

ABOUT TOWN

Boating safety talk next week at library

The Sailing Lecture Series hosted by the Friends of the Jamestown Library will welcome U.S. Coast Guard officers Andrew DeCoste BM2 and Mitch Miller SN on Thursday, Feb. 28, at 7:30 p.m.

Join the officers for a discussion on "Safety Issues and Rescues at Sea." They will discuss issues that impact both experienced boaters and the novice alike. Hear of heroic rescues and of the important role the Coast Guard plays in keeping all who love the sea safe.

NKHS info session for next year's students

North Kingstown High School will host two sessions to allow grade 8 students and their families to get to know the school.

On Tuesday, Feb. 26, and Thursday, Feb. 28, from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., high school administrators and guidance counselors will present an overview of the high school program. There will be a question and answer period following the talk, which will be in the auditorium. The same presentation will be given at both sessions; it is only necessary to attend one. For more information, call 268-6240.



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Sen. Paiva Weed to discuss budget woes

Sen. M. Teresa Paiva Weed, the Rhode Island Senate Majority Leader, will be speaking at the Central Baptist Church on Sunday, Feb. 24. Paiva Weed will discuss the state budget and its affect on local social and island services. All are welcome to the talk that begins at 11 a.m.

Shores group to meet

The Jamestown Shores Association will hold a general meeting on Wednesday, Feb. 27, at 7 p.m. at the Senior Center on West Street. Various topics will be discussed relating to Jamestown Shores issues as well as other town issues. Friends and interested islanders are welcome. Coffee and dessert will be served.

Get a pedometer and start walking!

A formula to consider: 8,000 steps per day x 17,252 days since my birth = 138,016,000 steps / 2,000 steps per mile = 69,008 miles.

Assuming that I have walked about four miles per day for my entire life, as of today I will have logged more than 69,000 miles.

If Jamestown is about nine miles from its northern tip to Beavertail Point, I have walked the equivalent distance back and forth more than 3,800 times. And, I have walked the width of this country 23 times! I wish I could say that I've walked the distance from Jamestown to the moon, but at more than 238,000 miles away, I would have to live to the ripe old age of 163 to reach that goal. The reason I am thinking about these facts is because I am wearing a pedometer every day to measure the number of steps I take. Of course, the way my mind works, this has brought up all kinds of other thoughts. At my present rate, if I live to 85 years, I will log about 124,000 miles—more than half way to the moon!

The Jamestown Press is participating in this year's Shape Up RI 2008 challenge. Several of us have set goals for number of steps logged on our pedometers and for total exercise hours per day. Wearing a pedometer is sort of like having an angel on one shoulder. If I look at it and I haven't met my goals, the angel is my cheerleader, saying "C'mon you can do it!" This, while the devil, in its inimitable way, attempts to come up with an appropriate distraction to keep me from moving farther. There's always a crossword puzzle to do,



Flotsam and Jetsam

By Donna Drago

or email to check—pursuits that plop my butt in a chair and render the 'chink-chunk' of the pedometer mute. The funny thing I've found is that no matter how little I feel like walking, I can still manage to log about 4 miles or 8,000 steps per day without even trying. The distance from my bed to the bathroom is about 60 steps there and back. If I go from the kitchen to the garage that's a round trip of about 75 steps. It's nothing to get up, visit the bathroom, let the dog out, make coffee, get the newspaper out of the driveway and come up with about 1,000 steps! If I go to the supermarket, I'm assured of at least 2,000 steps walking up and down the aisles.

Shape Up RI has everyone setting goals. Since I wanted to be realistic about my efforts I set my pedometer goal at 8,000 steps per day. Since wearing this pedometer for the past two weeks, my worst day has been 8,990 steps and my best was 18,200, which is more than nine miles! I admit those steps included a morning walk, an afternoon walk with the dog and nine holes of golf, which is not always possible in my schedule, especially when I am up north in the winter.

The conventional wisdom about pedometers is that they are good motivators. In this month's "Body and Soul" magazine, a Martha Stewart publication, it says, "People who wear a pedometer and have a daily goal, walk an average of a mile longer each day while reducing both their body-mass index and blood pressure."

A Harvard University Medical School website offers the following on pedometers:

"Generally, your goal is to work up to 10,000 steps/day or about 5 miles/day. To establish your baseline, you want to wear the pedometer while you do your regular activity and try to increase the number of steps you take each day." The website goes on to say, "Most people regularly cover about 2-3 miles each day. Walking an additional 4,000-6,000 steps/day can have a significant health benefit, cutting the risk of diseases such as cancer, diabetes and heart disease."

A study from the University of Tennessee on women, who admittedly did not get enough exercise, showed that in a typical day the test group took about 5,760 steps per day.

In the study, one half of the group was given pedometers, sealed so they could not see their step count. The other group received pedometers they could easily read.

The group with the sealed pedometers was told to take a brisk, 30-minute walk per day. The group wearing the readable pedometers was told to walk 10,000 steps per day. Here are the results. "Women told to take a 30-minute walk averaged about 10,000 steps—but only on days they actually took a walk. On other days, they tended to sit around as usual.

The women given a pedometer and told to walk 10,000 steps every day averaged about 12,000 steps on days they actually went for a walk. But even on days they didn't manage to go walking, they still upped their step total to about 8,000 steps."

In the amount of time it took me to sit at the computer and write this column, I could have easily walked 6,000 or so steps, but I chose to share with you the benefits of buying and using a pedometer to act as a motivator to get more exercise, get healthy and feel great. Now, get going!



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