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HEALTHY LIVING FROM THE GROUND UP

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# from the editor

We have an ongoing joke in my family that Thanksgiving dinner wouldn't be Thanksgiving dinner if we didn't have to cut the burned part off of the bottom of the dinner rolls.

Every year on Thanksgiving, my mother wakes up at the crack of dawn to start tidying up the house and preparing the family feast. There are dishes such as stuffing and mashed potatoes, and of course, a giant turkey. Other family members contribute to the meal, too. My aunt, for instance, brings the pumpkin and cherry pies, and a dessert salad my grandmother used to make. My mother-in-law brings her green bean casserole. And I bring my appetite. (I'm a lot better at vacuuming and setting the table than I am at cooking!)

We often have a handful of friends join us, too. If any friend or family member needs a place to go on Thanksgiving, they have a seat at one of our tables. The group of us gathers around a large, antique dining room table, a nearby card table which often gets dubbed "the kids' table," and around the table in the kitchen. A couple of stragglers might also take their plates into the living room, or attempt to eat at my niece's miniature princess folding table.

Last year, I sat halfway up the staircase that faces mom's dining room. By the time I had finished running around and doing this and that, most of the chairs were taken. But it was the best seat in the house. For a few moments, I got to take it all in.

As the meal went on, the room swelled with laughter. Giant bowls were passed from here and there, kids crawled underneath the table, and people reminisced about the time my mom dropped the infamous dessert salad all over the kitchen floor after my grandmother had spent hours hand-placing cherries and marshmallows, and the streak of time where it seemed as though we couldn't have a family gathering without someone breaking the chair they were sitting in.

As my family and friends filled their plates with the delicious, home-cooked food and buttered their potatoes, they sliced the burned parts off of the bottoms of their rolls, pulled them in half and buttered them, too. It didn't matter one bit if the rolls were burned because we were together. That's what the holidays are really all about, aren't they?

This month in Radish, we have a handful of stories to help you make the most of your time with your friends and family. On page 14, you'll find a story about an upcoming class the Milan Hy-Vee and the University of Illinois Extension are hosting to offer strategies to lighten up your holiday fare and stay active throughout the season, as well as a few recipes of dishes you can try at home. On page 22, you'll find a host of games you can play with your friends and family around the table before or after a meal.

Wherever you find yourself this month, we're happy you've snagged a copy of Radish to spend a little time with us, too. Cheers to the month ahead!

— Laura Anderson Shaw  
editor@radishmagazine.com



Gary Krambeck / Radish

**Radish**  
HEALTHY LIVING FROM THE GROUND UP

Number 11, Volume 12  
November 2016

Gerald J. Taylor  
PUBLISHER

Laura Anderson Shaw  
EDITOR  
309-797-0320  
editor@radishmagazine.com

Val Yazbec  
CHIEF REVENUE OFFICER

Terry Wilson  
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT /  
MARKETING DIRECTOR  
309-757-5041

Rachel Griffiths  
ADVERTISING EXECUTIVE  
309-721-3204

Kay Abbitt  
ADVERTISING EXECUTIVE  
309-757-4914

Kimberly Calhoun  
LAYOUT & DESIGN

PUBLISHED BY  
Small Newspaper Group

Deborah Loeser Small  
DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL PROJECTS

Sally Hendron  
VICE PRESIDENT, FINANCE

Robert Hill  
VICE PRESIDENT

Thomas P. Small  
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT

Len R. Small  
PRESIDENT

Radish is a monthly guide to improving your health through the natural foods, products, resources and services of Western Illinois and Eastern Iowa. It is distributed by Moline Dispatch Publishing Co., L.L.C., 1720 5th Ave., Moline, IL, 61265; (309) 757-5041; Fax: (309) 797-0317. To subscribe, send a personal check or credit card information for \$19.95 for one year (\$29.95 for two years) to Radish, 1720 5th Ave., Moline, IL, 61265. No part of this publication may be reprinted or otherwise reproduced without written permission. Send editorial correspondence to Editor, Radish, 1720 5th Ave., Moline, IL, 61265, or e-mail editor@radishmagazine.com. For a list of editorial submission guidelines, visit [www.radishmagazine.com](http://www.radishmagazine.com).



