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PAGE 14**

CENTRAL FLORIDA  
**healthnews**

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THE ENDORSED PUBLICATION OF THE  
POLK COUNTY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

**Oral  
Health**  
edition

**Spreading Smiles:  
Local Dentists Are Doing Their  
Part to Help the Community**



**POP QUIZ**

Test Your Knowledge on  
Tooth and Gum Disease

**Healthy Cook:**

Easy Recipes to Surprise  
Mom for Mother's Day

**TAKING CARE OF B(US)INESS:**

Highlighting Local Nurses for  
National Celebrate Nurses Week

**STRIKING OUT CANCER:**

Raising Cancer Awareness at  
the Charity Challenge

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# HELP for the GOLDEN YEARS

## Lake Wales Medical Center's Golden Care Unit is filling a need for behavioral health care specifically aimed at seniors.

When an elderly parent starts hearing music that isn't there, or seeing objects that aren't there, it can be perplexing. Reading the signs can be difficult: is it a side effect to a new medication, or something more ominous?

Whether it's hallucinations, early signs of Alzheimer's, another form of dementia, or another behavioral health issue, dealing with it can be especially challenging to a senior's family members.

They know their conduct isn't normal for them, and may endanger them, yet putting an older person into a regular mental health facility doesn't seem appropriate. Waning strength and function may make them particularly vulnerable if they are placed among regular adult behavioral health patients, who may be loud and agitated.

That's why the Lake Wales Medical Center has opened The Golden Care Unit. It is dedicated to unraveling the mystery behind the problem – and can help put elderly loved ones on the path towards recovery and a more fulfilling life. “We take folks that have chronic illnesses — depression, bipolar disorder, dementia, Alzheimer's — you can get those illnesses under control and live a very productive, happy life,” says Director Sabrina Long.

An 18-bed, safe and secure in-patient psychiatric

facility for those 60 and up, The Golden Care Unit is intended for those acute behavioral health issues. Patients also have access to medical specialists for non-psychiatric medical needs.

A specially-trained team of psychiatrists, staff nurses, technicians, professional therapists, counselors and other consultants work together, helping the patient and family with treatment goals. It tries to teach new problem-solving and interpersonal skills that address these later-in-life challenges. The structured, therapeutic program seeks to establish the best environment for recovery, combining individual, group, and family services as the patient's treatment plan dictates.

The Golden Care Unit works closely with outpatient behavioral health providers, including mental health centers, nursing homes, assisted living facilities and hospice providers to ensure patients have adequate care when they are discharged.

“We are a short-term acute care unit,” Long points out. “We get you ready for the next level of care. We try to either get people well enough to return home or get them well enough to graduate to a lower level of care, like an assisted-living facility or rehab.”

The facility, which opened in January 2015, offers a superior option to families with loved ones displaying symptoms of dementia, depression and other mental


health issues that could land them in a hospital's mental health unit. “This is a relatively special population,” Long explains. “You don't really want to mix them in with the adult population.”

A trying situation may be more frightening to the elderly when forced to be around those with other forms of mental illness.

“The community actually saw a need for this type of service for folks over the age of 60,” she says. “This was a very necessary service for this population. It just treats them as the special people that they are.”

In addition to diagnosis and evaluation, the unit offers 24-hour monitoring and supervision, medication management, individual psychiatric care, group therapy, secondary-health-issue management, patient and family education, and aftercare planning.

The unit is there for family members and their loved one every day, around the clock, offering compassionate care and a helping hand. The Golden Care Unit team can help patients and families understand why this is happening, and decide on the best plan for the future. “I'd like the community to know that we're here for them,” Long says. “We welcome people just giving us a call if they have questions about what comes next. If we can't answer those questions, we'll find someone who can.”

The unit can be reached at (863) 679-6840. 



**410 South 11th Street  
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The Golden Care Unit is a division of Lake Wales Medical Center. Lake Wales Medical Center is owned in part by physicians.

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# Features

## 8 SPREADING SMILES

Having a happy and healthy smile is something we should all strive for, and thanks to many community outreach programs and free dental clinics, improving oral hygiene across Polk County is possible. Read more about how local dentists and clinics are giving back to the community through their preventative care services.

## 16 TAKING CARE OF B(US)INESS

As National Celebrate Nurses Week approaches, we take a moment to recognize area nurses for their efforts in going above and beyond for their patients. See what local nurses have to say about their duties and how they go the extra mile on a daily basis.

## 22 STRIKING OUT CANCER

The Charity Challenge was held on April 15 to raise cancer awareness while simultaneously attempting to break the World Record for largest human awareness ribbon. Hear what event organizer Chris Hazelwood had to say about the special event.

## 24 POP QUIZ: CHEW ON THIS! SEE HOW MUCH YOU KNOW ABOUT TOOTH AND GUM DISEASE

This month's edition is all about oral health and hygiene. Check out our pop quiz and test your knowledge about tooth and gum disease. You just might learn something!



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Dr. William Nerestant of Midtown Dental in Lakeland offers free dental clinics during the Thanksgiving holiday season. Read more about his story as well as how other local dentists give back to the community through their dental care services.

Photo by LUIS BETANCOURT

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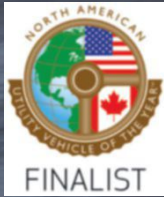


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**PCMA LETTER**

**SINK YOUR TEETH**  
*into These*  
**HEALTH FACTS**



ORAL HYGIENE is sometimes overlooked when it comes to overall health. Your teeth, gums, and mouth are very important to maintain a healthy lifestyle and prevent problems such as tooth decay and gum disease. In the Oral Health Edition of *Central Florida Health News*, various topics regarding oral hygiene and how to keep your mouth happy and healthy are covered. Read about local dentists who are giving back to the community through their preventative dental care. Be sure to read the pop quiz, which is all about tooth and gum disease as well.

The topic of oral hygiene is extremely important – and one that many people put on the backburner when it comes to maintaining their overall health. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, one in three Americans ages 18-65 have not had a dental visit in the last year. Not properly managing your teeth and gums can lead to many health problems down the road. Tooth decay, Periodontal disease, and cavities impact millions of Americans every year.

If you aren't taking your oral health seriously, the best time to start is right now. Throughout this edition you will find helpful tips and resources to help get your mouth in good shape, like the Editor's Dose, which offers great tips on snacks that are healthy for your teeth and gums.

Here at the Polk County Medical Association, we aim to do our part to raise awareness for a variety of health-related topics, including some you'll read about in this issue. If you're a medical provider in the community, we'd like to invite you to become a member. Through the PCMA, doctors can give back to the community by volunteering with We Care of Polk County. The PCMA's concerns are also heard in the Florida Legislature because of its strong ties with the Florida Medical Association.

Sincerely,

*Sergio B. Seoane, MD*

Sergio B. Seoane, MD  
*Family Practitioner and Pulmonary Medicine Specialist, Lakeland  
President, Polk County Medical Association*

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- \* Listing advantages in the annual *Central Florida Physicians Directory & Medical Providers Guide*
- \* Physician and medicine advocacy at all legislative levels

If you'd like more information about becoming a PCMA member or need to check your membership status for renewal, contact our Executive Director Jackie Courtney at (863) 644-4051 or email [director@polkcountydoctors.com](mailto:director@polkcountydoctors.com). **hn**

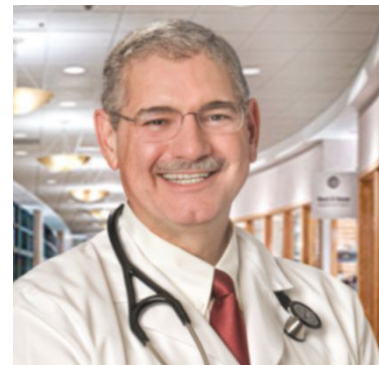


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# Spreading Smiles



## Local Dentists Are Doing Their Part to Help the Community

story by CHERYL ROGERS  
photos by LUIS BETANCOURT

**D**ENTISTS like Dr. William Nerestant of Lakeland donate their time to provide dental care to the needy, bringing smiles to patients one mouth at a time.

Dr. William Nerestant never saw a dentist until he went to dental school at the University of Detroit/Mercy. He'd known he wanted a career in healthcare, but dentistry wasn't on his radar. His plans were to go to medical school — until some friends shared their own aspirations in the dental field.

Today Dr. Nerestant, who practices at Midtown Dental in Lakeland, enjoys giving back to the community by volunteering his services to those in need. Sometimes it's when a specific need arises, or at an annual free dental day at his office around Thanksgiving.

