

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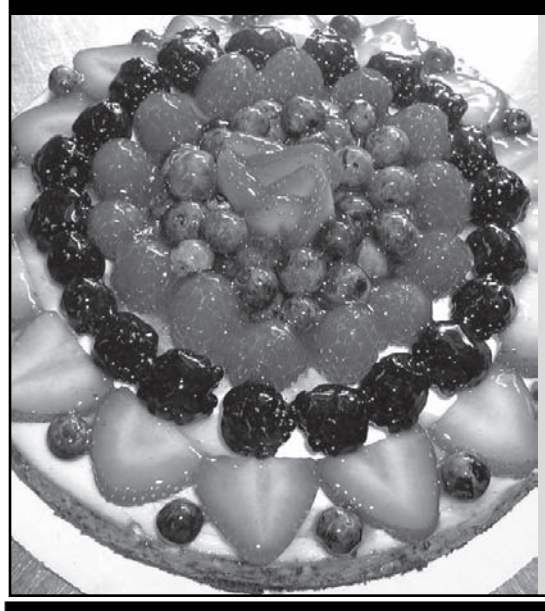

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Scouts that mush together, grow together

By Wally Meyer

On Feb. 2, members of Boy Scout Troop 23 participated in the Glacier's Edge Council's Klondike Derby. Over 500 Scouts and Scouters from southern Wisconsin converged on Camp Indian Trails in Janesville for a day of racing, fire building, first aid skills, sawing and pioneering. The day was accompanied by a picturesque all-day snow.

The Boy Scouts offer young adults the opportunity to learn camping knowledge, leadership, citizenship, nature and other important life-long skills. If you are in the fifth grade or at least 11 years old, the Scouts may be for you. Scout Troop 23 usually meets on Thursdays at St. Peter Catholic Church. If you are interested in learning more, contact Scoutmaster Wally Meyer at 246-8501.

Photo provided by Wally Meyer

Scouts from Troop 23 pull their sled in the Klondike Derby race: *Ian Murkve at the back, D.J. Harris, Bryce Meyer, Tanner Weinmann (obscured) and Branden Kruse in front.*

HAPPY 15TH BIRTHDAY TO THE NORTHSIDE PLANNING COUNCIL!!

(SEE PAGE 3)

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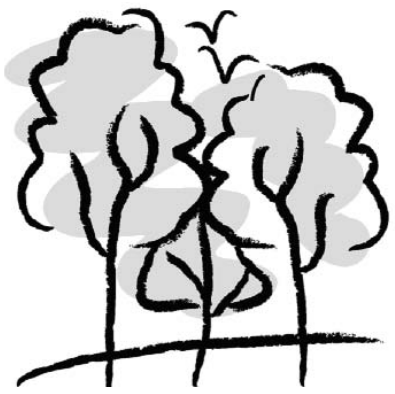

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EAST HIGH SCHOOL

From
ALAN HARRIS

EAST HIGH PRINCIPAL

Three Nights in March

Life at East is very good. Three successive evenings, March 6, 7 and 8 were a celebration of life at East High. It began with the bi-annual Taste of East event on Thursday evening, included a visit by Dan Nerad, the next superintendent, at the East Jazz fundraiser and concluded on Saturday night with the East On Ice athletic fundraiser. The life of a high school goes well beyond the classroom, to the community whose support of student endeavors is essential to success. These three events embody that support.

A Taste of East is a celebration of the diversity that is a strength of the school. Initiated in years past by long time Assistant Principal Lee Thomas, this event in the school cafeteria features food from diverse cultures as well as dance, music and poetry readings. We are grateful to Maria Avila and Brenda Ross for their leadership in coordinating this year's event. More than 300 students, teachers, parents and community members enjoyed food and culture while supporting several East High club activities. More important than the money raised was the sense of community and affirmation of diversity as a true strength in the school, that this night embraced.

The East Jazz dinner and fundraiser has become a highlight on the annual calendar. This event symbolizes the power of the community on the East Side of Madison. Organized by East High band parents this event includes dinner, terrific music from local musicians, silent auction items, raffles and then the main attraction, the East High Jazz Band. Students, parents and community members crowd the dance floor together enjoying the music of East High students under the direction of Dr. Scott Eckel. It is a celebration that just happens to raise much-needed funds for the East High music program.

When the Jazz dinner had to be moved up to March, there was some concern about having two significant fundraisers on the same weekend. Attendance and energy at the East On Ice fundraiser for athletics was an affirmation that the East High community is proud to support student programs. The brainchild of East High parents on the Athletic Boosters, this inaugural event was a real success. Again, it was more than a chance to raise funds for athletic programs. It was a celebration and statement of the pride that exists on the East Side of Madison.

