

Have a Go News ACTIVE AGEING LIFTOUT



Pole walking is an easy, efficient and low stress activity that promotes health and well-being. See page 9 for more details.



Active ageing important for a healthy body and mind



Mick Murray MLA

MICK MURRAY, Minister for Seniors and Ageing asks why is it that so many of us stop being active and trying new things as we head towards retirement age and beyond?

"We enthusiastically encourage our grandchildren into organised sport, recreation and social activities but we often don't place the same importance on

ourselves having that kind of healthy, balanced life.

"Perhaps some of us are still viewing the retirement years in the way previous generations did – where once the working and family-raising years were over, there wasn't much more on offer.

"I have seen that kind of old-world situation first-hand, where many of my former colleagues from underground coal mines were well and truly worn out by retirement age. The hard physical labour had worked them to the bone and there wasn't much left in the tank. Thankfully,

that kind of punishing physical labour is largely a thing of the past – and it means many more of us are able to enter our retirement years relatively fit, healthy and ready to enjoy life.

"Having the physical capability to get involved is one thing – but having the right attitude is just as important. Some people unfortunately allow the perception to persist in their own minds that there is nothing new to try, see, or do. The reality couldn't be further from the truth.

"There is more on offer now recreationally, physically and socially

for seniors than ever before. Social sport, community gardens, dance classes, seniors camps... these are just a handful of the hundreds of options on offer. For those who are less mobile, there are also a whole range of options like book clubs and card games to keep the mind ticking.

Have A Go Day, held on Wednesday 14 November during Seniors Week is a terrific event to attend if you don't know where to start, and the Council on the Ageing can also provide some great advice. Get out there and get involved," said Minister Murray.

Encouraging healthy ageing through activity



Jennifer Merigan

KEEPING active both physically and mentally as we get older delivers the best outcomes for our health and well-being.

We feature the low impact activity of pole walking on our front cover. This provides people with an opportunity to double the benefits of a normal walk. See page 9 for more information.

Research shows regular physical activity is the magic potion for longevity and we profile Derek Melhuish who climbed the Gloucester Tree to celebrate his 95th birthday. Now that's having a go!

There's a wealth of information for staying active inside these pages including stories on everyday people and how they keep active.

For those who may have a chronic disease a specially tailored exercise program can help. Our journalist Frank Smith who lives with spinal column damage shares his story about his participation in the Living Longer Living Strong

ger exercise program which enables him to maintain strength and flexibility.

Sleep is such an important part of our overall well being and we offer some practical tips for people on how to get to sleep.

Whatever your interests, there are myriad opportunities to join in on some physical activity especially designed for the over 50s.

For those who would like to join a club or a group tailored for the over 50s our website has a host of information - visit www.haveagone.com.au/clubs/

Jennifer Merigan
Editor

Protecting the rights of older people in WA

ADVOCARE is an independent, community-based, not-for-profit organisation that supports and protects the rights of older people in Western Australia through advocacy, information and education.

The team of advocates can help anyone who has a concern with a service about their rights or feel they are not being respected.

They supply information, advice and resources, to people to ensure they are fully informed about rights and options to enable better decision making.

They also offer support skills and strategies to resolve issues with any residential or community care services,

or for people who may be experiencing elder abuse.

Advocare also operates the Elder Abuse Helpline and supports older people who are experiencing abuse or are at risk of abuse.

The services are free, confidential and provided by a team of professional advocates. Contact them Monday to Friday 8.30am - 4.30pm, enquiries about general aged care information, call 08 9479 7566, country callers 1800 655 566.

For the Elder Abuse Helpline call 1300 724 679. They can also be contacted on email rights@advocare.org.au or visit www.advocare.org.au.

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Kick off and continue to play soccer - only walking style...



Paul Grayson (left) and Tony Stewart toss the ball around in this adapted game of soccer

by Brad Elborough

WE'RE always looking for ways of extending our sporting careers; to keep the glory days alive.

Well, just when some of you may have thought the opportunities to do so were long gone, along comes Tony Stewart.

Tony is making a lot of

former football (soccer) stars get their boots and jerseys out of mothballs through his Fox Football Fives initiative.

He's developed two artificial football pitches on top of a lawn bowls green at the Cambridge Bowling Club in Floreat.

They are just like indoor football pitches, only outside. They are 40m x 20m

in size and have nets all around them, as well as on top, so the ball is always alive.

They are perfect for games of five-on-five, with teams consisting of four players in field and a goal keeper.

Social groups, hard-nose competitors, junior groups, organised clubs, mixed teams, those no

longer able to play seniors or masters and even those with disabilities, are already trialling the pitches. And so far, the feedback has been extremely positive and encouraging.

Tony already has organised competitions for some of these categories and is planning more.

But it is the walking football that is gaining the most attention and is a version of the sport that Tony is very keen to expand on.

"Walking leagues have become very popular in England," he said.

"Even though you are walking, you are still kicking the ball and working up a sweat.

"And it's still competitive."

The rules are easy. If you run - that is, you don't have one foot on the ground at any one time - you turn the ball over to the other team.