"Growing up in Haiti, I knew about going to the doctor, but dentistry was not something that was at the forefront," he explains.

Because his parents couldn't take him to a dentist, it wasn't until dental school that he was able to get braces to take care of the spaces between his teeth. "Now people compliment me about my teeth," he says. "When somebody mentions something about your smile, it kind of lifts you up inside. It was quite an experience for me."

Dr. Nerestant, along with local Drs. Greg Scott, Mical Slater, and others, usually focus on cavities and cleaning during the free clinics. "The scope of what we do is to offer instant relief," he says. "I wish we would be able to provide a wider menu of service. That's what we are able to do in one day."

These days Dr. Nerestant is well aware of the importance of good oral health — and its

connection to heart disease, diabetes, and even premature birth and low-birth weight. "Sometimes we take it for granted when we have good oral health," he says, "and we don't see ... how it affects everything else."

As awareness grows about the link between oral and overall health, local government has increased efforts to make dental care more affordable to everyone. Through partnerships with organizations like Central Florida Health Care, it's beefing up free and discounted services — and bringing them closer to home.

As a Federally Qualified Health Center, CFHC operates 14 clinics in Polk, Highlands, and Hardee counties, where they saw 42,426 patients in 134,558 visits last year. "The demand is incredible. We can't keep up with it," says Ann Claussen, its chief executive officer.

Some 32,885 of those visits were for dental services.

CFHC is strengthening its oral health services to mirror what it's doing on the medical services side. "We're just very committed in the communities that we serve. A lot of them don't have anywhere else to go," Claussen explains. "We truly see everybody. Even if they are undocumented we see them, because that's what we should be doing."

CFHC currently offers dental services at eight area clinics: two in Winter Haven, one in Frostproof, two in Wauchula, one in Avon Park, one in Lake Wales, and one in Mulberry. It is expanding, with plans to add dental services in Haines City in about three or four months.

Within two or three years, the plan is to open a \$3 million complex of at least three stories where it could serve adults and children through a dental residency program, Claussen says.

In Polk County, a half-cent sales tax pumps \$2.6 million into dental care, says Joy Johnson, relations administrator for the county's Health and Human Services Division.

The half-cent sales tax is funneled into programs like that at CFHC, the dental assisting program at Lakeland's Trivis Technical College, and Lakeland Volunteers in Medicine, which offers services to patients.

"The one way we tried to increase access was to fund the agencies that did the nonprofit work," Johnson says. "They already have the capacity for dental work



# “Your dental health is a big part of your overall health.”

in their operations. We basically asked them to expand their dental program.”

The Polk County Health Department offers help to the uninsured through its Indigent Healthcare Plan. “They can contact the health depart to make an appointment and our staff can work with individuals to see if they qualify,” says Nicole Riley, public information officer.

At Lakeland Volunteers in Medicine, they cater to the working uninsured living in Polk County with income at 200 percent or below the poverty level. They expect to begin taking patients again in May after catching up from a backlog. “We’re just trying to let everybody get caught up right now,” says Kim Taylor, director of operations.

The clinic is staffed with 180 volunteers, but its two dental staffers are paid because they have a hard time recruiting volunteers. “We’ve had dental here since the beginning, and we go back to 2001,” Taylor says. “Your dental health is a big part of your overall general health.”

Florida has made some improvements since 2010, when it earned an F grade from the non-partisan PEW Research Center that assesses oral health policies and access to care, according to *Florida’s Burden of Oral Disease Surveillance Report*. That was upgraded to a D in 2013 and C- in 2014, the August 2016 report shows.

Those looking for discounted dental services can access an interactive, online tool at the Florida Department of Health website at [floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/community-health/dental-health/resources/index](http://floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/community-health/dental-health/resources/index). The tool allows them to search for prospective dental practitioners based on their address or community. **hn**



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## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

### Thank a Nurse

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**B**eing appreciated is always nice. Whether you're simply being valued for your day-to-day efforts or for going above and beyond for someone, it is rewarding to know when your actions are noticed. Showing appreciation and giving thanks is the driving force behind Celebrate National Nurses Week from May 6 - 12.

Nurses do a lot that might get overlooked. They do the necessary work that helps to keep the operations of any hospital or clinic moving. Celebrate National Nurses Week is an opportunity for us to take a second and recognize the hard work and dedication that nurses demonstrate daily.

In this month's edition of *Central Florida Health News*, we are proud

to highlight local nurses who have exceeded their duties when it comes to caring for their patients. Highlighting their work in this edition is just a small token of respect and appreciation for the work all nurses do.

Next time you see a nurse or if you happen to know one, take a second to thank them for the work that they do. If you're a nurse reading this, we at Central Florida Media Group and *Central Florida Health News* appreciate all that you do!

As always, thank you to our readers, clients, and everyone who supports us and helps to keep the ship sailing. Thank you for reading and please enjoy this month's edition of *Central Florida Health News*. **hn**

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## Affirmations: You Are What You Speak

by MARY JOYE, LMHC

WE ALL HAVE HEARD, “If you can’t say something nice don’t say anything at all.” Great sage advice, but we can succeed farther and faster in life if we go one step past that. It has been proven that what comes out of our mouth is as important as what goes into it. What we think and then say with our mouths can affect every part of us.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy helps retrain the brain. Cognition is thought. Think of it as ignition. When you change your thoughts, and apply pressure through mediation, challenges and affirmations, you have set a trajectory toward changing your behaviors. That changes your life. It works to the positive and negative. Being fully conscious of what you think, feel, say, and do is very important to positive change.

“Change your thoughts, change your life”, is a mantra with medical proof.

A good example would be a negative statement such as, “I hate going to the dentist.” Challenge it and change it to, “I love having a nice smile. The dentist helps me with that.” It is a subtle but powerful way to gain the rewards we all are looking to receive.

When we complain, we further imbed negative neural pathways. People who are addicted are more likely to have innate negative thinking patterns. It is one of the reasons they seek relief by self-medicating with substances. When we express gratitude or praise for ourselves and others, we feel better and the pleasure-seeking center of our brain is more satisfied with its own chemical factory. We are happier when we speak well of ourselves and others.

Magnetic Resonance Imagery has been used in studies to show how thoughts affect behaviors. Neuroscience has come a long way because we are now able to visually see what emotions are doing in the brain. No longer is anything “all in your mind.” Biology has a lot to say about psychology.

A study on self-affirmation at the University of Pennsylvania by Cascio and Falk for the Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience Journal from Oxford Academic revealed:

“...the ventral striatum (VS) and ventromedial prefrontal cortex (VMPFC) — are the same reward centers that respond to other pleasurable experiences, such as eating your favorite meal or winning a prize...Self-affirmation takes advantage of our reward circuits, which can be quite powerful...it increases a self-related processing that acts as a kind of emotional buffer to any painful, negative, or threatening information that follows.”

The study went on to say that when people work on only speaking things about themselves or to others with a high emotional respect and regard, wonderful things open up personally and socially.

Another interesting part of the study showed that the effects of self-affirmation were stronger when participants thought about a future orientation versus the past. When you have a vision of something better, you can reach it more easily with positive self-affirmation. Listening to what you say about yourself will help you treat others better and will in turn allow others through mirror neurons to be more respectful to you.

Try affirmations of kindness about yourself beginning today. With practice and rehearsal, you can do what you say! **hn**

*ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Mary Joye, LMHC, PA, is a licensed mental health counselor with offices in Lakeland and Winter Haven. She holds a Master of Arts in Counseling from Trevecca Nazarene University in Nashville, Tennessee. For more information, visit [winterhavencounseling.com](http://winterhavencounseling.com).*

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**healthy  
vision**

**WILLIAM CORKINS, O.D.**  
Eye Specialists of Mid Florida

## The 'Ripe' Time for Cataract Surgery

**W**henever I tell a patient that he or she has cataracts they immediately ask if they need to have surgery.

We start thinking about cataract surgery whenever the patient's quality of life is affected. Common complaints include, "I can't read road signs," or "I can't read the writing on TV," or "I can't read small print." If I cannot make the glasses prescription better, then we start to consider surgery.

Another very common complaint that drives cataract surgery is glare at night caused by oncoming headlights or rainy nights.