In the end more than $30,000 were raised for East High students by the community over three nights. These funds are essential for the type of co-curricular activities that are available for students. All three events symbolize the type of strong community support that exists for East High School. As principal, I am extremely grateful to the parents and community members, many who don't have students at East High, who support the school with their time energy and financial resources.

When I am asked about East Side Pride and what it means, I tell people about three nights in March. It is symbolic of the pride the in this community for the students of East High School.

East High students bring home the gold!

Congratulations to East High School students Long Her and Long Thao for winning a gold medal (first place) in the Badger State Games High School Badminton Tournament held on Feb. 3, at Keva Sports Center in Middleton.

Go Purgolders!

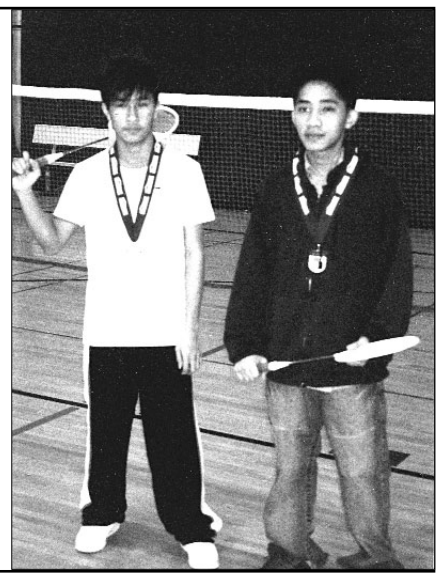

Photo provided by Anita Palmer

East Side Pride - Own It!

"Green" scholarships for $500 offered

High school seniors who have a "growing interest" in the future are invited to apply for a $500 scholarship offered by the Madison District of the Wisconsin Garden Club Federation (WGCF). The scholarship is available to students in Sun Prairie, Verona, Madison (including Northside students) and Mt. Horeb, the cities in which the Madison District clubs are located.

Applicants should be planning to pursue a degree in a horticulture-related field of study such as landscape design, botany, conservation, forestry or environmental studies.

WGCF is the largest volunteer gardening organization in the state. It was founded in 1928 to stimulate the knowledge of gardening the protection of natural resources, and the promotion of civic beautification.

Further information about the scholarship can be obtained by contacting high school administrators or Judith Nieder-Berger, Madison District scholarship chair, at 609-847-7057.

Ninth Annual Pi Mile on May 17 raises funds for EHS math

By Cynthia Chin

There's Still Time to Sign Up! Our Ninth Annual Pi Mile will take place at Warner Park on May 17 with registration at 9 am and the Run/Walk beginning at 10 am. Support the East math community, have a nice walk or run, and get a t-shirt plus pie. For advance registration information, contact Pat Meloy (*pmeloy@madison.k12.wi.us* or 204-1540).

The East High Engineering Club, NSBE Jr., would like to acknowledge some local sponsors for their assistance in acquiring materials and reducing travel costs for a robotics competition and national engineering conference trip during Spring Break. Applied Technology and Engineering instructor Richard Lyons accompanied the students to Florida, along with several members of the club's UW-Madison student affiliate, the National Society of Black Engineers-Wisconsin Chapter. They will be discussing their experience with technology, science, and math classes throughout the school later this year. In addition to our many bake sale customers, we would like to extend special thanks to the following:

American Family Insurance (club start-up materials, robot kit & instruction manuals), Madison Gas & Electric (travel assistance), Madison East Class of '57 (conference registrations, and a future local field trip).

Engineers from Trek Bicycles, Synchrotron Radiation Center, and EcoEnergy have also offered to arrange visits or presentations for East High students.

As of press time, the math department is still seeking guest speakers from the community to talk about how mathematics is used throughout the Madison area. We have several openings in our "Math Week" schedule, May 19-23, especially for midday and afternoon presentation times. Artistic, social and political applications are of interest, as well as technical and business uses. Please contact Cynthia Chin (*cchin@madison.k12.wi.us* or 204-1534) if you are interested in participating.

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Know Your Purgolder: Andrew Rothman

Naturalist with local roots branches out in service to Costa Rica

By Jeanette Riechers
East High Good News

Andrew Rothman, East class of 1995, says a college trip to Costa Rica changed his life by inspiring his passion for rainforest preservation. Today, as a Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources naturalist, Rothman develops and conducts environmental education programs at Horicon Marsh. He also works countless hours with the Rainforest Biodiversity Group, a nonprofit organization he founded to protect the Costa Rican rainforest, and as U.S. Director of the Costa Rican Bird Route, developing the country's first birding trail.