That doesn't mean that the game is slow either. It encourages players to move the ball around quickly, rather than dribble it.

Walking football on these pitches encourages the use of skills to move the ball around, not so much leg speed. So, if you fancy your ball control and kicking skills, here's your chance to show them off to your kids or grandkids.

A recent trial game consisting of players aged in their mid-30s, who are still actively playing, to some in their late 60s, proved that walking football was a viable option for all ages.

Paul Grayson, 63, hasn't had many opportunities to play the game he loves so much since having both hips and a knee replaced. But in this game, his skills, both in goals and out, were valuable.

Tony is starting a walking competition for over 50s. As soon as he has enough players for four teams, he'll blow the whistle for the first kick-off.

While he expects former players to be inspired by the concept, he also thinks those who haven't played football

before will be lured by the format.

"With my facility, because the perimeter is boarded, if you do a bad pass, or you mis-control it, it hits a wall and you play on," Tony said.

"When you play on a full-sized pitch, the ball is out of play for more than 30 per cent of the game.

"With my rebound format, you keep going. You only stop play for a free kick, or if a goal is scored."

"It's perfect too for people who are a bit out of shape, but still might have some skills, or those just looking for a bit of camaraderie."

Games consist of two halves, each going for 20 minutes.

The special FIFA certified artificial-turf surface also makes this facility very friendly on joints. The 60mm of artificial grass is laid on top of a thick layer of soft rubber.

"I have a shock pad, made from reconstituted car dashes and seats, that is made in Germany," Tony said.

"It's really easy on your

joints compared to grass and some of other pitches around Perth where the turf is rolled out on bitumen or sand."

With modern and well-thought-out drainage and flood lighting, games can be played all year around, during the day and at night.

As well as being perfect for introducing youngsters to the sport and getting active teams ready for a coming season, this set up is sure to get previously retired players back on to the pitch.

The chance to brag about performances, either recently displayed, or from yesteryear, is also popular among players.

Being located at the Cambridge Bowling Club, the bar and barbecue facilities are available for the football players to use.

For more information, or to register: Visit www.foxfootballfives.com.au call 0481 150 010 - email manager@foxfootballfives.com.au. Individual players are welcome.



Frank's grandkids don't mind when he drops in on them.

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Some practical tips on getting motivated to improve lifestyle and well-being



30 minutes of daily moderate exercise, such as cycling is ideal for mature adults

by Frank Smith

WE all know that we ought to exercise and eat more fruit and vegetables. Some of us may also need to give up smoking or drink less alcohol.

But knowing we should and actually doing things are not the same. What we need is motivation to achieve the goals we have set ourselves.

Dr Loren Mowszowski of Sydney University School of Psychology has five tips for achieving goals. She says:

Set SMART goals. That is an acronym for goals that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timely.

"Set two types of goal – one short term that you can achieve quickly. This will give you encouragement to carry on. Also set longer term goals that will take you six months or more to achieve," she said.

"Try to build new habits that you want to adopt into a pre-existing routine."

For example walking further when you do the shopping or adding a salad or more vegetables to your lunch.

"Enlist help from your family and friends to give you encouragement to keep on striving to reach the goal you have set. If you want to

walk more, try finding a walking partner so you have someone you are accountable to.

"Remember to measure and track your progress and use this to revise your goals so that they remain realistic," she said.

Dr Elissa Burton of Curtin University says motivation depends on the person. Everyone is different.

"My mum hates devices while my dad loves them. He keeps track of his movements using his fitbit. He loves finding out how many steps he's done today.

"The first thing with older people is to find out what they like doing – stuff they enjoy on a regular basis.

"My mum loves swimming and gardening. I encourage her to garden as much as she can, but when she is weeding I want her to get down on her knees. Getting up and down is excellent exercise for older people

"The guidelines for older people are 30 minutes per day of moderate intensity exercise, such as walking, swimming or cycling. You should puff a little.

"Also seniors need strength and balance exercises twice a week. There are lots of good local programs such as Living Longer Living Stronger or Tai Chi.

"Find something local and easy to get to,

also someone to exercise with. Use a partner or your kids to provide extra motivation. Even a dog has been shown to provide extra motivation and if you like dogs the Shenton Park Dogs Home is always looking for volunteers," she said.

Professor Martin Hagger of Curtin University says mental imagery can be used to provide motivation.

"Mental imagery is visualising the desired action – what you are going to do and the goal you want to achieve in real time.

"Visualise the steps necessary to get into a situation. For example rehearse getting ready for exercise and visualise the exercises you are going to do."

"Mental images are relatively brief and self administered. The more detailed the instructions the greater the effect.

"They are most effective when they include a follow up imagery component such as text messages or maintaining a diary," he said.

Most research points to working with other people to get motivated. Join a walking or exercise group, especially one where someone will ring up to check that you are all right if you don't turn up.

You can also think of ways to add more vegetables to your diet with a partner or friend.

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vide one-on-one support.

There are also a number of activities on offer at the VisAbility Community Activity Centre including woodwork, pool walking and discussion groups. Activities are modified to make them bigger, bolder and brighter.

