CITY OF GRAND PRAIRIE WELLNESS NEWSLETTER ★ APRIL 2014

# **April is Alcohol Awareness Month**

Millions of Americans misuse or are dependent upon alcohol. Most of them have families who suffer the (often serious) consequences of living with this illness. If there is alcohol dependence in your family, remember you are not alone. We offer help for the individual and for the family.

The city of Grand Prairie has contracted with Magellan Health Services Inc. to provide Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services to our employees and their families. The EAP is a confidential counseling and referral service that can help deal with life's challenges. Licensed professional counselors are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year to speak with an employee or a family member on a broad range of needs. The counselors can help with things like stress, anxiety, depression, relationship problems, job or work stress, parenting, alcohol and drug abuse, legal issues and financial concerns. All you have to do is call 1-800-523-5668 to speak with a counselor. The EAP services are available to you at no cost, as the city has prepaid for them. You can call and speak with a counselor every day, if you like. If you and/or the counselor believe that it would be beneficial for you to see a local, licensed professional in person, the counselor will find one for you. You have up to five counseling sessions available to you at no cost.

For more information on alcohol abuse and alcoholism, contact the following organizations:

- Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters www.al-anon.alateen.org
- Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) World Services www.aa.org
- National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD) www.ncadd.org
- National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism www.niaaa.nih.gov

Call the city's EAP coordinator, Fred Ginapp, at 972-237-8191 if you have questions pertaining to the EAP program.

\$132 billion

the amount paid by Americans in 2012 for drunk-driving related expenses – even those who were not directly affected by drunk driving contributed to the bill. In 2012, 10,322 people were killed and approximately 345,000 were injured as a result of drunk driving. Each crash, each death, each injury impacts not only the person in the crash, but family, friends, classmates, coworkers and more.

MADD

# **Alcohol and Your Body**

Drinking too much – on a single occasion or over time – can take a serious toll on your health. Here's how alcohol can affect your body:

## Brain

Alcohol interferes with the brain's communication pathways and can affect the way the brain looks and works. These disruptions can change mood and behavior.

## Heart

Drinking a lot over a long time or too much on a single occasion can damage the heart, causing problems including stretching and drooping of the heart muscle, irregular heart beat, stroke and high blood pressure.

## Liver

Heavy drinking takes a toll on the liver. It can lead to a variety of problems and liver inflammations including fatty liver, alcoholic hepatitis, fibrosis and cirrhosis.

#### Cancer

Drinking too much alcohol can increase your risk of developing certain cancers, including cancers of the mouth, esophagus, throat, liver and breasts.

Drinking too much can also weaken your immune system, making your body a much easier target for disease.

It is recommended that women have no more than one drink per day and that men have no more than two.

CDC, NIAAA

## Alcohol: The Bottom Line

Alcohol's link with health is a bit Dr. Jekyll and a bit Mr. Hyde. Exactly which face it shows depends largely on who's drinking and how much. For most moderate drinkers, alcohol has overall health benefits. While moderate drinking can increase the risk of colon and breast cancer, these risks are trumped by the boost in cardiovascular health—especially in middle age, when heart disease begins to account for an increasingly large share of disease and deaths.

## **Quick Tips for Staying Healthy with Alcohol**

- 1. If you don't drink, there's no need to start. There are other ways to boost your heart health and lower your risk of diabetes, such as getting more active, staying at a healthy weight, or eating healthy fats and whole grains.
- 2. If you do drink, drink in moderation—and choose whatever drink you like. Wine, beer, or spirits—each seems to have the same health benefits as long as moderation's the word.
- 3. Take a multivitamin with folic acid. Folic acid may help lower the risk of heart disease and cancers of the colon and breast. Since alcohol moderately depletes our body's stores, it may be a good idea to take a supplement.
- 4. Ask your doctor about your drinking habits. If you think you may have a problem with drinking, talk to a doctor about it.
- Pick a designated driver. Alcohol and driving do not mix. If you've been out drinking and it's time to head home, hand your car keys to someone who's been sipping seltzer all night. Harvard School of Public Health

# Six Ways to Enjoy More Fruits & Vegetables

Building a healthy plate is easy when you make half your plate fruits and vegetables. It's also a great way to add color, flavor and texture, plus vitamins, minerals and fiber. All this is packed in fruits and vegetables that are low in calories and fat. Make 2 cups of fruit and  $2^{1}/_{2}$  cups of vegetables

your daily goal. Try the following tips to enjoy more fruits and vegetables every day.

