

Smelter City Seniors

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JANUARY 2025

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The Anaconda
Leader

'Strong People': Class helps seniors stay active

JAMES S. ROSIEN
EDITOR

When Barb Andreozzi was the Montana State University Extension Agent for Anaconda-Deer Lodge County, she wore a lot of different hats, and after retiring about a decade ago she found other groups and individuals in town that picked up where she left off. Except for one thing: The Strong Women/Strong People fitness program she'd been offering for years at Goosetown Health Club in Anaconda.

So, she agreed to keep running it even in retirement, and 10 years later it continues to be as successful as it's ever been in keeping older age people, particularly women (though it is open to men as well), healthy and strong.

"When I retired, I really looked at where there was a void, what



The "Strong People" class gathers at Goosetown Health Club before starting their workout. Leader photo: James S. Rosien

I could focus on volunteering where I was most needed. I made sure my projects as an MSU Extension Agent would continue

with partners already helping with those projects," Andreozzi said. "What I could never find, though, is someone who would volunteer to take over the then-Strong Women Program [now Strong Women/Strong People or just Strong People]. It made such a difference in the participants' lives that I knew I had to keep the program going and focus on the needs of 60-plus-year olds."

"So I couldn't not do it," she said as the students in her advanced class – specifically the Level 3 Strong People Booster Program – prepared for the morning's activities.

Andreozzi explained the origin and principles behind the

program. It began as the result of medical tests showing that there were medications that caused strong reactions against women's bone density, so via research from Tufts University the Strong Women program was developed as a way to improve bone density as well as muscle strength in middle-aged and older women.

In particular, the research found that if a person keeps doing the same exercise over and over again, the body gets accustomed to it and so it has diminishing returns.

"So you have to keep changing your routine," Andreozzi said.

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Getting A 'Strong People' Workout



Top left: The Strong People class starts with some stretching exercises. **Top right:** Barb Andreozzi demonstrates one of those stretches. **Middle left:** The class progresses to stretching with a single weight. **Above right:** Then they add a second weight to their stretching routine. **Left:** They then proceed to the lifting portion of their exercise. Leader photos: James S. Rosien

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That's where having an instructor to lead the program is important, not only to demonstrate the techniques but to change things up as they go so the body doesn't get too used to any one thing.

"We are so blessed to have her here and doing this with us," said Becky Ellis, one of her Level 3 students.

Andreozzi though noted that with her advanced class, on days when she's gone they still run the class and divide up the duties between them.

She also said that in her years teaching the class, several long-time members had shown remarkable improvement.

"When they started, they had a hard time with stairs," she said. "They had a hard time with weight loss."

Now they're in that advanced class, able to do all that and more.

And going through the written materials on the program provided by Tufts, it's not hard to see why. In addition to the exercises, which start with a longer warm-up of stretches and squats, then proceeding to biceps curls, overhead presses, triceps workouts and presses both from a seated and horizontal positions and a series of cool-down stretches, the program also offers a wide range of nutritional tips that detail how each vegetable, fruit, fiber source, grain and other food source contributes to one's health.

It also emphasizes the importance of hydration,

especially for preventing chronic illnesses. Andreozzi's own notes show that hydration is the number one thing they talk about at their first meeting. She stated that they drink two cups of water the morning before class, and take water sips both during and after class as well.

It may seem like a lot, but the benefits are many and proven: The program has shown it helps with arthritis relief, with restoring balance and reducing falls, strengthening bone, weight maintenance, improved glucose control, improving one's overall state of mind, sleep improvement, heart health and brain function.

On that last point, Andreozzi pointed to a study that showed how a couple of exercises done once or twice a week over the course of 12 months showed that among women ages 65 to 75, that this produced the best results for memory and other cognitive functions. That, she said, is what Strong People is all about.

"This program has kept me young," Andreozzi said. "Most of the people in here are in their 70s, so you're never too old."