I often hear from patients, "I thought you did cataract surgery when it was ripe." Cataracts are not tomatoes; they do not get ripe! This expression came about when Medicare used the criteria of 20/50. If, with the best glasses, your corrected vision was worse than 20/50, then the cataract was "ripe" and Medicare would pay 80% of the cataract procedure. We have learned that using 20/50 as the criteria for cataract surgery is not adequate. Glare from the cataract is a more debilitating problem. You can have a person who can read the 20/20 Snellen line, but under glare conditions this person's vision drops to 20/80 or worse!

I explain this to my patients and they understand that the doctor is not the person who decides when to do cataract surgery, the patient does. When I examine my patients' eyes annually, I listen for complaints. If the patient is happy with his or her vision and is functioning well visually, we schedule a follow-up appointment in one year. If the patient becomes symptomatic before then, they know to schedule an appointment sooner so we can talk about cataract surgery.

*This article is sponsored by Eye Specialists of Mid Florida.*

*BIO: Dr. Corkins is a member of the American Optometric Association and Florida Optometric Association. He is board certified with the Florida State Board of Optometry. Dr. Corkins served as a Captain in the U.S. Navy Reserve and still has a passion for aviation. He is currently building a Glasair III high performance, retractable gear airplane. For more information or to schedule an appointment with Dr. Corkins, call 800-282-EYES.*

# Healthy Cook

## Easy Recipes to Impress Mom for Mother's Day

by TRENT ROWE, *food editor*



FIRST THE GOOD NEWS . . . it's going to be Mother's Day soon.

Now the bad news . . . somebody must clean the kitchen after dad and the young'uns make breakfast-in-bed for mom.

**NOTE TO MOM:** *leave this where Dad and the children can see it.*

### CANNED BISCUIT HAMMY-CHEESY CASSEROLE

- |   |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1 large can flaky refrigerated biscuits   | 10 eggs                   |
| 1 8-ounce bag shredded Cheddar, Swiss, Colby, or mixed cheese                                 | Salt and pepper, to taste |
| 1 cup milk  | Cooking spray             |
| 1 thick ham slice, fried until lightly browned on the edges, cooled and cut into ½-inch cubes |                           |

Have all the ingredients close at hand before starting.

**Dad needs:**

- A frying pan for the ham.
- A 1-cup measure for the milk.
- A large bowl for mixing the ingredients.
- Cooking spray or a little oil on a paper towel for the casserole.
- A casserole.

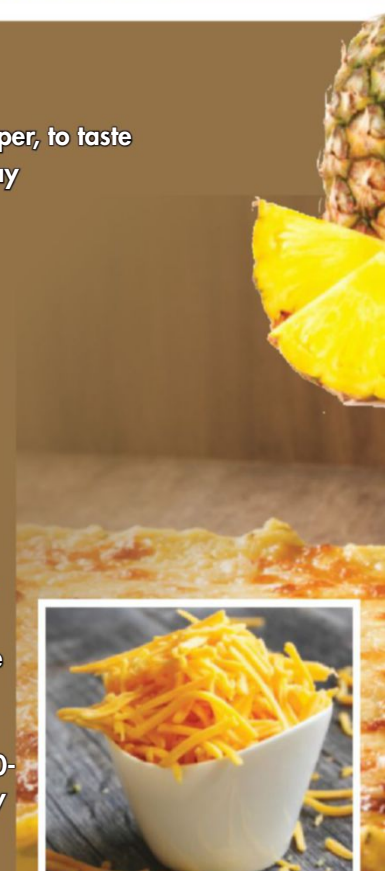
Heat oven to 350 degrees. Spray a 9x13-inch baking dish or casserole or wipe it with a little oil.

Whisk together eggs, milk, salt and pepper. Stir in the cubed ham and the cheese.

Cut canned biscuits into quarters and mix into the egg mixture.

Pour the egg-biscuit mixture into the baking dish and bake at 350°F for 30-40 minutes or until the biscuits are nicely browned and the eggs are gently firm.

Allow to cool a few minutes before cutting.







**DAD:** A little recipe planning and clean-as-you-go mean there will be nothing left for mom to do after breakfast and she will be able to enjoy the rest of her special day.

Figure out what you want to make that produces the least amount of grease splatters on the walls and stove. That means bacon and sausage are out. A thick slice of ham makes little mess and is high in flavor.

Baking something in one dish means little cleanup— one casserole to soak for a while in the sink before it goes into the dishwasher. **The recipe below left is adapted from Keyingredient.com.**

While the casserole is baking, wash the bowl, frying pan and measuring cup and put them away.

Truth be told, it's a good bet that

Mom would rather have breakfast at a table than on a tippy tray.

For a pretty start to her special meal the children can layer yogurt with mixed berries (fresh or thawed) in glasses. The dishwasher takes care of that cleanup.

Mimosas are a traditional drink for special morning meals. That's a mixture of Champagne and orange juice. Any sparkling wine works or ginger ale for those too young to imbibe.

Dessert isn't usually part of breakfast, but this isn't a usual day. And figuring the time it takes to get everything together and baked it might be more brunch than lunch.

With a bit of direction from dad, the children can make a special ending to Mom's meal. All it takes is a couple of cans of Mom's favorite fruit pie filling and a yellow or white cake mix. Oh, and some butter and nuts. If Mom likes fruit better than pie filling a can of that can go in too.



### PINEAPPLE CHERRY DUMP CAKE

- 1 large can of crushed pineapple with juice
- 1 large can of cherry pie filling
- 1 box of yellow cake mix
- 1 stick of unsalted butter
- 1 cup chopped pecans

If you and the children feel adventurous – a pinch of ground cinnamon or ginger or nutmeg

Preheat oven to 350°.

Dump the crushed pineapple with juice in a 9x13 baking dish.

Dump the cherry pie filling over pineapple and spread evenly.

Spread the yellow cake mix over the cherry pie filling.

Chop the stick of butter into small squares and scatter evenly on the cake mix. This will create a nice crust.

Scatter the chopped pecans on top. Place the baking dish in the oven with the casserole for 35 to 40 minutes or until the topping is slightly browned.

Cool before serving to Mom.

The Dump Cake can be topped with ice cream and love.

That makes a **Dump Cake**, called that because you dump in the fruit fillings and dump the dry cake mix on top. Dot with butter and sprinkle on the nuts for crunch. The cake can bake at the same time as the main course and rest on a counter until it's time to be served.

JoyfulHealthyEats.com has a simple recipe (above) that works every time Change the fruit and filling any way you like.

This will likely be a family favorite because it's so easy to make and takes only one dish. **hn**

## word of mouth



—William Nerestant, DDS  
info.midtowndental@yahoo.com

### What Dreams About Your Teeth Falling Out Might Really Mean

**D**reams can be confusing and intense experiences, and those that involve your teeth falling out are no exception. Dreams of teeth falling out, turning to dust, or cracking into pieces are stressful and unpleasant, and they can be caused by a number of issues.

#### EXPLANATIONS BEHIND DREAMS ABOUT TEETH FALLING OUT

There are no hard and fast rules when it comes to dream interpretations, and there are many different ways to interpret a dream about your teeth falling out. Some cultures' interpretations go beyond mere explanation and maintain that such dreams are a prediction that someone you know will die. The belief that dreams are predictions is rejected by modern dream interpreter psychologists, and most point to stress and anxiety as the reasoning behind having dreams where bad things happen to your teeth.

Stress of all kinds can manifest into dreams about teeth falling out; from stress about the usual topics— work, relationships, money, and more— to worry about the actual state of your oral health. Our unconscious minds deal with stress in a number of odd ways, and dreams about losing teeth may just be one of them.

Dream interpreters also believe that dreams about lost teeth stem from worry and anxiety over growing older. Since the chance of tooth loss does increase as we age, it's not too much of a stretch to see the worry about our own mortality in dreams about failing teeth.

If worry over your oral health is affecting either your sleep or your waking hours, make an appointment with your dentist to improve your oral health and banish those fears for good.

**This column is sponsored by Midtown Dental.**

**BIO:** Dr. William Nerestant received his Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) degree from the University of Detroit/Mercy School of Dentistry in Michigan. After serving and being recognized for his meritorious service in the Air Force as an officer in the Dental Corps, he currently serves patients at Midtown Dental in Lakeland. For more information, visit [mymidtowndental.com](http://mymidtowndental.com) or call (863) 226-0987.