His youth: My family's cabin near Minoqua got me interested in nature. My grandma was a birdwatcher, but I didn't become interested in birds until college.

At East: I mostly liked art and sports. As a freshman, I barely made the hockey team under Coach Bob Suter, but I ended the year as the #2 defenseman and was the first freshman ever to win the "hardest working player" award. We went to state my sophomore year, and I was Captain my last two years. I also played volleyball. We went to state my senior year.

In college: As a freshman at UW-Stevens Point, I went to Costa Rica. That changed my life by sparking my interest in the rainforest, environmental education and ethics. I graduated in wildlife and biology.

Rainforest Biodiversity Group: Our goal is to provide Costa Rican landowners with economic benefits for protecting rainforest habitat to preserve endangered tropical birds and birds that fly south for the winter – including nearly 100 species of birds found in Wisconsin. I met a landowner who wanted to buy land for preservation, and I started the group to help him. At first I thought we'd develop a single private reserve where people could see endangered species, but the project has evolved and we now work with many landowners. Want to learn more, write to *info@rainforestbiodiversity.com*.

Rothman (right) travels with a friend.

Costa Rican Bird Route: We're developing the country's first bird and wildlife observation route to help tourists view many species in their natural habitat and to create eco-tourism dollars that encourage landowners to sustain their habitat. Do you want to go to Costa Rica? The route opens this year, and we're planning trips now! More information available at *www.costaricanbirdroute.com.*

Great Green Macaw Project: This endangered parrot species is, biologically, an indicator of rainforest health. Where macaws remain, the forest is relatively healthy. Protecting their habitat will help thousands of other creatures in the same habitat, so we work to develop conservation initiatives to protect the macaw population. More information available at *www.greatgreenmacaw.org*.

Photos by Andrew Rothman

Obstacles: Two main obstacles are ensuring that landowners honor their commitments to rainforest preservation and funding. With money to hire even one fulltime staff, we could do much more community outreach, education, monitoring, training guides and marketing. And it is sometimes challenging to maintain communication and leadership from Wisconsin.

Advice for East students:

1. Know when to sit back, listen and learn.
2. Hard work pays off. The best DJ digs in the crates the deepest, and athletes who excel practice hard.
3. Travel. There's no bigger eye-opener.
4. Love the earth, and it will love you back.

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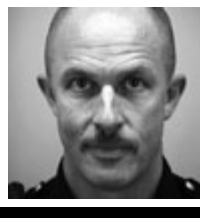
POLICE

From
Captain Cam McLay



NORTH DISTRICT POLICE

Greetings! 2008 has already been both busy and productive for the North Police District.

As many of you are well aware, we experienced a rash of stolen autos. The common thread in every case was that the cars were stolen when the owner /operator left the vehicle running and unoccupied. In response to this, I sent out a Reverse 911 call to all residents in the South/West half of the North police district with a recorded message alerting the public to this trend, and urging that citizens exercise caution and avoid this practice to prevent being victimized.

While I was doing this, our Patrol officers were catching stolen cars as they were being operated and our detectives were following up on unresolved cases. After several arrests, the suspects were identified and held accountable. This trend appears to have been resolved, for the time being.

There are similar efforts underway to deal with the string of burglaries that is currently plaguing all of Dane County. There have been a few key arrests that have helped somewhat, however this disturbing crime trends continues. A special Burglary Task Force has been created to lead a department-wide effort to address this issue. Within the MPD, detectives and patrol personnel are sharing information and working together to attack this problem.

Several good on-site arrests by our patrol officers have resulted from stepped up patrols around the areas affected by these burglaries. I am pleased and proud of the work our officers are doing to deal with criminal behaviors that disrupt the community.

As I indicated in last month's newsletter, improved responsiveness to community issues remains my top focus for 2008. We held a District In-service training day last month, during which all personnel in the district met together. During that session, we established our district goals for the year, and talked about how best to coordinate or efforts in order to achieve this important goal.

Take care and be safe.

Capt. McLay can be reached at cmclay@cityofmadison.com or by calling the North District Police District at 243-5258.

Captain McLay plans to meet with interested Northside neighborhood associations. Invite him to an upcoming meeting!

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

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From
SATYA RHODES-CONWAY

DISTRICT 12 ALDERPERSON

Dear Neighbors,

Congratulations on surviving the winter! We may still see some cold days, but we've turned the corner into spring. Here are a few things that are "popping up":

Captain McLay and I will be visiting a neighborhood association meeting near you in April and May to talk about the Community Policing Team, neighborhood safety, and how we can all work together for stronger neighborhoods I hope you'll join us!