So while many of her students have been with her for years, there are brand-new people as well, and Andreozzi is hoping to start a Level 1 - Strong People Stay Young class in March or April of this year.

Once Level 1 is completed, students move up to Level 2 - Strong People Strong Bones. Then the Level 3 Strong People Booster Program is open to people who have completed the first two levels. Its main purpose is to keep the students' efforts from those first two levels ongoing and prevent the improvements from being lost.

And though Andreozzi is retired, the program continues to operate under MSU Extension, so if you're interested in signing up check in with the Extension Office on the third floor of the ADLC Courthouse or call (406) 563-4035.





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Class of ‘74 teammates share memories of girls’ state basketball title

JAMES S. ROSIEN
EDITOR

As January rolls into February and the winter chill sets in, that’s the time when high school basketball heats up and thoughts start turning to the playoffs. The Copperheads and Lady Copperheads both advanced to state last year, and there’s hope that will be the case again, especially for the girls who have put together a strong season thus far and have most of their remaining games at home.

Yet with that in mind, it’s fitting to look back at the pioneering Lady Copperheads of yesteryear who built the foundation of the program and in the 1973-74 school year, just the second season of the

team’s existence, they won the state championship.

This past summer, the Anaconda High School Class of ‘74 celebrated their 50-year class reunion, and through that event the Anaconda Leader was able to get in contact with two members of that state title-winning team, Karen Kracher Dykstra and Jill Bowman, who shared the Lady Copperheads’ origin story – and how they quickly climbed to the top of the competition.

“When we were juniors, that was the first year the MHSA [Montana High School Association] sanctioned state girls’ basketball championship tournaments,” Dykstra said. “It was the 1972-73

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Community Nursing Home of Anaconda	563-8417
Court House Information	563-4000
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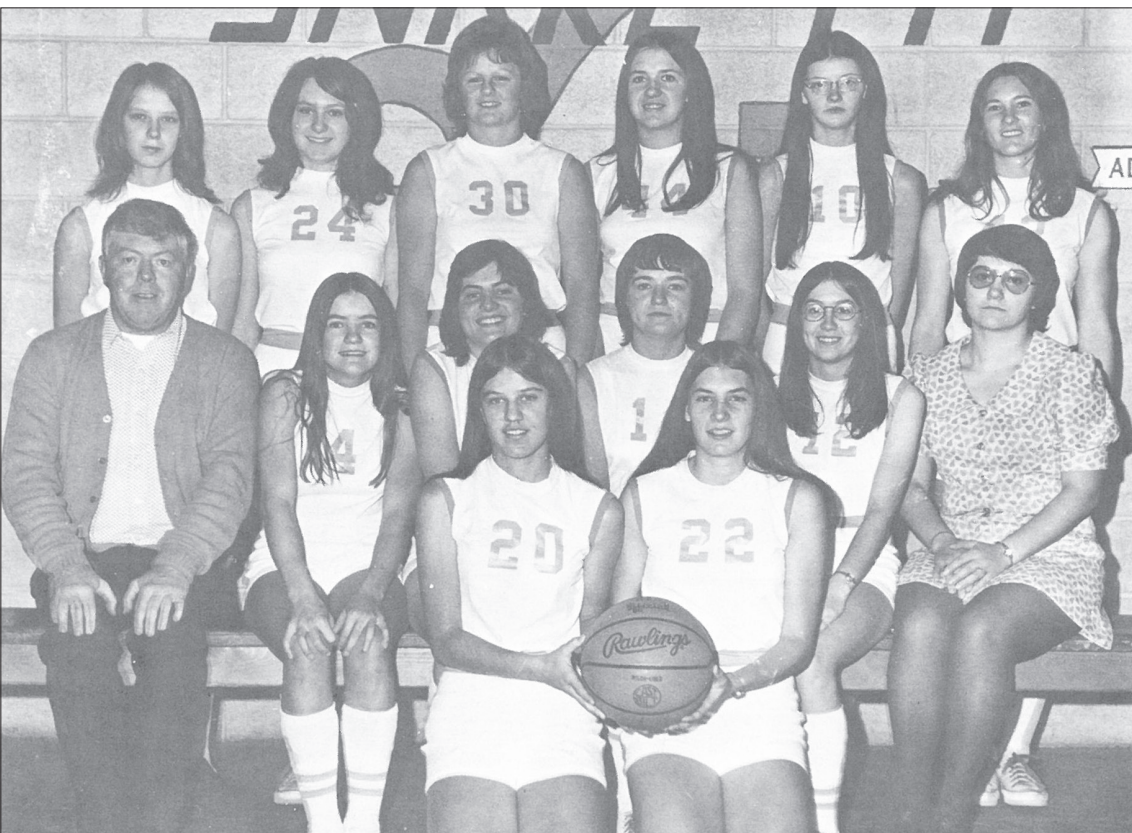
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Left: The “Copper A’s, Our State Champions” photo from the Anaconda High School Class of 1974 yearbook shows the Lady Copperheads state title-winning basketball team: Susan Hansen, front left, and Laurie Horsfall; Coach Menahan, middle left, Penny Hill, Abby Laughlin, Patty Hill, Karen Walker, Mgr. Vicky Chambers, and Sheila Sullivan, back left, Karen Johnson, Peggy Smith, Leni Estes, Dannette Davis and Jill Bowman. Photo courtesy of Ray Haffey.

