

# LIFESTYLES

## SHARE YOUR STORY

The Journal welcomes ideas for stories about people in our community who have gotten married, graduated, joined the military, etc.  
Call the Journal at 285-7411

## Health benefits of meditating

**Q. Does meditating have any real health benefits?**  
A. Meditation definitely reduces stress. And too much stress is bad for your health.

There is some research that indicates meditation may help with: allergies, anxiety, asthma, binge eating, cancer, depression, fatigue, heart disease, high blood pressure, pain, sleep difficulties and substance abuse.

I started meditating in 1976, when Dr. Herbert Benson published his book, *The Relaxation Response*. The techniques he advocated work. In the years since, I've found that, when I forget to meditate, I get a stress buildup. As soon as I meditate, I feel better. And the effects of the meditation carry through the day.

I studied Zen Buddhist meditation, which involves many of the same techniques that Dr. Benson wrote about. Zen meditation is more structured and its purpose is to bring spiritual enlightenment, not just relaxation.

Is there a difference between meditation and prayer? Many sources define prayer as a form of meditation. There are similarities between the two. I would explain it this way: it's possible for an atheist to meditate.

Meditation is classified as a mind-body practice in complementary and alternative medicine (CAM). Meditation has been practiced for thousands of years.



Fred  
CICETTI  
HEALTH CARE WRITER

There are many types of meditation. Most of them originated in ancient spiritual traditions.

How does it work? If you pay close attention to your mind, you'll find that it has a mind of its own. All day long, the mind brings up thoughts you didn't ask for. Much of your thinking is as voluntary as breathing or circulation. Unfortunately, a lot of the stuff your mind regurgitates is negative.

*I'm such a failure...When am I gonna catch a break?... Everyone is against me... What's the point of anything? Etcetera, etcetera, etcetera....*

Where do these thoughts come from? Years of experiences and the collective consciousness of humankind. They're all stored away just waiting to show their ugly faces. They usually surface when your body/mind is under a lot of stress. When you meditate, you clear away this stress-intensifying garbage.

The primary benefits of meditation are immediate relaxation and a better understanding of how your body, mind and spirit work together so that you can handle stressful situations.

Over time, you will gain greater peace for yourself and those around you.

I have learned a lot from studying Zen and Eckhart Tolle, a German philosopher who advocates many of the teachings of Zen. In Tolle's book, *The Power of Now*, he explains that meditation can help you stay in the moment, which is a potent stress-reliever.

"The eternal present is the space within which your whole life unfolds, the one factor that remains constant. Life is now. There was never a time when your life was not now, nor will there ever be," Tolle writes.

Past and future are mental constructs. If you dwell upon the past, you can fall into the abyss of guilt, regret, resentment, and many other negative feelings. If you concentrate on the future, you can build up overwhelming obstacles that will make you fearful.

Tolle points out that we are all capable of dealing with the present moment, but that no one can rectify imagined mistakes of the past or the projected challenges of a future. Neither the past nor the future exists. Accepting this reality gives you an amazing high.

[More about meditation in our next column.]

*If you would like to read more columns, you can order a copy of "How to be a Healthy Geezer" at [www.healthygeezer.com](http://www.healthygeezer.com).*

**Cicetti is a health care writer with more than 40 years of journalistic experience.**

## RLMC Auxiliary met at hospital

BY MARGUERITE DAVISON

Rainy Lake Medical Center Auxiliary met Feb. 4 at the hospital with president Sonia Wegge presiding. She led in the prayer for hospital auxiliaries. Eleven members were present.

Hospital liaison Kelly Millerbernd was present and told of the new rural health clinic open for business as of Feb. 3. The clinic is housed in the former Good Samari-

tan Society. The hospital blood drive will be from 1:30 to 5:30 p.m. Feb. 26. She confirmed the date of the sloppy joe feed as Feb. 27 at the hospital.

Corresponding secretary Mary Ann Lien said cards had been sent to the Hams family and Gale Gagne.

Gift shop chairperson Helen Billig reported on her trip to "market" and gave the financial report for the gift shop.

Information was given

on the trip to the State Capitol for Legislative Days April 9.

Connie Lacher and Carolyn McDougall are chairpersons for the Feb. 27 sloppy joe feed at the hospital. Auxiliaries will furnish bars for dessert. Proceeds from the event will go toward the auxiliary scholarship fund.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the auxiliary will be March 4 at the hospital.

## SENIOR MENU

Hot meals for people 60 or older are served at noon Monday through Friday at Koochiching County Senior Center, 307 Fourth St.

Meals are for anyone, regardless of income. A \$3.50 donation is suggested. Meals are subject to change. Participants under age 60 are welcome at \$6.50 each.

For reservations call 283-3460 the day before the meal. Cancellations may be made the day of the meal.

**MONDAY**  
Goulash  
Lettuce salad with cucumbers  
Dressing  
Fruit

**TUESDAY**  
Baked chicken  
Tater Tots  
Green beans  
Brownies

**WEDNESDAY**  
Pork chops  
Mashed potatoes

Gravy  
Stuffing  
Bean salad  
Fresh fruit

**THURSDAY**  
Chicken broccoli bake  
Rosy applesauce  
Jell-O with fruit

**FRIDAY**  
French toast bake  
Sausage links  
Apple juice  
Fruit  
Pudding

## MEMORIAM

In memory of **Beverly June Tivey**  
Feb. 25, 1940 — Feb. 14, 1998  
*My angel up in Heaven, I wanted you to know, I feel you watching over me, everywhere I go. I wish you were with me, but*

*that can never be, Memories of you in my heart, that only I can see. My angel up in heaven, I hope you understand, That I would give anything, if I could hold your hand. I'd hold you oh so tightly, and never let you go,*

*And all the love inside of me, to you I would show. My angel up in Heaven, for now we are apart, You'll always live inside of me, deep within my heart.*

**Deeply missed by her family**

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**HAPPY 8TH BIRTHDAY**  
Gracie Jo Swenson!  
Love Mom, Dad, Kenzie and Hayden



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