Participants are supported to use specialised equipment, assistive technology, processes and their other senses to compensate for their vision impairment or disability.

This program uses self-management and wellness approaches and is reviewed every three months in response to participant needs and feedback.

"I would strongly recommend anyone with a disability, not just vision impairment, to get in touch with VisAbility. The staff I have encountered are caring, knowledgeable and empowering. The aids and advice I have obtained help me so much, you have no idea," said Lorene Brochure, a Community Activity Centre client.

And if you're over 65 and accessing services from a disability provider, you may be eligible to receive either individual services or a tailored package of services under MyAgedCare funding.

If you would like to know more about VisAbility's Sport and Recreation program, the Community Activity Centre or My Aged Care, contact VisAbility today on 9311 8202.

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Men's Sheds promote active ageing



and other pursuits.

Many Men's Sheds also contribute to the maintenance and development of local community facilities.

Older and retired men are typically reluctant to recognise and discuss their health matters and frequently avoid seeking health advice and submitting to routinely available health checks. Mixing with other men of similar age and health status makes these discussions easier and less confronting.

In some cases men have become disconnected from their local community. It could be they have had a central focus on work and family. As life changes through retirement, job loss, loss of their partner or relationship breakdown, a number of men are challenged with anxiety and depressive issues.

There are 180 Men's Sheds throughout Western Australia. Find a Shed near you. Their contact details are available at www.mensshed.org.au/sheds-near-you.

SIMPLY being a member of a Men's Shed enhances men's health and well-being in many ways, including overcoming social isolation and providing meaningful activities. There is a positive impact on physical and mental health, plus social inclusion, with benefits extending to relationships and families, plus the wider community.

The membership of Sheds is diverse. Men from all backgrounds, ethnic and social mixes enjoy the benefits of their Shed, bringing their own cultural characteristics and life's experiences to enliven the activities.

The common theme in

all Men's Sheds is about men feeling useful and by contributing to their communities being valued, learning or sharing their skills, making friends, networking and availing themselves of health information programs and opportunities.

They work on projects, contribute to the community, learn new skills, unwind and talk with mates. Activities vary widely, as groups pursue their members' interests. These include woodwork, metalwork, the restoration of old cars, building equipment for third world countries, restoring computers for the not-for-profit sector

It's all in the stroke for senior swimmers



Left to right; Channel 7 newsreader, Susannah Carr - Octogenarian Tony Smith

by Lee Tate

SWIMMING ain't what it used to be and seniors are making the most of it.

People come to public pools and the ocean with all types of floating apparatus plus flippers, masks and snorkels.

Any embarrassment by poor swimmers at being seen splashing about in public has gone down the gurgler. And fair enough, provided they don't block the lanes of us swimming regulars.

It's all nicely supervised with most public pools setting aside times for special groups with lanes for slow, medium and fast swimmers.

Some groups do water exercises under the direction of supervisors with music blaring. There is definitely a place for the senior, the disabled and the struggling or shy swimmer.

Swimming pool managers, exercise leaders and local councils all pitch-in to play their parts. Newcomers can phone ahead and ask the best times to take their dips when numbers are lowest.

Octogenarian Tony Smith has swum all his life and

it helps his asthma. He's a regular among Cottesloe Surf Lifesaving Club ocean swimmers and now swims with the crabs - that's Cottesloe Crabs.

On Sundays, about 60 swimmers have handicapped races and events at HBF Stadium (formerly Challenge Stadium).

"You always feel refreshed after a swim and miss it if you don't do it. There's also the camaraderie in the group," says Tony.

"You're swimming in a heated pool and you can be aged 70, 80 or 90. We have coffee, home-made soup and sausages after the swim. It's enjoyable and the swim is good for you."

Experts tell us swimming has advantages over other activities. Swimming uses all the muscles in the body whether you swim a gentle breaststroke or do butterfly.

"Exercising in water makes your body work harder so 30 minutes in a pool is worth 45 minutes of the same activity on land," says one instructor.

A great form of cardiovascular exercise, swimming 30 minutes a week can help to guard against heart disease, stroke and type 2 diabetes. It is ideal exercise for people with osteoarthritis who find weight-bearing exercises excruciatingly painful. Swimming decreases arterial stiffness, a risk factor for heart trouble.

Swim training is linked with lower blood pressure among people with hypertension.

The coolness and buoyancy of water appeals to overweight or obese people who find load-bearing aerobic exercises like running, too hot or uncomfortable. Water supports up to 90 per cent of the body's weight.

"Just 30 minutes of swimming three times a week alongside a balanced, healthy diet and lifestyle is one of the best ways to stay fit, healthy and maintain a positive mental outlook," says the instructor. "Do it with friends, and it's even more fun."

A gentle swim can burn more than 200 calories in half an hour, more than double that of walking. It is great for general well-being.

Channel 7 newsreader Susannah Carr gives swimming a top-rating.

"It's all about fitness and health. When I started swimming in my twenties I changed my circulation problems and increased my lung capacity," said Susannah who swims 20 laps (one km) twice a week.