Right: Members of the team gather with their trophy and the net they cut down after winning state. Photo courtesy of Karen Kracher Dykstra.



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season. Girls basketball back then was played in the fall.

We took third that year.”

“We only lost three times in that first season,” said Bowman. “Seeley Swan beat us, then we lost to Deer Lodge, and then Glendive at state.”

Then, in their senior year – which was also the year that AHS and Anaconda Central High School merged and the senior class grew by nearly 100 students – they put together a dominant season that culminated in their defeating rival school

Deer Lodge to win the state championship.

“Deer Lodge was our big rival,” Jill Bowman explained. “They were the one team that could beat us.”

The two teams were evenly matched at state, going into the half tied at 18 all, but the Lady Copperheads pulled away in the second half to win the title, 35-29.

Pretty darn impressive for having put the team together so quickly. The girls weren’t strangers to sports. The girls had played together since

they were eighth graders, Bowman said, “so we were pretty well synched with each other.”

“Some of the teams were fresh teams, and we beat them so badly we felt bad,” Bowman said.

They also competed in track together as the first sanctioned high school girls’ sport, and when the opportunity came about to have a girls’ high school basketball team that could play in tournaments, they jumped at the chance.

“When they offered it we

were really excited because we could play together more and travel like the boys did,” Bowman said. “It was nice traveling. We had experience with that with track. We’d go to meets so that wasn’t new.”

“It was great,” Dykstra said. “It was a group of us girls who got together, got some help from our parents, got some coaches and put the team together.”

Red Menahan was the team’s head coach and Sheri Horsfall was the assistant coach.

“We asked Red to coach.

He was a legislator at the time, but he was all in. We really gelled under his leadership,” Dykstra said. “And Sheri Horsfall, she was great, too.”

Things were a bit of a challenge at the start from a logistical standpoint – “we didn’t have matching shoes and all those things,” Dykstra said – but they, their parents and coaches were able to get their uniforms together and get practice

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times scheduled.

"Red helped us because he opened a lot of doors. His status helped us be more accepted. And he was just a really nice guy," Bowman said. "We teased him, and he took it good naturedly."

Then things just gelled.

"We clicked really well because we were really good friends, and we were fortunate to have a class of athletes," Dykstra said. "And the town really supported us."

"The boys' basketball team had

been successful, too, so we had some great support," she added.

Now, looking back and watching her grandnieces play basketball, Dykstra said it's great to see how far girls' sports, particularly basketball, have come in the past 50 years.