- Variety abounds when using vegetables as pizza topping. Try broccoli, spinach, green peppers, tomatoes, mushrooms and zucchini.
- 2. Mix up a breakfast smoothie made with lowfat milk, frozen strawberries and a banana.
- 3. Make a veggie wrap with roasted vegetables and low-fat cheese rolled in a whole-wheat tortilla.
- 4. Try crunchy vegetables instead of chips with your favorite low-fat salad dressing for dipping.
- 5. Grill colorful vegetable kabobs packed with tomatoes, green and red peppers, mushrooms and onions.
- 6. Wake up to fruit. Make a habit of adding fruit to your morning oatmeal, ready-to-eat cereal, yogurt or toaster waffle.

# Rain Barrel Class at Farmers Market

The Grand Prairie Farmers
Market will host a Make It and Take It
Rain Barrel Class Saturday, April 12,
at Market Square, 120 W. Main St.
The class costs \$40 for Grand Prairie
residents and \$55 for non-residents.
The class will be from 9 a.m. to 10:30
a.m., and pre-registration is required.
Send a check or money order payable
to the city of Grand Prairie to:

Selena Jackson P.O. Box 534045 Grand Prairie, TX 75053

On the check or money order, be sure to reference "Rain Barrel Class" and include your phone number, email address (optional), and any other relevant contact information. For more information about the class, call 972-237-8377 or email sjackson@gptx.org.

## Alli Recalled

GlaxoSmithKline is recalling all supplies of its non-prescription weightloss drug Alli in the United States and Puerto Rico, the company said on March 27, after reports that some bottles had been tampered with.

The British group, which believes that some supplies may not contain authentic Alli, is working with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration on the retailer-level recall.

News of the tampering first emerged on March 26.

GSK has received inquiries from consumers in seven U.S. states about bottles containing tablets and capsules that were not Alli, with a range of tablets and capsules of various shapes and colors reported. Alli is a turquoise-blue capsule.

Huffington Post

# Clean Fruits & Vegetables with Vinegar

We've all heard that we should wash fresh produce under clean, running water prior to consuming, but adding vinegar to the mix may help kill even more bacteria. A study published in 2003 in the *Journal of Food Protection* found that washing apples with a vinegar and water solution reduced salmonella on the outer skin significantly more than washing with water alone. Jack Bishop, editor of *Cook's Illustrated*, performed a similar experiment, and found that vinegar killed approximately 98 percent of bacteria on the surface of fresh fruits and vegetables.

For Smooth-Skinned Fruits and Vegetables:

- Pour white distilled vinegar into a spray bottle and add three cups water. Secure the lid on the bottle and shake well to combine the ingredients.
- Spray smooth-skinned vegetables and fruits, such as apples and tomatoes, with enough of the vinegar solution to cover the entire surface area, about five or six squirts. Rub gently with your hand to
  make sure the skin is coated thoroughly.
- Rinse the fruit or vegetable under cold running water, which removes the residual vinegar flavor.
- Rub with your hands to help remove every trace of vinegar, shake off the excess water and pat dry
  with a clean towel before slicing.



- Pour distilled vinegar into a large bowl or sink and add three cups water. Stir gently with a large spoon or ladle to
  mix the liquids thoroughly.
- Separate the leaves of leafy vegetables, such as lettuce, spinach and turnip greens, and dip them in the vinegar solution
- Remove from the bowl, rinse under cold running water, shake off any excess and pat dry before serving.
- Place irregular vegetables that have many crevices, such as cauliflower and broccoli, in the bowl of vinegar and water. Allow these vegetables to soak for at least two minutes before rinsing under cold, running water.
- Shake off excess water and pat dry before cutting or serving.

Do not wash produce until just before you're ready to prepare and serve. If you wash fruits and vegetables before storing, they will spoil much faster.

\*\*Livestrong\*\*

# **Employee of the Month**



**Amber Martin, Recreation Leader at The Summit**, has been named Employee of the Month for April. Martin is a dedicated, proactive, go-getter who is a vital part of The Summit. She is not one to sit still; she is always busy at work. She pays close attention to detail, has excellent customer service skills and delivers world-class service every time she walks through the door. Martin perceives a need and delivers raving fan service without being directed.