Just as spring follows winter, summer – better known as construction season – follows spring. You should already be seeing the first signs of this out on the streets – patching potholes. If you've got a "favorite" pothole that needs filling, please call the Pothole Patrol at 246-4532 or go online at *www.cityofmadison.com/transportation/potholepatrol*.

Quite a few streets around the city are scheduled for some more intensive attention this summer. Gorham Street, from North Baldwin Street to North Livingston Street, is going to be closed or partially closed, so you'll want to think about alternate routes. After Rhythm and Booms, Sherman Avenue from Windom Way south to the railroad tracks will be resurfaced. One lane each way will remain open, and access to all the businesses will be maintained. If you'd like more information about this project or to be added to an email list for updates, contact me (see below). We'll also be holding a series of meetings on the results of the Northside Walking Audit to discuss ways to improve pedestrian and traffic safety on several streets.

Other things to keep an eye on include the Northside Plan update, the market study, the City's economic development plan, long-term recommendations for Metro, and the update of the Zoning Code.

Closer to home, this morning I saw the first tips of my tulips pushing through the mulch. Think Spring!

Ald. Rhodes-Conway can be reached at 242-4426 or district12@cityofmadison.com

From
DAVE CIESLEWICZ

MAYOR OF MADISON

Madison Celebrates Earth Day with Commitment to Sustainability

April is the month when we celebrate Earth Day, so it seemed like a good time to provide an update on the many city environmental initiatives that are underway.

In 2003, Madison took a pledge to reduce its contribution to global warming pollution. We were the fifth city in the nation to take this pledge, which was organized by the mayor of Seattle in the absence of meaningful action from the federal government.

To make good on that pledge, I created the Energy Task Force, which released the "Building a Green Capitol City" plan. One of its recommendations was to have the City purchase 10 percent of City electrical energy from renewable sources by 2006, and 20 percent by 2010. We are on our way to meeting this goal with approximately 13 percent of our total electrical energy coming from renewable sources in 2008.

You can also do your part in the fight against global change by signing up with the Mpowering Madison Campaign (*www.mpoweringmadison.com*), a public-private partnership to reduce city government's global warming emissions (CO_2) by 15,000 tons over the next five years, and emissions from the community as a whole by 100,000 tons.

Sustainability is key to our efforts. Madison is a leader in implementing the Natural Step program, which makes sustainability a part of everything city government does. Natural Step projects currently underway focus on everything from solar energy to "green" purchasing policies to making our fleet of city vehicles more energy efficient.

To coordinate these efforts and others like them, I created a Sustainable Design and Energy Committee, and a new Facilities and Sustainability Manager position in city government. This gives us significant resources to make our work as effective as possible.

Happy Earth Day!

Mayor Cieslewicz can be reached at *mayor@cityofmadison.com* or *266-4611.*

From
MICHAEL SCHUMACHER

DISTRICT 18 ALDERPERSON

Economic Development

If the City's new 3-5 year economic development plan is to inspire us to action, then we need a bolder vision and more concrete goals and economic policies for Northside businesses. The plan's advocacy for more high-end jobs is not enough.

We need to encourage business development to serve residents, promote stable employment, protect the natural environment, and increase social equity. And we need to understand that while government has an important role in setting the tone, let's not forget that unless business is ready, willing and able to invest in a community, economic growth simply will not occur, regardless of how much government spends.

Therefore, we need to ask ourselves how government can effectively collaborate with businesses. I have learned that when we address the following five dimensions results happen:

Vision. Imagine the two Northside retail centers being revitalized by their owners into integrated town centers comprised of retail, offices, entertainment, and community space.

Skills. Imagine local educational institutions forming a consortium to establish a comprehensive life skills and job training program/center for Northsiders.

Resources. Imagine the City investing in a City Manager with grant writing expertise to connect with state and national resources.

Incentives. Imagine using Tax Incremental Financing to reward successful investors instead of offering TIF as corporate welfare to the squeaky wheel. Or imagine establishing our own micro-lending operations to support businesses.

Action plans and goals. Imagine establishing merit criteria as a roadmap and holding ourselves accountable, reinforcing what works, and abandoning what doesn't. This is perhaps a novel approach in Madison.

Economic development begins with government establishing community-based outcomes and continues with businesses creating jobs and wealth that sustain our economic, natural, and social needs in our community.

The good news is that we have many Northside businesses, including alders, willing to take on the challenges.

Ald. Schumacher can be reached at 242-1779 or district18@cityofmadison.com

Upcoming Common Council Meetings:

Apr. 8 ~ Apr. 22 ~ May 6 ~ May 20 ~ Jun 3

Tuesdays at 6:30 pm in Rm. 201 at the City-County Bldg. 210 MLKJr. Blvd.

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