"We established a foundation for those that came after us. We blazed the trails," she said.

Bowman agreed.

"It's a good thing because all students need that outlet," she said.

Interestingly though, one thing

Dykstra said she had learned over the years is that in other states there were different rules for basketball for girls than boys. Not so in Montana.

"We played real basketball, full-court basketball. Around the country there were different teams and different rules [at the time], but in Montana we played full-court basketball," she said.

Even so, the game has changed since those days, Bowman said.

"We didn't have plays. We just played," she said. "Defense was one

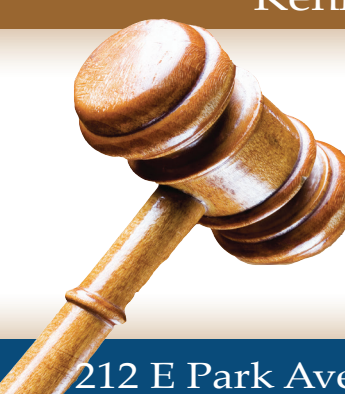
thing though that we did have a plan for. We played a 2-3 zone, a box-and-1, but otherwise we gave the ball to an open person and they'd shoot it."

Ultimately, while they were championship winners and pioneers of girls' sports, it was also a lot of fun.

"It was nice that senior year. We'd gone through it the year before so we were a bit wise to what could happen," Bowman said. "It was a good time."

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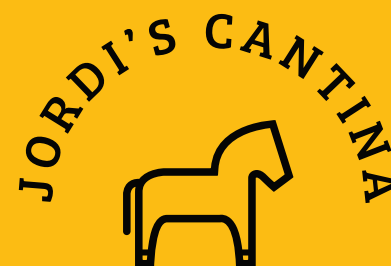
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Senior speaks on importance of native plants

KASEY EDGE-FAUR
COPY EDITOR

How many caterpillars does a chickadee eat between birth and when they grow into adulthood? Five thousand.

This is one of many facts that Patrick Plantenberg, past president of the Montana Native Plant Society, regaled the Anaconda Garden Club with at its January meeting.

Part of the reason native plants are so important, Plantenberg said, is because they are home to bugs like caterpillars so that birds like chickadees can survive. If you want to see more chickadees in your garden, native plants may be the answer.

But that's not all. Other animals and insects like butterflies get their food from native plants too, he said.

"I'm excited about today's topic," said Anaconda Garden Club member Lisa Moisey. "I live out at Georgetown Lake, and it's difficult get plants to grow, and we've found that native plants do the best." She attributed the difficulty plants had growing to factors like the elevation and the short growing season.

Plantenberg said that education about native plants is vital when encouraging people to plant them. For one thing, teaching people to expect a less-than-beautiful appearance in the fall months.

"Native plant gardens look really beautiful early spring to June, then in fall, they don't look so good," Plantenberg said.

Another important component



The Anaconda Garden Club hosted Patrick Plantenberg, past president of the Montana Native Plants Society, at their meeting in January at the Hearst Free Library to provide tips on native plants. Leader photo: Kasey Edge-Faur

of native plant education is firewise landscaping, Plantenberg said.

Firewise landscaping is organizing gardens and plants in such a way to reduce the risk of wildfires damaging homes or buildings.

Techniques for this include planting shrubs in distinct groups, not having shrubs next to the house and putting adequate space between shrubs and a tree that may be in the

See PLANTS on page 10





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area. There are some native plants that are fire resistant, Plantenberg said.

One benefit of native plants is that they also require less maintenance, less fertilizer and fewer pesticides than non-native plants, although

Plantenberg was careful to emphasize that this doesn't mean they require zero maintenance, as gardeners still have to ensure their gardens look maintained, are noxious weed-free and are attractive to neighbors.

Specifically, native plants generally

require less water than their non-native counterparts.

This is a big deal for Montana, Plantenberg pointed out, as drought conditions become increasingly severe with every year, with 2021 bringing Montana's most severe drought in 20 years, according to the US Drought Monitor.