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# Taking Care of B(us)iness

Highlighting Local Nurses Who Go Above and Beyond Everyday



*What actions (big or small) do you take on a daily basis to make a difference for your patients and coworkers?*



**TABITHA MULFORD, LPN – Watson Clinic**  
**March 2018 PEER (Program for Employee Excellence and Recognition) Award Winner**

*“I make sure that all patient concerns are dealt with in a timely manner. Communication is key as well as working as a team.”*

*Tabitha Mulford, LPN works alongside Dr. Prashant Desai from our Orthopedics/Sports Medicine department. She has consistently gone the extra mile for her patients and their families, and her compassionate and positive manner makes her an ideal Watson Clinic employee.*

**KAYLIE MANCIL – Lake Wales Medical Center**  
**2017 Employee of the Year**



*“I always treat my patients the way that I would expect my loved ones to be treated. I do my best to understand their feelings and make them know that I care. When I say I will do something, I do my very best to follow through and keep them up to date on their situation. Being in the hospital can be very hard on patients and reassurance can help to ease their minds. I give a smile to whoever I pass in the hallway. It’s incredible that something so small and simple can brighten someone’s day. Every day at work, I try to help whoever I can.”*

*“She’s an AWESOME nurse...patients are always complimenting her, she’s a leader to her colleagues, and we frequently see her mentioned in our patient satisfaction surveys.”*



**KAYLEN O’LEARY, MSN, RN – Lakeland Regional Health**  
**Stroke Program Coordinator • Past Chair, Nursing Professional Care Council, 2017-2019**

*“As the Stroke Coordinator at Lakeland Regional Health, I work to collaborate with all disciplines, including other nurses, to ensure that patients fully understand their plan of care while at the hospital as well as when they go home. Something as little as taking the time to ask if the patient or family has questions and letting them know that you have the time to listen can make all the difference. Nursing can be a very busy job, and some patients feel they are bothering the nurse when they ask questions. By taking the time to listen, we can help the patient know that we truly care. In addition, clearing up any confusion and addressing fears and concerns will help reduce the patient’s stress and lead to a successful discharge.”*

**NATALIE JENKINS, ARNPC-MSN – Associates in Dermatology**

*“I care a lot about my team and my patients that are like a second family to me. I enjoy listening to the story of their lives; especially about the adventures of my elderly patients to understand better what might have lead to the sun damage and skin cancers they have. This is also why I am very dedicated to skin cancer prevention and warning the younger patients about the dangers of sun exposure. It makes my day when I see a significant improvement in any of my patient’s dermatological condition or when I find a type of skin cancer in time to treat it. I truly love what I do! I guess that is why so many patients have been my patients in Davenport for over 15 years! I truly feel honored that my long-time patients continue to trust me to provide their care.”*

*Natalie has been part of the Associates in Dermatology team of providers for the last 15 years and is a Certified Dermatology Nurse Practitioner and Board-Certified Family Nurse Practitioner.*



**ERIKA ROJAS, RN, MSN – Heart of Florida Regional Medical Center**  
**Nominee for Daisy Award**

*“The biggest reaction I get from patients and co-workers is from an action that might seem small: I give five minutes. With my patients, I introduce myself, sit down in the chair next to them, and listen to them. We sit eye-to-eye for about five minutes and I ask them to treat today like a new day. I ask them, “Can you tell me what you need today because I want to provide the care you deserve.” Then, I just listen. This type of simple interaction puts my patients at ease and helps them realize they have open communication with me.”*

*continued on page 18*





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*What actions (big or small) do you take on a daily basis to make a difference for your patients and coworkers? (continued)*

**JENNIFER SINGLETON, RN, NURSE MANAGER - Central Florida Health Care, Winter Haven Women and Children**

"I am at my best when caring for others. I lead by example with a smile, positive attitude, and an open door policy. I ensure my staff have the tools they need to succeed and will hold a patients hand when in need."

*What do you enjoy most about your job?*

**DANI GAINER, Dental Hygienist - Haines City Dental**

"I appreciate the chance to connect with my patients and help them towards better health."

*Dani has been a dental hygienist at Haines City Dental since May of 2008. She graduated from Valencia College with her Associates of Applied Science Degree and completed her Bachelor of Applied Science in Dental Hygiene from St. Petersburg College in 2011. Dani enjoys spending time with her friends and family and exercising in her spare time. She also enjoys doing volunteer work such as, Relay for Life and working at a local soup kitchen.*



*Why did you want to be in the medical field?*

**STEPHANIE MONTALVO, MA - Ridge Technical College National Technical Honor Society - Due to graduate July of 2018**

"To make a long story short, I have a daughter who has a few medical conditions and we are always in and out of medical offices. In the beginning I didn't understand her diagnoses, so I did a lot of research to help educate myself. Her health issues are stressful and I want to help other people going through health problems. I feel it is critical to listen to the patient because no detail is too small, and I just want to help make each patient feel a little less stressed during their office visit. If we show the patients that we truly care, they will be more inclined to come in regularly which will help them stay healthier. I will treat each patient as I would want my loved ones treated because we all have loved ones that we want to live a long and healthy life." **hn**



# **IF YOU ARE THINKING** about starting a **NEW CAREER** in healthcare, *the first step begins with TRAINING*, and Ridge Technical

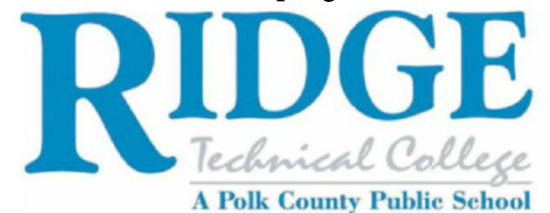
College offers a wide variety of programs to get you started. Health Science Education programs at Ridge include Medical Coder/Biller, Medical Assisting, Patient Care Technician, Pharmacy Technician, Practical Nursing, and Massage Therapy.

Patient Care Technicians (PCT), Medical Assisting (MA), and its related occupations continue to be part of the fastest growing opportunities in healthcare, and most companies and practices are looking for experience and or schooling like what is offered at Ridge Technical College.

The opportunities for an MA and PCT are the most in-demand jobs today. The training at Ridge Technical College prepares students for employment in the area of doctors' offices, nursing homes, health clinics, hospitals, and patients' homes.

"The employment outlook for PCT's and MA's is expected to be higher than average for the next few years," says Dr. Dickens, "and the best job opportunities will go to those with formal training. We keep our eye on the employment trends so that we can continue helping our students better themselves in the workforce."

*For more information on these and many more programs offered at Ridge Technical College, call 863.419.3060 or visit [www.ridge.edu](http://www.ridge.edu).*



Ridge Technical College is accredited by the Commission of the Council on Occupational Education [www.council.org](http://www.council.org). The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Council on Accreditation and School Improvement, an accreditation division of AdvancEd accredits Ridge Technical College.





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# calendar



*This is just a sampling of some of the many health events going on in your community. For more great events in your*

## **SUPPORT GROUPS & CLASSES**

**ACCESS ART: SPECIAL NEEDS** – Individuals with special needs and various exceptionalities are invited to this class held monthly at Polk Museum of Art to view and discuss exhibited artwork. Group meets on the first Saturday of each month (unless it is a holiday weekend) at 11 a.m.

**ALZHEIMER'S SUPPORT GROUP** – Held the first Thursday of each month at Heart of Florida Regional Medical Center: 40100 U.S. 27 in Davenport. For more information or to register, call (863) 292-9210.

**BETTER BREATHERS PROGRAM** – This course provides information and support for individuals with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease. Held the third Tuesday of each month from 1-3 p.m. at Heart of Florida Regional Medical Center, 40100 US Highway 27 in Davenport. The program is endorsed by the American Lung Association. Preregistration is required by calling (863) 419-2247.

**BLOOD PRESSURE PROGRAM** – Held at Lake Wales Medical Center on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month, 410 South 11th St. in Lake Wales, Hunt Building (2nd Floor, Room 201) from 9-11 a.m. For more information, call (863) 676-1433.



**BRAIN INJURY SUPPORT GROUP** – This is an open forum for brain injury survivors and their caregivers on how to live life to the fullest after a traumatic injury. Group meets on fourth Tuesday from 7-8:30 p.m. at the Winter Haven Hospital Wellness Center conference room. For more information, call (863) 292-4060.

**BREASTFEEDING CLASS** – Offered by the Winter Haven Women's Hospital, this Breastfeeding Class will be held on Saturday, May 5, 9:30 a.m. – 12 p.m. in classroom A, 101 Avenue O SE in Winter Haven. Registration is required and the cost is \$15. For more information and to register, call (855) 314-8352.