Do you miss it when on assignment or on holiday? "Sure do but unless you go to a resort with a big pool it's rarely possible."

Do you mostly swim the same stroke? "Mostly freestyle but sometimes breaststroke every fourth lap."

Do you vary your speed?

"After all these years I'm still not fast. It's frustrating but that's just the way it is. I've considered getting some coaching and may still do that. But a friend said if your stroke is inefficient you use more energy so maybe I'll just stay an inefficient swimmer."

"It's harder in summer when more people use the pool... we all-year-round swimmers feel a trifle resentful towards fine weather-only swimmers."

Do you feel it does you better and feel good afterwards?

"Always feel great and it's very meditational. Any downside?"

"Not really... I have to wash hair anyway!"

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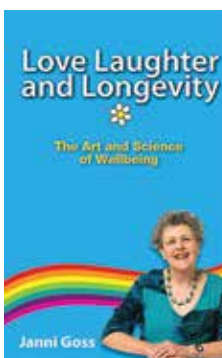
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Laughter is the best medicine...



JANNI Goss says that laughter is one of the most cost-effective ways to reduce stress and help boost the immune system.

Janni is the Laughter WA coordinator and runs various laughter yoga classes. She has published *Love, Laughter and Longevity* to promote healthy ageing and well being.

Each chapter deals with different issues and provides the reader with the opportunity to better understand trigger points which lead to poor health and stress.

She particularly focuses on laughter to help people live a happy and healthy life.

They say laughter is the best medicine and this book offers suggestions to help those journey to a life of well being and happiness.

For more information call Janni Goss on 9277 7922 or visit her website at www.jannigoss.com

Coming full circle and getting back in the saddle of cycling



Lee Tate

by Lee Tate

I'M BACK on a bicycle and loving it. Like a lot of baby boomers, my life's come full cycle.

It's just a discarded bloke's bike, all black with a cracked seat and rusty bike stand. Certainly not suited in any way to joining those gung-ho, lycra lads who know only one speed.

Being back in the saddle has opened pathways to unexpected and welcome new outings and adventures. Big and small.

I remember my first bike as a schoolboy. It was bright red and also pre-loved.

Coming down my very first hill, I slammed into a light pole in Swanbourne. While the rider was intact the bike's front fork was forced back towards the frame.

From then on the front wheel could turn only when the pedals were vertical, stationary and clear of the turning front wheel. But you adapt. In our day you knew there'd be no replacement.

Cycling for seniors enriches your life but not in a high-powered way.

Not for us hurtling along highways or pounding down pathways packed with petrified pedestrians. Speed isn't the point of it. And you may have a gammy knee or arthritic joint to consider.

There's pure pleasure, the newfound freedom of setting out at sunrise or coming home at sunset after a session of open-air peddling. You don't have to work up a sweat.

My wife, Robyn, and I now take our bikes on holidays with us. It's the last luggage to go into our caravan after all else is packed, tethered tight to the caravan kitchen table with rubber straps.

Country expeditions have taken us down bush tracks we wouldn't otherwise have seen, along wa-

ter drains, beside rail tracks and, in Broome, past a dumfounded dingo.

In Busselton there are bike/walk trails that hug the coast and from the caravan park to town it's about 30 minutes, just the right distance for a cycle outing.

I do it religiously before breakfast. Rain, hail or shine it clears the head and stretches the legs, bracing you for whatever else the day holds. I also have a beach swim.

Why wouldn't you have a bike? Bikes are easy to use. Cheap to buy, sometimes free. Seniors certainly don't need the latest, lightweight streamlined machines. They come at high prices and need to be carefully looked-after.

For boomers, enjoyment is the object. If fitness follows it's a welcome side benefit.

Bikes cost little to run, after obtaining helmet, lock and good air pump and are cheap to service and fix.

My battered bike is kept outside in the elements. I put a plastic bag over the seat to stop water seeping into the split.

Occasionally I spray its moving parts with an oily spray. Apart from cleaning-off red dust after riding in the North-West, I barely touch the bike.

When I got the bike, I had the bike shop mechanic give it the once-over and replaced a tyre and tube. And I've been cruising ever since.

My bike is no lightweight. But it's tough and doesn't easily damage if it topples over.

The bike came with a rack on the back, handy for a Sunday ride to get a newspaper or occasionally to collect some light shopping and an occasional chance to leave the car at home. What's the rush?

We've had plenty of adventures and a misadventure. Between 5.30am and 7.30am, the only two hours it was unlocked, Robyn's

bike was nicked from a caravan park in Busselton.

We reported it at the cop shop and then, not wanting to ruin a holiday, tracked down a second-hand bike in the area and used that for a few days. Busselton police did a top job, investigated and later rang to say the bike had been found in sand hills – not an uncommon occurrence,

they said.

But now we had a surplus bike. So, for a quick sale on Christmas Eve, Robyn took a photo of the surplus bike and put it on Gumtree. The bike sold immediately for the price we paid.