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# the grapevine

## From our readers

"Learning about so many useful items for health purposes and fun living."  
— Sharon VanDeWoestyne, Geneseo

"I appreciate local info on upcoming events." — Devin Frenell, Moline

"Lots of good info in the magazine." — Betsy Kincaid, Bettendorf

"Love reading the magazine. Very interesting articles." — Amy Taets,  
Geneseo

"Great venue for organic/healthy lifestyle articles. Teach me a lot. Love this  
(Healthy Living) Fair." — Linda Rice, Moline

"Always pick up a copy. Really like the articles you publish about the farm-  
ers market vendors." — Linda Naugle, Davenport

"I love to read all the articles in Radish. I look forward to each issue!" —  
Ginny Tudeen, Bettendorf



We love to meet our read-  
ers! Thanks to Friends of Radish,  
you can find representatives of the  
magazine this month at the 16th  
annual Iowa Organic Conference:  
Perennial Passion, Sunday and  
Monday, Nov. 13 and 14, University  
of Iowa Memorial Union, 125 North

Madison St., Iowa City. Find Radish staff at the conference on Nov. 14.

For more information, visit [sustainability.uiowa.edu/2016-iowa-organic-conference](http://sustainability.uiowa.edu/2016-iowa-organic-conference).

This month, Radish bags and magazines also will be available at:

• **Wellness Rocks, the annual Carl Sandburg College Employee Benefits Fair**, Friday, Nov. 18, in Galesburg.

• **John Deere Seeding & Cylinder Health Fair**, Thursday, Nov. 3, in Moline.

To discover more upcoming events, see the events calendar on the Radish website.

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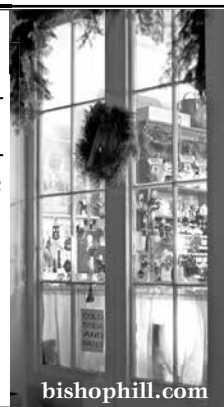
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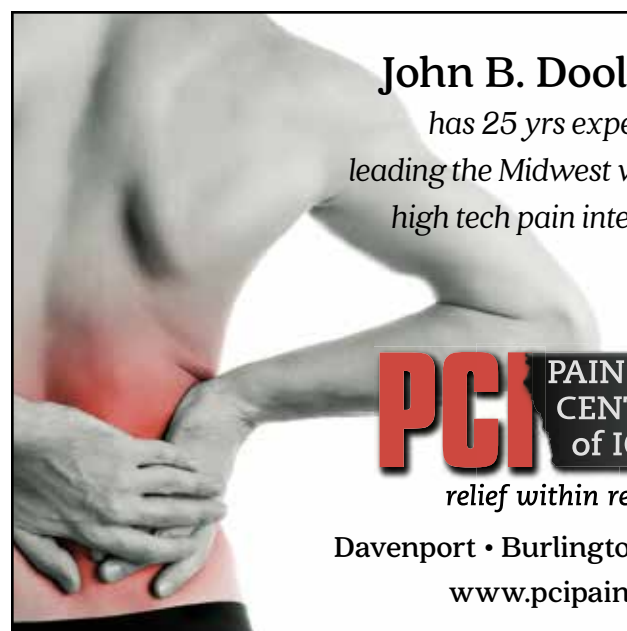
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# healthy living from the ground up

## features



**8 Cheers to autumn**  
Easy DIY mugs to celebrate the season.

**14 Holiday meal ready**  
Class helps you make over menu and routines.

**18 Spice is nice**  
Putting five pumpkin drinks to the test.

**26 Choosing a personal trainer**  
What to look for, what to avoid.

## in every issue

**4 from the editor**

**5 the grapevine**



## on the cover

Bring your body into balance with Maria Dummermuth and singing bowl therapy. (Photo by Brian Achenbach / Radish)

## departments

**10 body, mind & soul**  
Calming vibrations: Singing bowl therapy works to heal body, quiet mind.

**12 healthy living**  
Going green, saving green: Aldi ups its good-for-you goodies.

**16 body, mind & soul**  
Free Range Yoga: Center offers classes and services for body and mind.

**20 body, mind & soul**  
A force for good: Mama Bear will lead the way.

**22 healthy living**  
Game on: Fun and easy games for your next gathering.

**24 body, mind & soul**  
Centering prayer: Upcoming retreat to provide the tools for the practice.

**28 winter wellness festival**  
Save the date: Radish wellness event returns Dec. 10.

**34 food for thought**  
Lucky day: Finding gratitude on purpose.



## radishmagazine.com

Are you an older adult in search of activities? The LeClaire Community Library is partnering with Home Bound Healthcare to provide bi-monthly community outreach programs, according to a news release.