To find native plants, the Montana Native Plant Society have a source guide to let people know where they can buy native plants near

them: <https://mtnativeplants.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Native-Plant-Sourceguide.pdf>.

At the meeting, Coni, the owner of the Treasure Town Market in Anaconda, said the market sells native plant seeds. and currently has 12 varieties available

"They're grown in Montana so they're perfect for the Montana climate," Coni told the Leader. She said they have 12 varieties left but hope to get more by spring.



Patrick Plantenberg answers a question from an Anaconda Garden Club member during his presentation. Leader photo: Kasey Edge-Faur



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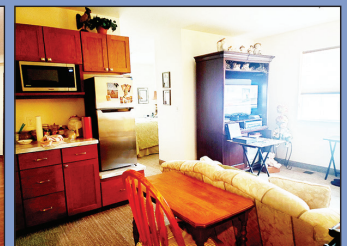
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Wandering: A safety concern

Editor's note: This originally appeared in the Montana State University Extension Magazine, "Alzheimer's and Related Dementias: Support for Montana Farmers and Ranchers and their Families (Volume 2), by Marsha A. Goetting, PhD, CFP; Vicki Schmall, PhD; S. Dee Jepsen, PhD; Jennifer Munter, MS; E. Edwin Eck, Emeritus Professor. The complete edition is available online at <https://www.montana.edu/estateplanning/4642AlzheimersMagazineVol2FINAL.pdf>.

Six out of 10 individuals living with Alzheimer's wander at least once; most will wander repeatedly. Wandering is dangerous, especially

for individuals living and working in an agricultural environment. Many farms and ranches in Montana consist of hundreds or thousands of acres and open spaces.

Farmers and ranchers with Alzheimer's may become disoriented on their own property. They may get lost in a community where they have lived for years. They also may wander when traveling with other people. A farmer or rancher may respond with "OK" to a request to "stay right here" while others go elsewhere, but then does not remember what was said and wanders away. They may start searching for someone they know or

See WANDERING on page 12

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a familiar landmark and become lost.

Wanderers may not know when they are lost. They may:

- not remember the location of their home on their farm or ranch property.
- face sudden rain or snowstorms and not be dressed appropriately for the weather.
- come across bodies of water deeper than they realize.
- pass out from exhaustion.
- not know how to use their cell phone and be unable to make a call for help.

Plan ahead

The stress experienced by families and caregivers when a farmer or rancher living with Alzheimer's wanders and becomes lost is significant. With a plan in place, everyone will know what to do if a person wanders.

Consider enrolling the person in the Alzheimer's Association's nationwide 24/7 Wandering Support for Safe Return Service, www.alz.org/documents/national/card_wanderingwhoisatrisk.pdf.

Ask neighbors, friends, family, and local retailers to call if they see the farmer or rancher wandering, appearing lost, dressed inappropriately for the weather, or alone in an unusual or dangerous area.

Family members should notify local law enforcement that the farmer or rancher has Alzheimer's and may wander.

Keep a recent, close-up photo of the person with Alzheimer's to give to the local sheriff in case a photo is needed for identification.

Identify potentially dangerous areas on the farm or ranch and nearby, such as bodies of water, cliffs, dense foliage, or roads with heavy or fast traffic.

Reasons a person may wander

Wandering can occur due to various circumstances, including stress, overstimulation, confusion, medication, fear, or the person's

inability to recognize their surroundings. Wandering behavior may stem from a farmer's or rancher's need to move. If true, take them on frequent walks or offer other physical activities such as raking leaves or shoveling snow from the porch or driveway. Regular exercise may also relieve tension and improve a person's sleep.

To prevent and reduce wandering, ask yourself, "What are possible reasons the person wanders?"

Did the farmer or rancher previously enjoy walking the property and doing other outdoor

- activities?
- Did the person often walk to reduce stress?
- Is the farmer or rancher bored?
- Is there a place the person wants to go?
- Is the person looking for someone or something related to their past?
- Was the person trying to get away from someone?