On one of our outings, on the track near Busselton hospital, we encountered a duggie at close quarters – almost under a front

tyre – but we gave way and it turned for the bush. Since then I've seen several snakes of varying hues dashing across or sunning next to bike tracks.

Two longer-term bike buddies tell me they are switching to electric bikes: one has hernia issues and the other is finding some steep hills near his home becoming too grueling and doesn't want to aggra-

vate old wounds.

Some senior blokes order women's electric bikes because they won't have to throw the leg over the bar, risking injury.

Bike riding leaves you feeling good.

A study published in *Aging Cell* magazine compared 125 keen and longtime cyclists aged 55-79 with same-age non-cyclists.

Results showed cy-

clists had far better muscular strength, lung function, fitness levels, blood pressure and immune systems than the others.

A recent Swedish survey of 200 women, middle aged to 90s, found that the physically-fittest of them reduced their risk of dementia by 90 per cent.

They all make good reason for all of us riding into life's sunset.



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Living Longer Living Stronger program providers

Tier 1 – Providers include accredited exercise physiologists or physiotherapists who work directly with people who have a chronic illness or rehabilitation requirements.

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Attadale Physiotherapy Centre	9317 4777
• Balcatta	
Bounce Physiotherapy	9344 7476
• Bedford	
Exercise for Life	9371 8563
• Bentley	
Curtin University Physiotherapy Clinic	9266 4644
• Bicton	
Life Ready Physio	6313 4010
• Bullcreek	
Revolv Heath (at Definition Health Club)	9313 5125
• Bunbury	
Maximum Results Exercise Physiology	9792 4179
• Canning Vale	
REPS Movement	6258 5822
• Claremont	
Essence Lifestyle Changes	9386 8588
• Coogee	
Coogee Beach Fitness Club	9418 4227
• East Fremantle	
REPS Movement	9319 8355
• Inglewood	
Life Ready Physio	9276 6155
• Joondalup	
ECU Vario Wellness Clinic	6304 3444
• Margaret River	
Margaret River Recreation Centre	9780 5620
• Merriwa	
Seaside Exercise Physiology	0497 065 883
• Midland	
Life Ready Physio	9250 7772
• Rockingham	
Life Ready Physio	9500 7643
• Wangara	
The Health and Fitness Centre	9409 3033
• Warwick	
Life Ready Physio	6168 8564

Tier 2 and working seniors tier providers - are accredited fitness professionals who have also completed the compulsory Living Longer Living Stronger™ Instructor Training Course. Working Seniors' Tier is now available at most Tier 2 providers – offering an expert level assessment and safe gym program for those unable to attend regular session times.

• Armadale		
Armadale Arena		9394 5840
• Augusta		
Augusta Recreation Centre		9780 5620
• Bassendean		
Jetts Bassendean		6278 2799
• Beechboro		
Altone Park Leisure Centre		9207 8555
• Bedford		
Exercise for Life		9371 8563
• Bridgetown		
Bridgetown-Greenbushes Recreation Centre		9761 2966
• Cannington		
Cannington Leisureplex		6350 7300
• City Beach		
Bold Park Aquatic Centre (Tier 2 only)		9385 8767
• Cockburn		
ROAR Fitness		9468 7778
• Collie		
Roche Park Recreation Centre		9734 4388
• Denmark		
Denmark Recreation Centre		9848 2044
• Donnybrook		
Donnybrook Recreation Centre		9731 1822
• East Perth		
Stadium Fitness		0434 233 382
• East Victoria Park		
Leisurelife Centre		9373 5450
• Ellenbrook		
Jetts Ellenbrook		6296 7042
• Falcon		
Anytime Fitness Mandurah South		9534 4495
• Forrestfield		
Hartfield Park Recreation Centre		9359 1700

• Halls Head		
Halls Head Community Centre		9550 3950
• Harvey		
Harvey Rec and Cultural Centre		9729 3311
• Kalgoorlie		
Eastern Goldfields YMCA		9021 1035
• Kelmscott		
Genesis Health Club		9390 4900
• Kwinana		
Kwinana Recquatic		9236 4700
• Mandurah		
Mandurah Aquatic and Recreation Centre		9550 3600
• Melville		
Leisure Fit Melville		9364 0800
• Merredin		
Merredin Squash and Fitness		9041 2381
• Merriwa		
Seaside Exercise Physiology		0497 065 883
• Midvale		
Swan Park Leisure Centre		9207 8888
• Morley		
YMCA Morley Sport and Recreation Centre		9375 3529
• Mt Barker		
Mt Barker Recreation Centre (Tier 2 only)		9851 2122
• Mundaring		
Club Sierra		9295 1426
• Narrogin		
YMCA Narrogin Regional Leisure Centre		9881 2651
• North Lake		
Lakeside Recreation Centre		9310 7700
• Northam		
In-Balance Fitness		9622 5335
• Pinjarra		
Shire of Murray Recreation Centre		9531 2000
• Riverton		
Riverton Leisureplex		9231 0900
• Thornlie		
City of Gosnells Leisure World		9251 8700
• Wangara		
The Health and Fitness Centre (working seniors tier only)		9409 3033
• Warnbro		
Aqua Jetty Rockingham		9591 0888

COTA WA celebrates Active Ageing

The winners of the WA Senior Awards 2017 are great examples of positive and active ageing



WA Seniors Awards

Metropolitan Juniper Lifetime Achievement Award Winner

Philip Paddon

Phil Paddon has volunteered for more than 15 years, encouraging older people to remain active as they age. He is vice president of the Seniors Recreation Council of WA, runs annual events for the Square Dancing Association of WA and stages country music concerts.