This month's program will be Healthy Holiday Eating Tips, on Nov. 10, which will include tips, tricks and recipes to keep you and your family eating healthy throughout the holiday season, according to the release.

A nurse from Home Bound Healthcare also will be on site to give a presentation and answer any questions.

The class is part of the Lifelong Learning Series geared toward the older adult. For more information about the upcoming class, visit [radishmagazine.com](http://radishmagazine.com).



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handmade

# Cheers to autumn

Easy DIY mugs to celebrate the season



Todd Mizener / Radish

These fun, festive mugs were painted with multi-surface acrylic paint and oil-based paint pens.

By Laura Anderson Shaw

Autumn really is the perfect season. With mild temperatures and minimal bugs, you can spend your free time exploring the outdoors. Evenings can be spent huddled around a campfire, or snuggled up on the couch with a movie.

No matter what you decide, there is nothing like a warm cup of cider or cocoa on a chilly, fall evening. It is the proverbial icing on the cake. And what better way to

enjoy your beverage than by sipping it out of an adorable, festive mug?

I am a bit of a mug collector. They're both useful and decorative, and I have them in just about every color and size that you can think of. Some were purchased new, some are from thrift stores, and some were gifts. Some feature cartoon characters and drawings, and others, inspirational sayings. But some of my favorites are the ones that were handmade or hand-decorated.

Decorating your own mugs is a great way to personalize them. Plus, it lends the

opportunity to give a face-lift to old mugs or thrift shop finds, and makes for a fun project you can do alone, with friends or with the kids. All you need is a handful of materials, a couple of hours and a little creativity.

One thing I really like about this project is that you can make it as simple or complex as you'd like. You can paint anything, from a little scribble or an initial to a quotation, saying or a picture. You definitely do not have to be crafty or artistically inclined! Kids can go crazy on mugs of their own or for gifts for family members, and the clean up is easy with soap and water.

You'll need:

- **Mugs, with a smooth surface (solid, plain colors tend to work best)**
- **Acrylic paint that is compatible with glass and ceramics (I chose white, black and gold Americana Gloss Enamels multi-surface acrylic paint. They're a couple of bucks each at area craft stores, and they offer baking instructions on the label to set the paint.)**
- **Paint brushes (I like detailing brushes because of their size)**
- **Rubbing alcohol**
- **Paper towels**
- **Cotton swabs**

Before you start painting, brainstorm what you would like your mug to say or feature and plan it on scratch paper. This will help you determine how big to draw or write and where on the mug you should position your piece.

If you're working with kids, ask if they want to write words, draw pictures or both — anything goes!

When you have an idea of what you want to do, prep the mug by wiping it down with rubbing alcohol. This will get rid of fingerprints, oils, dust and such, and help the paint adhere to the surface. Then, start painting!

When you're working with the paint, keep in mind that less is more.

Add a little paint to your brush and begin to sketch out your picture or word with the paint, then go over it with another layer. A couple of light layers of paint tends to work better than one thick layer.

If you make a mistake — fear not! Simply wipe it with a paper towel or cotton swab dipped in rubbing alcohol. (Just be sure to completely wipe it away, or it will be set later when you bake the mug!)

Be sure to keep the paint away from any food or drink surface, including the rim of the mug where you'll drink from!

Once your design is set, put your mug in a safe place for it to dry for four days, according to the Americana Gloss Enamels' label. Then, flip the mugs upside down (for more stability), and place them on a cookie sheet, and follow the baking instructions on the paint label.

Dozens of DIY blogs recommend using oil-based paint markers (not regular permanent Sharpies or similar markers!) for this project. Many of the blogs instruct to place the mugs inside of the oven, set it to 350 degrees, bake for 30 minutes, and allow the mugs to cool inside of the oven. My niece made a mug with Sharpie oil-based markers, as many of the blogs called for — but the paint is beginning to chip off, and her designs aren't holding up. While many bloggers seem to have luck with this method, we aren't. Perhaps I will try to bake them longer to see if the paint will cure.

Once your mugs have cooled, they're ready to be used! They are safe to wash by hand, but do not put them in the dishwasher or the microwave.