**CAREGIVERS SUPPORT GROUP** – Meetings are held the second Friday of each month at the Winter Haven Hospital Wellness Center conference room, 200 Ave F, Northeast, Winter Haven, from 1:30-2:30 p.m. For more information, please call (863) 291-6095.



**CONQUERING CHEMO** – This weekly education class is offered to new patients before their chemotherapy session begins. It's designed to empower patients and their family members/caregivers with the most up-to-date information on cancer treatment and side effect management. Classes are available every Monday (9:30-11 a.m.), Tuesday (12-1:30 p.m.), and Thursday 2-3:30 p.m.) at Watson Clinic Cancer Center Boardroom, 1730 Lakeland Hills Boulevard in Lakeland. For more information, please call (863) 603-4739.

**DIABETES SELF MANAGEMENT CLASS** – Lake Wales Medical Center holds this class on the fourth Wednesday of each month from 1-3 p.m. There is no charge for this course. For more information, please call (863) 676-1433.

**GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP** – Cornerstone Hospice offers a weekly support group each Thursday to help you on your journey of grief recovery and rebuilding your life. This is a free support group that is facilitated by a trained counselor who understands the grieving process, and is held 9:30-11 a.m. at Highland Park Church, corner of Hallam Drive and 540A, at the Main Campus, 4777 Lakeland Highlands Rd, Room 101, Lakeland, FL 33813. Registration is required. For more information, call Cornerstone Hospice at (863) 291-5560.

**HEARING LOSS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA, LAKELAND CHAPTER MEETING** – The Hearing Loss Association - Lakeland Chapter extends an invitation to join them every second Thursday of the month at 6 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church, 175 Lake Hollingsworth Drive in Lakeland. The meeting will be held in Multipurpose Room A. To learn more about the Lakeland HLA Chapter meetings, visit [hla-lakeland.org](http://hla-lakeland.org).

**HEARTSMARTS CARDIAC CLASS** – Lakeland Regional Health offers this free program on the second Tuesday of every month from 2-3 p.m. in the B-Wing Classroom B201. Registration is not required. For more information about HeartSmarts, please contact Kara Bailey, MSN, RN, CMSRN, CCCC at (863) 687-1100 ext. 7618 or [kara.bailey@myLRH.org](mailto:kara.bailey@myLRH.org).

**LUPUS SUPPORT GROUP** – Held on the third Monday of each month, 6:15-8:15 p.m. at Heart of Florida Regional Medical Center, 40100 US Hwy 27 in

Davenport. For more information, call (800) 339-0586.

## **MENTAL HEALTH PEER RECOVERY PROGRAM**

This program is offered by Winter Haven Hospital Center for Behavioral Health on two different days per week. The first meets weekly on Mondays from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Lions Park Clubhouse, 820 Avenue L SW in Winter Haven. The second meets at the center, 1201 First Street North in Winter Haven on Wednesdays from 12:30-4:30 p.m. This program is free and registration is not required.

**OSTOMY SUPPORT GROUP** – Meets in the Winter Haven Hospital Wellness Center conference room on the third Wednesday of each month from 10-11 a.m. For more information, please call (863) 293-1121 ext. 1511.

**PARKINSON'S DISEASE SUPPORT GROUP** – Held the second Wednesday of each month at 1 p.m., this support group is located at Rath Senior ConNEXTions and Education Center. The address is in the Lakeland Volunteers in Medicine building, 1021 Lakeland Hills Boulevard in Lakeland. Interested attendees can get more information at [therathcenter.org](http://therathcenter.org) or by calling (863) 937-8023.

## **PREGNANCY & CHILDBIRTH EDUCATION CLASS**

This class is available for established Watson Clinic OB patients. It is designed to prepare couples for the miracle of childbirth and is held on Thursday evenings at Watson Clinic's Bella Vista Building, 1755 North Florida Avenue in Lakeland. For more information or to register, go to [WatsonClinic.com/events](http://WatsonClinic.com/events).

**TOTAL JOINT REPLACEMENT CLASS** – For any individual considering or scheduled for total joint replacement, this class teaches expectations pre- and post-surgery (i.e. pain, exercise, length of stay, equipment, and follow up care). The class is taught by orthopedic nurses and occupational and physical therapists, from 12:30-2 p.m. on the first and third Tuesday. Meets at Winter Haven Hospital's Orthopedic Department Waiting Room, 200 Ave F NE, Winter Haven. Registration is required. For more information, please call (863) 293-1121 ext. 1806.



## **WOMAN-TO-WOMAN CANCER SUPPORT GROUP**

Meets on the second and fourth Monday of each month at the Winter Haven Hospital Wellness Center, 200 Ave F NE in Winter Haven at 6-7 p.m. For more information, call (863) 291-6095.



# may 2018

## dental health



Heather Hafner

Patient Relations Coordinator, Haines City Dental

area, visit our comprehensive online calendar at [CentralFloridaHealthNews.com](http://CentralFloridaHealthNews.com).

### EVENTS & FUNDRAISERS

#### MAY 2 – SOCIETY OF THE TURTLE JOG

Take part in a slow jog around Lake Silver in Winter Haven. It's a great way to get some activity in while enjoying the company of fellow joggers. Put on your running shoes and meet at the fountain in Central Park at 5:15 p.m. for this easy aerobic exercise.

#### MAY 2 – READ WITH BONNIE THE THERAPY DOG

Every Wednesday you can have a date with Bonnie the Therapy Dog at Bruton Memorial Library in Plant City from 4 – 5 p.m. She is a good-natured dog that loves to snuggle with readers while getting some pats and pets. She will be on the couch in the children's area, but is available to children of all ages.

#### MAY 4 – FREE SKIN CANCER SCREENINGS

Watson Clinic will be offering free skin cancer screenings in observance of Melanoma/Skin Cancer Detection and Protection Month. You can get your screening done on Friday, May 4 from 8 – 11:30 a.m. at Watson Clinic Dermatology at Sun City Center facility, located at 924A Cypress Village Blvd in Ruskin, or on Saturday, May 5, 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. at either Watson Clinic South (1033 N Parkway Frontage Rd, Lakeland) or Watson Clinic Highlands (2300 E County Rd 540A, Lakeland).

#### MAY 9 – JUST SAY NO PARADE AND RALLY

The highlight of "Just Say No" Week is the 28th Annual March and Rally held in Bartow. The festivities begin at 9:30 a.m. when the parade starts in Downtown Bartow and ends at the Bartow High School Gymnasium. This exciting community event is a public education effort designed to encourage young people to say no to drugs.



#### MAY 12 – BABY FAIR

Heart of Florida Regional Medical Center will be hosting a Baby Fair from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. on Saturday, May 12 at the hospital located at 40100 US Hwy 27 in Davenport. The Baby Fair is free and open to all new and expectant mothers. There will be health-related giveaways for mothers and babies, tips on dropping baby weight, tours of the labor and delivery area, and information on breastfeeding, managing colic, newborns and sleep and infant immunizations. For more information, call 866-997 DOCS (3627) or visit the events tab at [HeartOfFlorida.com](http://HeartOfFlorida.com).



#### MAY 12 – LEWIS FAMILY CANCER FUND "SWING FOR THE CURE"

Join the Lewis Family in the fight against cancer when they host this fun Scramble Golf Tournament and After Party. The After Party is open to non-golf participants as well as golfers. This is a fundraiser for the Winter Haven Hospital Cassidy Cancer Center. It will be held 9 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. at 2888 Southern Dunes Blvd in Haines City (Southern Dunes Golf and Country Club). For more information, please email [WHHFoundation@baycare.org](mailto:WHHFoundation@baycare.org).

#### MAY 12 – ADHD WORKSHOP FOR PARENTS AND EDUCATORS

Learn tips and strategies for working with children who have ADHD at this workshop. There will also be a question and answer portion. This event is free, but you must register in advance at [eventbrite.com/o/huntington-learning-center-3698766385](http://eventbrite.com/o/huntington-learning-center-3698766385). The workshop will take place from 2 – 3:30 p.m. at Huntington Learning Center, 6655 S Florida Ave in Lakeland.

#### MAY 12 – CENTRAL FLORIDA HEALTH EXPO

This is the best place to go to get all the information you need on a wide variety of health topics. Enjoy the market atmosphere while taking advantage of free health screenings and learning about healthcare. There will be information about health insurance and enrollment, plus a blood donation site. This event is free to the public and will take place 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. at 20 N Market St in Downtown Lake Wales.