WA Seniors Awards

Regional Juniper Lifetime Achievement Award Winner

Lesley Balinski

Lesley Balinski is actively involved in working with the diverse community in Katanning. She tutors English, helps new arrivals settle in the town, and advocates for them as part of the Katanning Multicultural District Health Advisory Council. She also works closely with the town's young people, organising events, drama workshops and teaching ballroom dancing.

Keep active for good health and happiness – Join the Living Longer Living Stronger™ program which promotes active ageing for people aged 50 and over.



For information contact COTA WA | The Perron Centre, 61 Kitchener Avenue, Victoria Park | Ph: 9472 0104 | w: www.cotawa.org.au

Practising what I preach in exercise utilising the Living Longer Living Stronger program



Frank Smith

by Frank Smith

IT is important when you write about ways of maintaining your health as you age, that you practise what you preach.

So I've been going to my local gym twice a week for eight years, missing only for holidays and injury. I signed up for COTA's Living Longer, Living Stronger program (LLLS) for seniors and when my Kalamunda gym ceased to offer the course, I moved to the Midland Leisure Centre.

Now I'm one of about 40 regulars who range from youngsters of 60 upwards. The doyen of us is Olive still going strong at 87 and leaving many younger women for dead on the treadmill or lifting weights. As if that were not enough she mothers us all.

In theory members turn up at midday and start with 10 minutes of group exercises to warm us up, under the leadership of one of the trained instructors. They then do a number of individually prescribed exercises with weights and aerobic exercises on the treadmills or stationary bicycles. Later there are more group exercises as a cooling down period.

I do something a bit different. For the past 16 years I've been living with spinal column damage that limits my mobility, so I concentrate on weights. I start off around 11.30am with 20 minutes of the stationary bicycle. My target is to generating at least 55 watts. By this time I'm warmed up and therefore miss out on the class warm up exercises. I then go on the weight machines until

12.45pm when I join the rest for class exercises for cooling down. I aim for 90 minute workouts twice a week.

I've gradually increased the weights I push, pull and lift until I can manage 80kg on the chest press, something that the younger people in the gym do with ease, but not many of us oldies.

Along the way I've rebuilt strength and flexibility in my shoulder following a reconstruction after breaking the bone and tearing the ligaments in a fall three years ago.

While exercise is my main interest, the class has a social side. To some members that is clearly the main point of coming, but most combine chatting and exercising.

I have made no great effort to

socialise but still know most of the regulars by name. The Leisure Centre puts on free coffee after the class for participants and at least half of them take advantage of this. I often intend to, but by 1pm I am starving and hurry home for lunch. I also have an active social life independent of the gym, including interviewing many interesting people for *Have a Go News*.

Am I healthier as a result of the exercise? LLLS has certainly increased my strength and this is invaluable when I am in danger of falling. I can't say going to the gym is the highlight of my week, but if I miss out I regret it. For me the main motivating factor is trying to do better each time I go.

I'm striving to eventually lift 100kg on the chest press. I'll let you know when I get there.

Walk this way and enjoy an all-round work-out

POLE walking is a low impact activity which provides a complete body work out for people.

Introduced to WA by the Seniors Recreation Council in 2006, more than 7000 people have 'had a go' at this activity and many of those continue to walk individually or in pole walking groups.

The concept came about from skiers in Nordic countries who utilised their ski poles to assist in walking the mountains.

Using poles was found to be a great benefit for walkers and in 1988 manufacture began of poles specifically made for walking.

It is now considered to be one of the best all round low impact workouts and especially effective for older adults.

Pole walkers use more of their muscles and the activity has a greater intensity, increasing fitness and muscle tone quicker and easier than normal walking.

Pole walking builds up, strengthens and tones muscles in the chest, arms, shoulders, abdominals, spine and other core areas.

It also increases oxygen uptake by up to 45 per cent and burns 20 per cent more calories than walking alone and assists balance, stability and mobility.

It's easy to learn the technique and adopting pole walking as an exercise routine has been found to be very beneficial for people with hip, knee or back problems and especially beneficial to heart health.

Pole walking can reduce stress and improve mood and coordination.

dination.

The Seniors Recreation Council sell the poles and offers demonstrations for clubs, groups or individuals.

Pole walking will be one of the activities people on offer at *Have a Go Day* on Wednesday 14 November at Burswood Park.

To find out more about pole walking contact the SRC office on 9492 9773.