Martin continuously goes above and beyond. She recently had a baby, and five days after delivery she was already checking work emails and was the first on staff to submit

corrections to the newsletter! Martin even attended a staff meeting eight days after delivery. Her actions clearly show her dedication and passion for her job.

Further, Martin is a very patient and kind person. She recently created a Raving Fan by teaching a 78-year-old Summit member how to swim. Through her excellent instruction and patience she helped the member overcome his lifelong fear of water.

But that's not all! Amber also coordinated The Summit 50+ Expo, which had more than 30 vendors and raised more than \$5,000. Similarly, Martin coordinates the arts and crafts programs offered by The Summit. Her hard work has allowed the program to quadruple in size.

# Wellness

## **April at Farmers Market**

The Grand Prairie Farmers Market has a lineup of upcoming events that are sure to interest all ages!

## Saturday, April 5

- Grand Prairie Arts Council Art Contest
- Cooking demo featuring Chef Ernst from Texas Chefs Food Service at 10:30 a.m.
- Sign-up for the Run for Shelter Bunny Hop and 5K, which will be on Saturday, April 19

#### Saturday, April 12

- Cooking demo featuring Chef Otto from Central Market at 10:30 a.m.
- The Summit Gardening Club plant sale
- Booth sponsored by the Girl Scouts of North Texas
- Make It and Take It Rain Barrel Class from 9-10:30 a.m.

#### Saturday, April 19

- LifeLine's Run for Shelter Bunny Hop and 5K hops off at 8 a.m.
- Class on container gardening at 9 a.m.
- Cooking demo featuring Kyle Bryson from Mixed Up Burgers at 10:30 a.m.
- · Knife sharpening

## Saturday, April 26

 Main Street Fest at Market Square, featuring music, carnival rides, Harley Davidson stage, BMX and skate demos, beer garden and more

The market is open every Saturday from 8 a.m.-1 p.m. For more information, call 972-237-4599 or visit www.gptx.org/farmersmarket.

# Message from the Manager

Did you know that you work in the 15th largest city in Texas and the 129th largest in the United States? During last month's State of the City address, Mayor Jensen pointed out that Grand Prairie grew 38 percent from 2000 to 2010 — from a population of 127,000 to 175,000. Since 2010, our growth rate of 1.6 percent has been on par with the median growth rate in the Dallas-Fort Worth area of 1.5 percent.

Forecasters predict that between 2010 and 2020, Texas will grow by 10 percent, and the Dallas-Fort Worth area is expected to outpace the state with a 24 percent growth rate.

In Grand Prairie, new home starts reached 422 in 2013, the best number since 2008, and the average single-family home sales price of \$165,000 exceeds those of Arlington and Cedar Hill.

Grand Prairie's economic development outlook remains bright. We outpaced our competitors during the last three years with new industrial, commercial and retail construction starts and more than 1.4 million new square feet under construction.

Some new things coming to town that you may be interested in are Dairy Queen on I-20, HEB Grocery store at Camp Wisdom and Lake Ridge, and three QuikTrip convenience stores at Main St. and SH 161, I-20 and Lake Ridge and I-30 and Belt Line.

If you live in Grand Prairie, remember to vote for or against the proposed new recreation center and indoor/outdoor water park at Central Park. The proposal is to use both the retiring 1/8 cent sales taxes for QuikTrip Park and The Summit to build and operate this new facility, which will be accessible to residents of all ages. Proposed amenities at the facility might include multiple

gym courts, a lounge area, an art gallery, a library, an Internet café, exercise classrooms, state-of-the-art fitness equipment, an indoor track, courts for racquet sports and an area for teen activities. Also included in the plans is a Central Park amphitheater, trail system and a giant, all-accessible playground.



If the proposition does not pass, the city would retire the two 1/8 cent sales taxes

for QuikTrip Park and The Summit and would not build the recreation center and water park. The portion of sales tax that the city received would be reduced from 2 percent to 1<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> percent. The combined <sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> cent sales tax could then be devoted to another municipal use, if approved by voters.

Grand Prairie has a prosperous future ahead and we are working to bring business in and improve quality of life for residents. Thank you for all you do to make this a great place for business and the best place to live, work and play.

Tom Hart City Manager