• Was the person trying to avoid an unfamiliar or uncomfortable situation?

- Did something on television frighten or upset them?
- Did an unusual noise attract their attention, such as a fire truck with sirens driving by or road construction near the house?
- Was the person overstimulated or overwhelmed by an activity, too many people, or too much noise?
- Did the environment change on the farm or ranch?
- Is the person in an unfamiliar location?
- Does the person recognize their current home as "home," or do they leave to find their "home?"
- Is the person trying to fulfill former obligations, such as going to town to work at a local business they ran years ago?
- Is the person searching for a sense of security, for example when they say, "I want to go home" or "Where is my mother?"

See WANDERING on page 13



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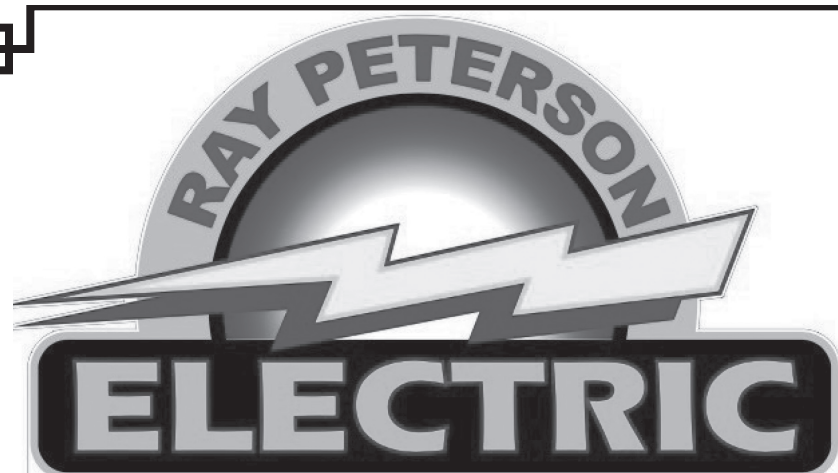
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WANDERING from Page 12

• Is the wandering because the farmer or rancher thinks it's time to perform a task? For example, the person may believe, "It's time to feed the hogs, chickens, horses or sheep."

Track the person's wandering behavior to see if there is a pattern. Is there a time of day when wandering occurs most often? Wandering may have no specific cause other than being a symptom of Alzheimer's.

Reduce the risk of wandering

The Alzheimer's Association offers the following tips to reduce the risk of wandering. Being prepared can bring family members peace of mind. However, these actions cannot guarantee a person living with Alzheimer's will not wander.

Offer opportunities for the farmer or rancher to engage in structured, meaningful activities throughout the day.

Identify the time of day when the person is most likely to wander such as late afternoon or early evening as daylight wanes. Plan things to do during this time. Activities and

exercise may help reduce anxiety, agitation, and restlessness.

Consult with their doctor about reducing – but not eliminating – liquids up to two hours before bedtime so the person is less likely to have to find and use the bathroom during the night.

Involve the person in daily activities with another family member or farm or ranch hand to help check the fencing for damage or see if pests are affecting the crop.

Provide reassurance if the person is agitated, lost, or disoriented.

Avoid busy places that create confusion or disorientation and cause the person to be overstimulated such as trade shows, conferences, shopping malls, local fairs, grocery stores, or holiday celebrations.

Assess the person's response to new surroundings that may cause confusion, uncertainty, or agitation.

Never leave a farmer or rancher with Alzheimer's alone in a parked vehicle with the keys left inside. They could cause an accident by starting the vehicle and driving away. Or they

could leave the vehicle and wander.

Review medications with their doctor to learn if one or more may be causing confusion and delusions.

When someone with Alzheimer's goes missing, begin search-and-rescue efforts at once. According to the Alzheimer's Association, many individuals who wander are found within 1.5 miles of where they disappeared.