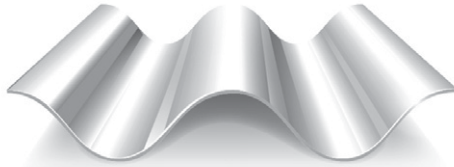




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A directory of sport and recreation

To obtain a free copy of the 20th edition **Add Life to your years** directory please contact Dawn at the Seniors Recreation Council on 9492 9773 or email info@srcwa.asn.au

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Salt water runs through their veins



Trigg Friends celebrating the winter solstice

by Wendy Holtom

AN informal group of ocean loving older adult body surfers and boogie board riders at Trigg beach are a shining example of active ageing at its best.

Recent research has confirmed that adults who belong to a group and enjoy sport or other activities together will most likely live longer. It is not just the exercise

that helps achieve this outcome. The social connection and sense of community that is a spin off to adults enjoying sport or hobbies together cannot be underestimated.

Trigg Friends between the Flags formed in the summer of 2009/10 when several enthusiastic adult body surfers and boogie board riders started chatting whilst looking westward waiting

for waves.

By the end of that summer there were about a dozen in the group who would meet from around 9am or later depending on the surf and weather. Having someone to chat to and look out for each other meant that no one was surfing alone. The group then enjoyed an end of season lunch which has grown in numbers somewhat over the past eight years.

Kevin Menagh or YK as he is known was one of that original group. In the first few years YK kept a roll book, but as the number of surfers grew and grew to the hundred or so they are today it became impossible to remember who surfed on any particular day.

The group, which was only officially named last summer, consists of mostly retired folk, several part time or shift workers and some who can only surf at weekends and holidays until they retire.

Another legend from the original group is 86-year-old Meryl who has had a strong affinity with the ocean since she was a teenager living and body surfing in Scarborough. Meryl drives from Dianella to Trigg for a surf most weeks in summer and always enjoys the special treatment from the lifeguards who drive her back up to her car from the beach.

Over the years Meryl has written some amazing poems about the group and the joy of the ocean, several of which she has recited at the end of season lunches.

Many of the group enjoy coffee together after a surf plus lunches and festive season drinks have become regular occasions over the years.

Several of the group go cycling together in the cooler months and in recent years have enjoyed cycling holidays to Asia as well as organised walks along the coast during winter.

The ocean is the drawcard for us all from October to May each year, plus our annual dip on the day of the Winter Solstice. We meet in front of the patrol or lifeguards marked by our special flag which depicts the waves of Japan. Anyone is welcome, we truly have salt water running through our veins.

Conquering sleep issues



by Frank Smith

GETTING to sleep is a problem for everyone at times and this often becomes more of a problem as we age.

RPH sleep scientist Dr Kim Ward says it is important to seek medical advice for a possible sleep disorder if getting to sleep becomes a persistent problem.

At night, older people may take longer to get to sleep, wake up more often and spend less time in deep, refreshing sleep. They also have a higher risk of insomnia. More serious than occasional insomnia is obstructive sleep apnoea (OSA).

"Obstructive sleep apnoea is very common in middle to older age, and often presents as insomnia because every time the person falls asleep, the throat obstructs and causes an awakening, and this cycle can be repeated over and over," said Dr Ward.

When the throat obstructs breathing stops for a short time – from 10 seconds up to a minute or more – and blood oxygen levels fall as a result. This interrupts sleep for a few seconds but this disrupts your snooze and can

be repeated many times during the night.

Alcohol and sleeping tablets may make OSA worse. Check your sleeping habits (below) and if OSA persists see your doctor.

For the best chance of getting a good night's sleep follow the advice of the Sleep Health Foundation:

Your bedroom should be quiet, dark, comfortable and neither too hot nor too cold. Ban all electronic gear such as computers, TVs, mobile phones and clocks that you can see from the bed.

Try to go to bed at the same time every night and avoid food, caffeine, alcohol, exercise and computer games just before bedtime and don't take long naps especially during the evening.

If you haven't fallen asleep after about 30 minutes, don't stay in bed. Get up, go to another room and do something quiet and restful in dim light like reading a book. Don't use your computer, mobile or TV, because the light they emit can stimulate your mind and keep you awake.

When you start feeling tired, go back to bed. If you still can't fall asleep,

get up again. Don't worry if you have to repeat this several times.

Remember to get up at your regular wake-up time however little sleep you have had to avoid getting into a non-sleep routine.

Sleeping pills will send you to sleep but do not deal with the cause of sleep problems and they can be addictive. Moreover the longer you take them, the less they will work. This means they are really only a short term solution for a short term problem.

Over the counter sleeping pills include doxylamine which can be taken for up to 10 days and herbal remedies usually containing valerian or camomile for which there is little hard evidence of efficacy.

Melatonin, available only on prescription, may also work for some older people.

If these hints don't help consider trying mindfulness meditation. This teaches you to manage your physical sensations, thoughts, and emotions in a non-critical way.

Join a class or download a mindfulness app. You can listen to the app at bedtime or take part in activities that encourage mindfulness, such as yoga, Pilates, walking or Tai Chi.