#### MAY 24 – CHAT AND CHEW MORE PLANTS

Dr. Michael Greger, author of "How Not To Die" and "How Not To Die Cookbook," will be joining us via Skype for a discussion about healthy diets. Dr. Greger has been featured on PBS and morning talk shows. His books delve into the research surrounding diet and heart disease, diabetes, and more. This will be held from 5 – 6 p.m. at the Winter Haven Library, 325 Ave A NW, in the large meeting room.

#### MAY 24 – PAR-TEE WITH THE FREEDOM TO WALK FOUNDATION

The Freedom to Walk Foundation is dedicated to improving the quality of life of children and adults who experience Foot Drop due to upper motor neuron injuries or certain medical conditions. This event features golf, raffles, food, fun, and prizes. All ages are welcome. The entry fee is \$65 per golfer, \$390 per team of six golfers, and \$40 per spectator. This event will be held at TOPGOLF, 10690 Palm River Rd in Tampa. **hn**

### Benefits of CareCredit

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CareCredit is not a typical credit card. It can be used to pay for health and wellness care at more than 200,000 enrolled providers nationwide — including Haines City Dental. It can be used to pay for out-of-pocket expenses medical insurance does not cover. Special financing options are available that may not be possible with other cards.

CareCredit can be used for check-ups, endodontics, periodontics, periodontal scaling, periodontal disease prevention, gingivitis prevention, fluoride treatment, ceramic fillings, sealants, and cleanings.

The card is also accepted for such needs as mouth guards for sports, dental implants, ceramic crowns, root canals, braces or retainers, Invisalign straightening, and lumineers.

CareCredit offers short-term financing options of six, 12, 18 or 24 months without interest on purchases of \$200 or more when a minimum monthly payment is made - as long as the full amount owed is paid by the end of the promotional period.

You can apply by phone by calling 1-800-677-0718 or by going to [carecredit.com/apply](http://carecredit.com/apply).

If you have questions about how you may be able to use this financing option, please contact us at 863-422-8338.

*This column is sponsored by Haines City Dental.*

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JEFFREY EPSTEIN, MD  
PEAK Annual Wellness Center

## What is the Annual Wellness Visit?

**Y**ou may be wondering what exactly an Annual Wellness Visit (AWV) is, or why you need one. After all, this is not something you have had done at your yearly physical with your doctor. Yet, as you age, this becomes an important part of your healthcare routine.

Consider this. Think of your body as a house. It's your home and you want it to be in good condition now as well as in the future. You may be 65 years old now, but you want to make it to 99+, right? Well, if you want your house to be in good condition for the coming decades, you need to get it checked out and make any necessary repairs. You check the foundation, the plumbing, the wiring, everything that keeps your home functional and comfortable. The same is true for your body.

Imagine that the AWV is like having the home inspector come out. He inspects the building and provides you with a report and educates you on what needs to be done. Then you take that report to a general contractor— your family doctor or primary care physician— and discuss the plan to take the appropriate steps to complete those goals. In fact, having the long-term, comprehensive plan that only an AWV can provide is the most important part of your medical care, because it can reduce hospitalizations by 40 percent.

Plus, the Annual Wellness Visit is completely free for Medicare patients. Call us today to schedule your Annual Wellness Visit. Your body is a temple— take care of it with a real plan for wellness.

*This article is sponsored by PEAK Annual Wellness Center.*

*BIO: Dr. Jeff Epstein is Board Certified in Geriatric Medicine and Internal Medicine. He is passionate about helping seniors stay healthy so they can maintain a high-quality lifestyle. Dr. Epstein has practiced General Internal Medicine and Geriatric Medicine for 20 years before transitioning to a role as Hospital Medical Director and Physician Advisor in 2011. Peak AWC was founded to provide Annual Wellness Visit to seniors and empower them to avoid vulnerabilities that could cause great harm. It is the goal of Dr. Epstein and Peak AWC to provide better care at a lower cost by focusing on keeping individuals healthy and out of the hospital. For questions or to schedule an appointment, call (855) 732-5292.*

FEATURE | event

# STRIKING OUT



# CANCER

## World Record Attempt at Charity Challenge Helps Raise Cancer Awareness

by MARY TOOTHMAN  
photos by APRIL SPALDING

**T**HE THIRD TIME was supposed to be the charm - but an attempt on April 15 to break the World Record of a human cancer awareness ribbon did not have Mother Nature on its side.

Still, organizer Chris Hazelwood sounded anything but defeated in the aftermath of the Charity Challenge that brought in 400 to 500 people — instead of the 10,000 they had aspired to draw.

“In no way was it a failure,” she said with great cheer. “It was an amazing event. People who came got to be in the ribbon and they got to see a baseball game.”

The World Record Human Cancer Ribbon event was held at the Publix field at Joker Marchant Stadium. Participants were draped

in purple ponchos - to represent the all-inclusive cancer awareness color.

According to the American Cancer Society, cancer is a group of diseases characterized by the uncontrolled growth and spread of abnormal cells. If the spread is not controlled, it can result in death.

Although the reason why the disease develops remains unknown for many cancers — particularly childhood cancers — there are many known causes.

Lifestyle factors, such as tobacco use and excess body weight, and non-

modifiable factors, such as inherited genetic mutations, hormones, and immune conditions, are known causes. These risk factors may act simultaneously or in sequence to initiate and/or promote cancer growth.

More than 15.5 million Americans with a history of cancer were alive on January 1, 2016. Some were diagnosed recently and are still undergoing treatment, while most were diagnosed many years ago and have no current evidence of cancer.

About 1.7 million new cancer cases are expected to be diagnosed in 2018 — 135,170 of them in Florida.

After the ribbon formation, participants could attend the baseball game between the Lakeland Tigers and the Charlotte Stone Crabs. The Tigers were decked out in special, purple jerseys for the event.





Two other local attempts to set the same record, one in 2012 and another in 2014, fell short of the goal. Hazelwood said there was a feeling that this past try would be the winning one — but it just wasn't to be. "It was too windy for our helicopter to land, and for the official photo to be taken — and we couldn't do the release of the doves, either," she said.

Saudi Arabia set the Guinness World Record for the largest human awareness ribbon on Dec. 15, 2015, with 8,264 participants. While Lakeland's recent try had between 400 and 500 people, about 5,000 tickets were sold at \$5 each.

"It was the weather," Hazelwood said. "But you know, the main reason

for it was to raise awareness, and we did that.

"I am very proud of my event."

It was an **amazing** event. People who came got to be in the ribbon and they got to see a baseball game.

A breast cancer survivor, Hazelwood has been involved in a number of local charity and cancer awareness events. She's upbeat and not easily deferred — but fell short of vowing that the human ribbon will be attempted again. While it may not be a human ribbon event, it seems certain Hazelwood will soon be working on

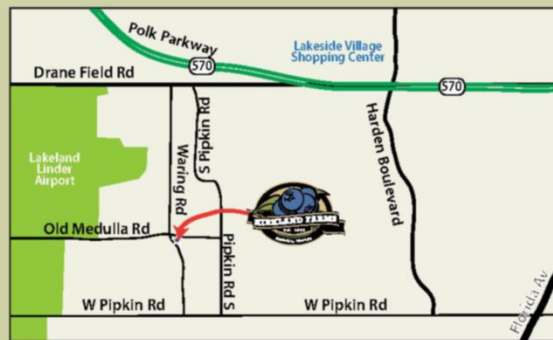
another awareness effort of some type soon.

In 2018, 609,640 cancer deaths are projected to occur in the United States. Over the past decade of data, the cancer incidence rate (2005-2014) was stable in women and declined by about 2 percent annually in men. The cancer death rate (2006-2015) declined by 1.5 percent annually in both men and women. The combined cancer death rate dropped continuously from 1991 to 2015 by a total of 26 percent. That translates to about 2,378,600 fewer cancer deaths than would have been expected if death rates had remained at their peak. Of the 10 leading causes of death, only cancer declined from 2014 to 2015. **hn**



## U-Pick Blueberries!

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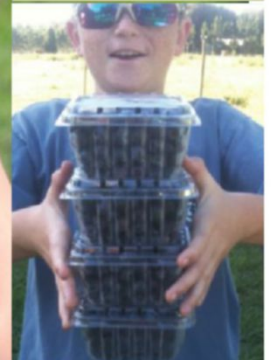
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# MEDICAL Advice

## Drowning Prevention

by JOY JACKSON, MD, Director of DOH-Polk

AS THE TEMPERATURE begins to rise outside and the water begins to heat up, Florida residents enjoy the summer days and nights by the water. Whether it be the backyard pool, a local lake, or the ocean, swimming and boating are two of the most popular summer activities for people living in or visiting Florida. Although these activities can be a fun way to enjoy the summer months, it's also important to take precaution and practice good safety measures around the water.