Most cell phones have a GPS feature that can track a family member's location. Consider attaching a small GPS-guided tracking device to the person's clothing and using an app to track the GPS unit. Recommendations about tracking devices are available online, www.medicalalertbuyersguide.org/articles/the-best-gps-trackers-for-dementia-patients.

Have the farmer or rancher always wear an identification or medical-alert bracelet showing their name, address, telephone number, and the phrase "memory-impaired" or "brain-impaired." Unfortunately,

listing the official diagnosis, such as "Alzheimer's" or "dementia," may not be helpful because some people who see a wanderer may not know the meaning of the words.

Approaching a family member or neighborhood wanderer who has Alzheimer's

Approach a wanderer slowly and calmly from the front. Offer reassurance. Gently ask, "May I walk with you for a while?" Walk a short distance in the same direction they are going, and then, gradually turn them in the direction of home.

Another strategy is to redirect the wanderer to an activity they enjoy. For example, say, "I have your favorite cookies and ice cream back at the house." or "Your favorite TV program is on soon."

Do not hurry, scold, restrain or use physical force. Such actions usually make a person more agitated, confused, and angry. Do not expect the person to understand the reasoning and logic for returning to their home.



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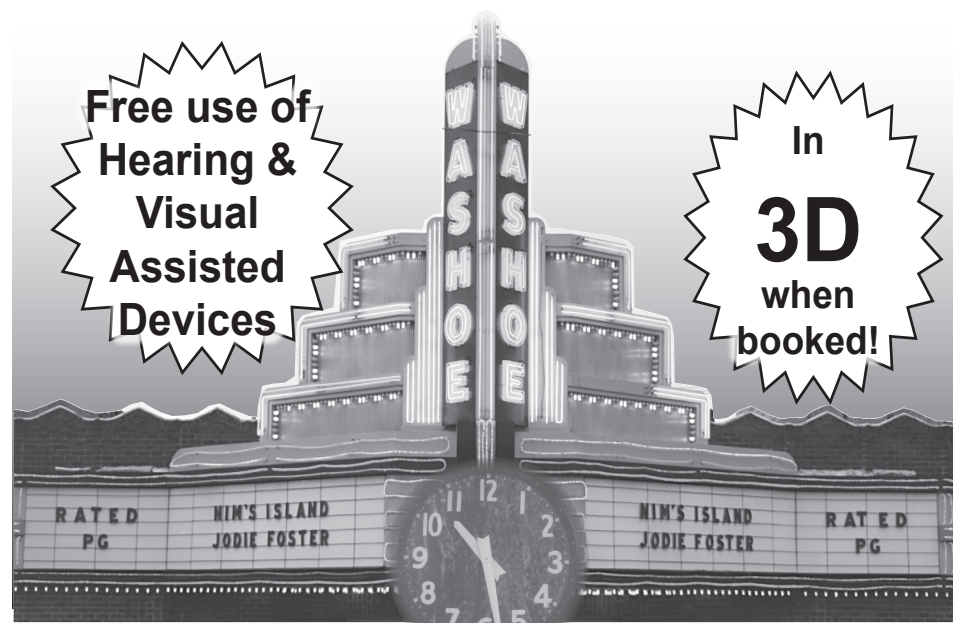
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Reminder: Winter Walking Group is underway

The MSU Extension Winter Walking Group has hit the ground running, giving the community an opportunity to participate in a free indoor walking activity. The self-guided group takes place every Monday through Thursday from 4-6 p.m. at Anaconda Junior/Senior High School, except when school isn't in session.

A sign-in sheet is available allowing participants to sign in and

out and track their walking activity. They ask that walkers use the Main Street door to enter and exit.

Walkers are able to go at their own pace, develop a routine, make friends and enjoy the fellowship, and welcomes walkers of all ages and skill levels. They ask that you bring water and wear comfortable shoes and feel free to bring a walking stick if you have or need them.