Another suggested mindfulness technique is 4-7-8 breathing. Breath in through your nose for four seconds, hold your breath for seven seconds, then exhale through your mouth for eight seconds. This is said to soothe you to sleep.

If all this fails to help you sleep you could try cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT).

Research shows this is effective in the medium and long term especially for older adults. It reduces sleeping difficulties by 50 per cent on average.

There are effective online CBT programs online such as SHUTi (myshuti.com) that can be accessed from home.

If you are having ongoing trouble sleeping, persistent problems with mood, restlessness in bed, severe snoring or waking unrefreshed, don't assume it is a normal part of ageing. See your doctor who may refer you to a sleep specialist or psychologist.

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There's no keeping still for 95-year-old Derek



Derek Melhuish at the gym

by Brad Elborough

DEREK Melhuish will turn 96 years old on 8 December and he is carefully considering how to celebrate the occasion.

The Clarkson resident wants to better the achievement of his 95th birthday when he climbed Pemberton's famous Gloucester Tree, for the 18th time.

In doing so, Derek became the oldest person to reach the top – easily managing the 153 spikes to get to there,

72m from the ground.

"It wasn't tough," he said. "I've been up there quite a few times before. I go down there quite a lot. I usually spend a couple of weeks in spring in the Stirling Ranges."

"I love it down there."

The popular Gloucester Tree, the second tallest lookout tree in Australia, was first used as a look out in 1947. It's height and vantage point made it perfect for scanning the area for fires.

It still provides an

amazing view of the surrounding karri forest.

While Derek loves the tree and the view it provides from its peak, he thinks there is a better one.

"The nicest climb is not the Gloucester, but the Bicentennial Tree, right in the middle of the forest," he said. "That's largely because of the location."

"It's a little taller than the Gloucester and a little harder to climb. It does have a platform at about 20m, so beginners can go up to there."

The Bicentennial Tree is a 75m climb to the top, with 165 spikes to navigate.

The climb up the Gloucester Tree as a birthday event came about after Derek was joking around with some friends and he told them he could achieve the feat, even at his tender age.

So, they set him the challenge and took over organising it.

Some of them tagged along on the day and made it a special one for Derek to remember.

"Some of them came down to see me do it," he said.

"It was a lovely day and the view was good. I climbed first thing in the morning and we went to a café where I was known and had a bit of a party with seven or eight of us."

"Someone even brought a cake."

Derek won't be stand-

ing still waiting for his next milestone to come along though. It's not in his nature.

The father of two is always keen to get out and about.

A month before his birthday climb, he took on and conquered the three km half-day bush walk up Mt Hassell in the Stirling Ranges.

The grade four trek reaches a peak of 847m and can be quite tricky. But the views at the top are worth it.

Derek tributes his restlessness potentially to being stuck in a German prisoner of war camp during WWII, when he was unable to get out and about as he liked.

Having been born in London, he was serving in Britain's Royal Air Force as a navigator when his bomber got shot down and he had to bail out one night.

He says it wasn't really a tough 18 months while being captive, but since his release, he hasn't been able to stand still.

Post war, Derek travelled and worked throughout Western and Northern Africa and then India where he ran an import and distribution centre with more than 200 staff.

He was in India for 15 years before he and his then wife decided to move to Australia in 1966.

Now he's retired and living in Perth's northern suburbs.

He's still restless and keeps himself fit and active. He works out at Jetts gym in Clarkson regularly to keep things working properly.

"Nothing much," he said. "I go to the gym three times a week for residence stuff mainly."

"It's all to keep your muscles going, so residence stuff is the main thing."

So, what's next for Derek? He is asked regularly about his 100th birthday celebration plans, but...

"I haven't planned that far ahead," he said.

"I'm trying to think of something outrageous for my next birthday."

Good results for hips and knees from treatment

OSTEOARTHRITIS (OA) is the most common lifestyle disease in individuals 65 years and older, but can also affect people as young as 30.

In Australia, treatment for OA usually focuses on surgery but the GLA:D™ Australia program offers a better and safer alternative.

Current national and international guidelines recommend patient education, exercise, and weight loss as a first line treatment for OA.

Research from the GLA:D™ program in Denmark found symptom progression reduces by 32 per cent. Other outcomes include less pain, reduced use of joint related pain killers and fewer people on sick leave. Participants also reported high levels of satisfaction with the program and increased levels of physical activity 12 months after starting the program.

It involves a first appointment where a full explanation and data collection is taken on current functionality of the patient. Followed by two education sessions which teach patients about OA and small group neuromuscular training sessions twice a week for six weeks to improve muscle control of the joint. This leads to reduction in symptoms and improved quality of life.

Attadale Physiotherapy principal Jacqui Herron said this program helps individuals who experience hip and knee osteoarthritis symptoms regardless of severity.

"It provides education and exercises to strengthen and correct everyday movement patterns enabling participants to train their bodies to move properly, prevent progression and reduce pain," she said.

For more information about this tailor-made program contact Attadale Physiotherapy on 9317 4777 or email attadalephysiotherapy@inet.net.au.

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