Since many are so comfortable near the water, residents may have a false sense of security. It is very important for all Florida residents to be aware of the following water safety tips to keep a fun family outing from turning into a tragedy.

**SUPERVISION** Drowning is a silent and deadly killer. It can occur within the small amount of time it takes an adult to check their phone, read a page in a magazine, or run inside for a towel. With the majority of drownings in Polk occurring in residential swimming pools, actively watching children while in the pool is the first line of defense against a drowning accident. Take children with you if the phone should ring or if you should need something from inside the house. Designate one adult to watch the children while they are in the pool if you must leave. Children should never be in the pool area unaccompanied by an adult.

**SWIMMING LESSONS** The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children ages four years old and older learn to swim to prevent drowning. However, remember that swimming lessons are not a substitute for supervision! For information about swimming lessons offered in the Polk County area, visit the Department of Health in Polk County's website at [polk.floridahealth.gov](http://polk.floridahealth.gov).

**BARRIERS** Having a barrier between the house and pool could help to reduce the instances of drowning accidents by 50-80%. Examples of barriers include child-proof locks on all doors, a

4-sided fence (at least 5 feet tall) separating the pool from the house, gates with self-latching/self-closing mechanisms, and door alarms.

**BOATING SAFETY** When boating, make sure that all passengers are fitted with the appropriately sized life jacket. The U.S. Coast Guard requires all children ages 13 and under to wear a personal floatation device any time they are on a recreational water vehicle. Obey all signs while on the water and keep a close eye out for other boaters and swimmers. In addition to this, remember that drinking alcohol while boating will impair one's judgement and reaction times. Drinking and boating is considered drinking and driving.

Swimming can be a great way to enjoy Florida's natural scenery and escape the heat that accompanies summer. It is our responsibility to ensure the safety of our children, and of ourselves, when in and around the water. For more information related to drowning prevention and resources, please visit [polk.floridahealth.gov](http://polk.floridahealth.gov) or [waterprooffl.com](http://waterprooffl.com). **hn**

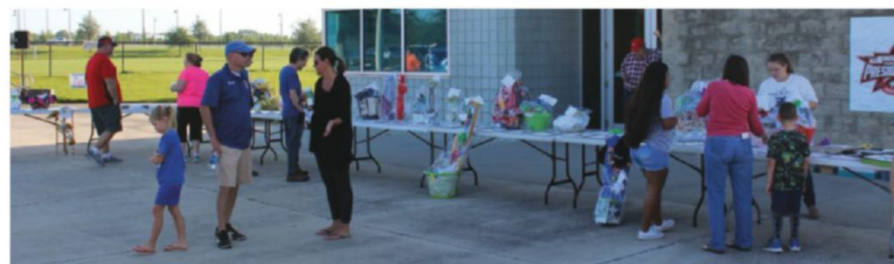
**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Dr. Joy Jackson, an internal medicine physician, serves the community as director of the Florida Department of Health in Polk County (DOH-Polk). For more information about DOH-Polk, visit [mypolkhealth.org](http://mypolkhealth.org). Follow DOH-Polk on Twitter at [twitter.com/FLHealthPolk](https://twitter.com/FLHealthPolk).



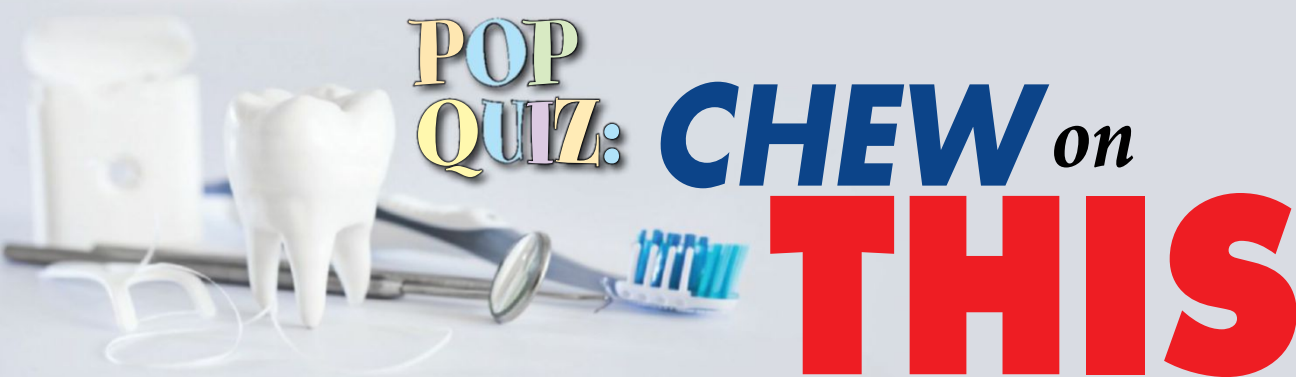
### Banding Together for Foster Children

On Saturday, April 14, the Polk Pre-Collegiate Academy (PPCA) organized the Strummin' & Drummin' 5K Run/Walk - Banding Together for Foster Children event. Proceeds from the 5K went towards foster children, served through Polk, Highlands, and Hardee counties' Heartland for Children non-profit organization, for essential personal items to support their transition into foster care. There was a silent auction during the race as well as a variety of music genres from local musicians throughout the day.

photos by MATT COBBLE







POP QUIZ: CHEW on THIS

## See How Much You Know About Tooth and Gum Disease

by ERIKA ALDRICH

**T**OOTH AND GUM DISEASE are important health considerations well beyond childhood, but they are not as high in our social health consciousness as they need to be. Since knowledge is power, knowing as much as possible about oral health can help you to decrease your chances of having cavities, losing teeth, developing periodontal disease, or being diagnosed with oral cancer. How much do you think you know about gum disease, cavities, tooth loss, and oral cancer? Take our quiz and chew on the facts and statistics within concerning tooth and gum diseases.

**1** *What is the most common cause of tooth loss among adults?*

- A. Injury
- B. Periodontal (Gum) Disease
- C. Oral Cancer
- D. Dental Caries (Cavities)

**2** *True or False? The rate of moderate and severe periodontal disease—characterized by the loss of gums, jaw bone, and/or teeth—in adults and seniors has increased since 1970.*

**3** *Which of the following increase the dangers of having periodontal disease?*

- A. Smoking
- B. Getting older
- C. Being male
- D. Poor oral routines
- E. All of the Above

**4** *Which of following is the largest, yet most preventable, chronic disease in both children and adults in the U.S.?*

- A. Arthritis
- B. Cancer
- C. Dental Cavities
- D. Gum Disease

**5** *Fill-in-the-Blank: The rate of cavities has significantly \_\_\_\_\_ for most Americans in the last 40 years, but*

*that trend recently \_\_\_\_\_ for children.*

- A. Increased; decreased
- B. Slowed; accelerated
- C. Increased; stalled
- D. Decreased; reversed

**6** *While tooth loss has decreased since the 1970s for adults over 65, what percentage of seniors are missing 100% of their teeth?*

- A. 27%
- B. 36%
- C. 52%
- D. 79%

**7** *True or False? Elderly women are more likely than elderly men to suffer from tooth loss.*

**8** *Approximately how many Americans are diagnosed with oral cancer every year?*

- A. 37,600
- B. 49,700
- C. 55,400
- D. 68,300

**9** *Fill-in-the-blank: Since the mid-1970s, rates of oral cancer have \_\_\_\_\_ by 15%, and the 5-year survival rate has \_\_\_\_\_.*

- A. Decreased; increased
- B. Increased; decreased

editor's dose

## Don't Brush Aside These Healthy Foods for Your Teeth!



CELESTE JO WALLS, Editor  
celeste.walls@centralfloridamediagroup.com

**E**veryone knows the various ways we can help keep our mouths healthy. We've heard it all at the dentist before – brush twice a day, floss in-between meals, no excess sugar, etc. But what about our diet? Besides cutting out the sugars, what foods can help to improve our overall oral hygiene? There's quite a few, actually.

If you're a dairy fan, you might have a healthy mouth already. Cheese and yogurt have calcium and protein that strengthen tooth enamel. Cheese helps to lower the risk of tooth decay and yogurt has beneficial bacteria that help your gums by crowding out the bad bacteria that causes cavities.