According to an article published

by The University of Delaware, Walking has been shown to reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression, improve mood, and boost self-esteem. When you join a walking club, you not only can enjoy the physical benefits of exercise but also the mental clarity and relaxation that comes with spending time outdoors, or in this case, indoors.

Studies have found that walking

groups can have many benefits, including improving heart rate, blood pressure, cholesterol, body fat, strengthening the immune system, creating stronger muscles, and lower body mass index. It may also help prevent heart disease and assist in cardiac rehabilitation.

For more information call Paula at the MSU Extension office at (406) 563-4035 or deerlodge@montana.edu.



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Anaconda Pool League helps senior stay active

JAMES S. ROSIEN
EDITOR

The game of pool is one of those lifelong interests that can be enjoyed from the moment you're able to handle a cue, and for one senior in the Smelter City it's how he stays active, including through the Anaconda Pool League.

Kermit Ulstad first got involved with the league after he opened his bar, the aptly named "Kermit's Pad," or as he called it "the classiest dive in town."

"It was a small place, but it was a good one," said Ulstad in an interview at his own pad, complete with a bar, bar stools, plenty of memorabilia and even the tip jar from his old bar that he was able to save after the place sadly was destroyed by fire in January of 1987.

But seven years before that,



See POOL on page 16 Kermit Ulstad stands behind the bar with the tip jar from "Kermit's Pad" still intact. Leader photo: James S. Rosien

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POOL from Page 15

when he opened the bar a man by the name of Bill Kauhi, who ran the Anaconda Pool League at the time, started coming in and asked if he would sponsor a pool team for the bar. While the league is now sponsored by Budweiser, in those days it was the bars that did the sponsoring.

"I told him I'd sponsor anything I could," Ulstad said. "Then come opening night [of the league] he said 'come on, you're on the team.' I'd never shot pool before. I wasn't very good, but I enjoyed it."

Back then the league had 22 teams, eight players to a team so you played doubles, Ulstad said. There was even an A league and a B league.

Even though Kermit's Pad was a small bar, he was able to fit two pool tables in and sponsored four teams – most of which were often at or near the top of the standings.

His own team of Orville LaTray, Ace LaTray, Bill Kauhi, Mick Miller, Lester Miller, John Rangitsch, Roxanne LaTray and of course himself won the league in

1985 and the runner-up that year was another team from Kermit's Pad. He still has the score sheet and the clippings from the Leader 40 years ago to show it.

"It was fun. We had good times," Ulstad said.

Understandably he has fond memories of those days, and not just of the league or the bar but the people as well.

"I lucked out and had the best bartenders: Bimbo Schafer, Mick Miller, Joyce McLaughlin and 'Ratso' Tracy," he said.

After Kermit's Pad burned down, Ulstad moved to Idaho and stopped playing pool for 10 years, but after returning to Anaconda he got back onto a team here and one in Butte, and he's been shooting pool ever since. By then the Anaconda Pool League was run by Chet D. Young, who has since passed away.

"He ran the league for years and years, and he did a fantastic job," Ulstad said.

While the list of teams has changed since the '80s, back when names like "Ledo," "Red's," "Mill,"

"Pewter Mug," "Warm Springs Store" and "Saddle Club" appeared alongside more familiar ones that are still in the league like Carmel's and The Ranch, there are new ones that have joined as well like Northern Hall and Big Stack.

And while the number of teams has also declined, as currently there are 11 teams in the league, they'd certainly welcome more.

"There's some really great players in the league," he said, but added that "People aren't as into it anymore and it's a shame because I really enjoy it."

But one thing that hasn't changed is his own team – he now shoots for The Elks, with teammates Dave and Ted Beck, Mike Dome and Jim Black – is near the top of the standings (they're in second place as of Jan. 16).

But for Ulstad it's just about having a good time and staying active.

"We have a lot of fun," he said.

The Anaconda Pool League's season starts in the fall and runs through the spring.



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