Apples and carrots are a few more easy, quick snacks that promote a healthy mouth. Both are full of fiber and increase saliva production in your mouth. This rinses away bacteria and food particles, which reduce your risk of cavities. The fibrous texture of apples also stimulates the gums.

Finally, don't forget your greens! Leafy greens such as kale and spinach are full of vitamins and minerals that help promote oral health. They are high in calcium and contain folic acid, a type of B vitamin that has numerous health benefits, including possibly treating gum disease in pregnant women. Celery is another green that is a good source of vitamins A and C, two antioxidants that give the health of your gums a boost.

Remember to be mindful of what you drink as well. Water is always a safe option and avoid drinking too much sugary soda or juice.

Having a healthy mouth doesn't have to be a pain, adding a few of these foods into your diet will go a long way in keeping your teeth, gums, and mouth healthy! **hn**

*continued on next page*





# All About Allergies

TRISHANNA SOOKDEO, MD  
trishanna.sookdeo@heartofflorida.com

**W**hether you call it seasonal allergies, allergic rhinitis, or hay fever, it affects millions of people worldwide and is very common. There are two main types of allergic rhinitis:

**Seasonal allergies (hay fever):** Caused by an allergy to pollen and/or mold spores in the air. Pollen, is comes from flowering plants and is carried through the air and is easily inhaled. Symptoms are seasonal and usually occur in spring, late summer, and fall.

**Perennial allergies:** These symptoms occur all year round and are caused by allergens such as dust mites, pet hair or dander, or mold.

Symptoms vary, depending on the severity of your allergies. They can include:

- Sneezing.
- Coughing.
- Itching (mostly ears, eyes, nose, mouth, throat and skin).
- Runny/stuffy nose.
- Headache.
- Pressure in the nose and cheeks.
- Ear fullness and popping.
- Sore/itchy throat.
- Watery, red, or swollen eyes.
- Dark circles under your eyes.
- Decrease sense of smell or taste
- Hives

- Low grade fever
- Malaise

Talk to your doctor if you experience any of these. Many over the counter medication are first line treatments for symptoms, but prescription drugs or a referral to an allergist is sometimes helpful. Here are some steps you can take to limit your exposure to the pollen or molds that cause your symptoms:

- Keep your windows closed at night
- Use air conditioning, which cleans, cools and dries the air.
- follow your local news channel regarding pollen count and try to stay indoors when the pollen or mold counts are high.
- With severe symptoms, wear a pollen mask if long periods of exposure are unavoidable.
- When you return indoors, take a shower, shampoo your hair and change clothes.
- Avoid being responsible for mowing lawns or raking leaves. This stirs up pollen and molds.
- Also avoid hanging sheets or clothes outside to dry.
- Take all medication as prescribed.
- When traveling by car, keep your windows closed.

This article is sponsored by Heart of Florida Regional Medical Center.

BIO: Dr. Trishanna Sookdeo is a board-certified physician who has a Master's in Public Health. She cares for the whole family, ages three days and up at Heart of Florida Physician Group. Should you have any questions or wish to schedule an appointment, call 863-419-2420, ext. 2, and ask for Dr. Sookdeo.

continued from previous page

- C. Increased; increased
- D. Decreased; decreased

- C. Between 50 and 60
- D. Between 60 and 70
- E. None of the Above

**At what age do oral cancer rates peak?**

- A. Between 20 and 30
- B. Between 40 and 50

Resources: Information provided by the National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research

- Answers
1. B. Periodontal (Gum) Disease. Gum disease is the leading cause of tooth loss in adults.
  2. False. The rates of moderate and severe periodontal disease in adults has decreased since the 1970s.
  3. E. All of the Above. The risk for developing periodontal disease increases with age, if you are male, if you smoke, and if your oral healthcare routines are poor.
  4. C. Dental Cavities. Cavities, or dental caries, are the largest and most preventable chronic disease in both children and adults.
  5. D. Decreased; reversed. While the rate of adult cavities has decreased significantly since the 1970s, that decreasing trend has reversed recently for children.
  6. A. 27%. Of the seniors over the age of 65 in the U.S., 27.27% of them are missing all of their teeth.
  7. True. Senior women are slightly more likely than men to have missing teeth; of remaining teeth.
  8. B. 49,700. Nearly 50,000 Americans are diagnosed with cancer of the mouth or pharynx—oral cancer—every year.
  9. C. Increased; increased. While the rate of oral cancer diagnoses has increased by 15% since the 1970s—likely through increased awareness and screening—the 5-year survival rate has also increased by 15% since the 1960s.
  10. D. Between 60 and 70. The risk of developing oral cancer increases with age, peaking between the ages of 60 and 70.



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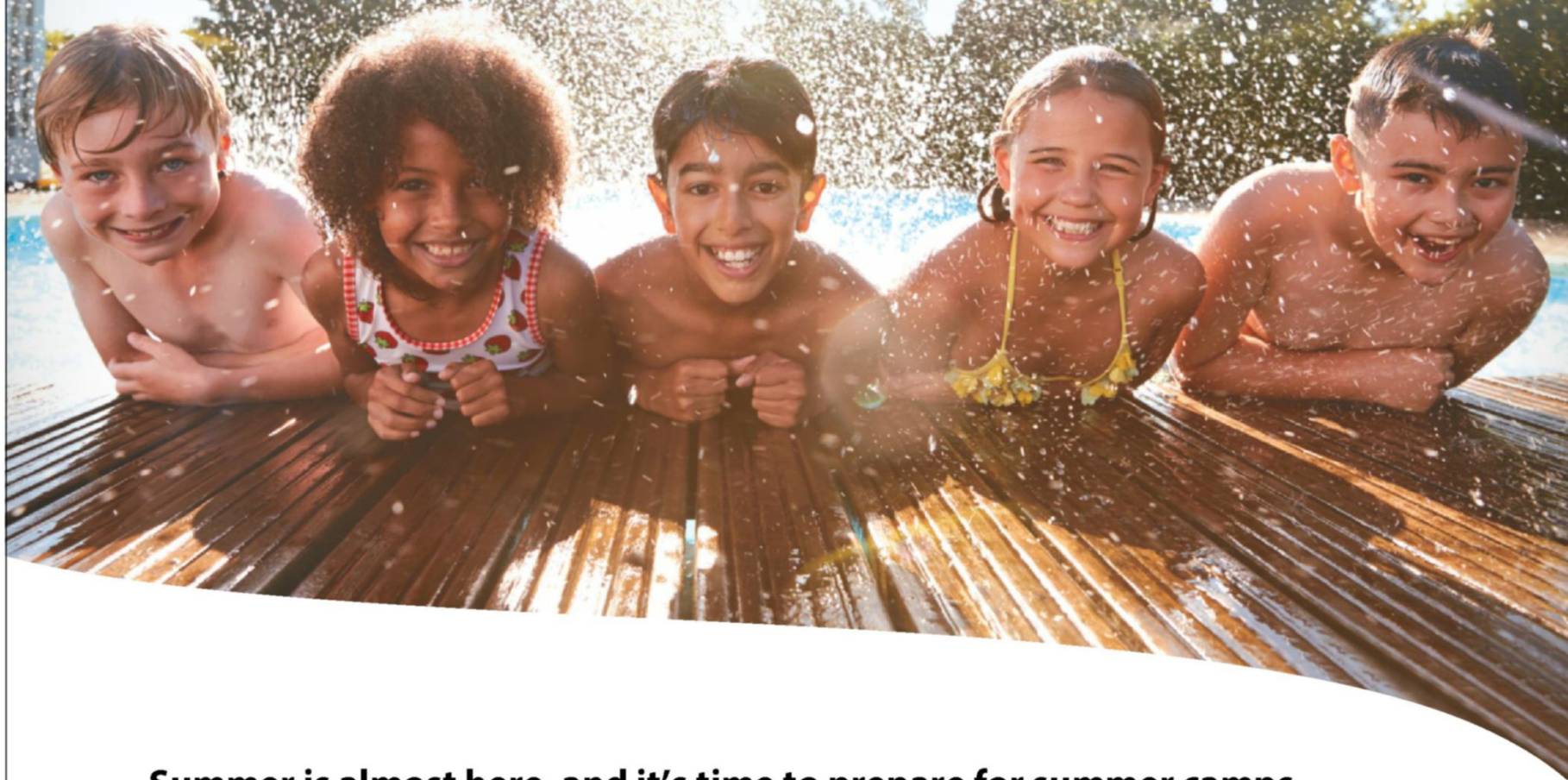
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