Pour in some hot apple cider, and enjoy!

*Laura Anderson Shaw is the editor of Radish. Did you try this project? Post a photo on Instagram with the hashtag #RadishCrafts, or email a photo to editor@radishmagazine.com for a chance to be featured in an upcoming issue.*

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body, mind & soul

# Calming vibrations



Singing bowl therapy works to heal body, quiet mind

Submitted

Maria Dummermuth offers personal and group sound-healing sessions mostly out of her home just outside of Cedar Rapids. Dummermuth says the holistic therapy works to bring the cells of the body into balance through sound and relaxation.

By Annie L. Scholl

When she scheduled a singing bowl therapy session for herself and a couple of friends, Maria Dummermuth was looking for a fun activity that she hoped would also help the three friends get back into sync.

What she got from the session, though, was so much more than that.

"I was hooked," says Dummermuth, 42, of Cedar Rapids. "I could literally feel energy moving through my body. I left the session feeling alive and pulsing with life."

Himalayan singing bowl therapy is a holistic therapy practiced for many years by Tibetan, Nepalese and Indian spiritual healers. The premise, Dummermuth explains, is that because our bodies are made up largely of water, when we have an injury or distress, our cells might vibrate out of balance. The goal of Himalayan singing bowl therapy is to bring the cells back into balance through sound and relaxation, she says.

After the initial session with friends, Dummermuth returned for a private session, which she says was even more powerful. After the session she bought a book about singing bowls. Though she calls herself "super frugal," Dummermuth took a "leap of faith" and decided to take training in singing bowl healing through the Atma Buti Soul Medicine Sound and Vibrational School in Boulder, Colo. She also invested in a full set of bowls.

"This was really important to me to learn to follow Spirit and to trust," she says.

During a two-year period, Dummermuth completed the necessary training to become a teacher-trainer through the school, including many hours of volunteer work and 200 hours of actual sessions.

Dummermuth offers personal and group sound-healing sessions, and also teaches certification courses. Most of her private sessions are held in her home just outside of Cedar Rapids. Sessions are \$65 per hour.

During a session, Dummermuth generally starts with a relaxation sequence, playing the bowls either on or around her client's body. She often uses warm water or essential oils in the bowls to intensify their healing properties.

"As I am gifting this service to others, it brings me great joy to see them relax and completely surrender to sound," she says, adding that her clients often fall asleep during sessions. "The vibrational quality of the bowls allows people to access the sensation of energy in their body quite easily," she says, "and to quickly enter a relaxed state, which can be difficult for many people to do on their own."

She believes we all can benefit from the relaxation singing bowl therapy offers.

"We live in a stressful world today, and our mental, physical and emotional states are all a reflection of what is going on in our lives," she says. "So many of us are in dire need of relaxation."

The sessions can be particularly helpful for people who suffer from issues such as anxiety, depression, high blood pressure, arthritis and insomnia, Dummermuth says. Beyond feeling relaxed, her clients also tell her they feel increased energy and less pain after their sessions.

"Most clients love having the bowls played on their body as the vibration is more intense and noticeable, not only in the physical body, but in deeper levels of consciousness as well," Dummermuth says.

The bowls she uses are handmade and are of Himalayan origin. They create a unique sound with multiple tones and vibrations, she says.

"The bowls speak to me at a level that completely sets my heart free," Dummermuth says. "The sound and feeling that I receive from the vibrations is unbelievable."

Sound healing sessions and trainings fit in well with Dummermuth's other work as a yoga and Pilates instructor.

"My goal as a teacher and healer has always been to empower people to look inside themselves and find their own source of healing," she says. "I believe there is no quick fix. We have to do the work to truly heal ourselves, both internally and externally."

As a sound healer, Dummermuth travels for continued education, retreats, and even to perform with the bowls.

"I pinch myself all the time thinking, 'Really? I get to do this for a living?' Plus I have truly found my tribe — a group of healers who I connect with who speak my language."

*Annie L. Scholl is a frequent Radish contributor. For more information about Maria Dummermuth and the services she offers, visit [mariadummermuth.com](http://mariadummermuth.com).*



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healthy living

# Going green, saving green

## Aldi ups its good-for-you goodies

By Katy Williams

The biggest excuse I hear about a person's ability to eat healthy foods is how much food costs. It's cheaper to buy a \$2 bag of Cheetos than it is to grab a \$4 to \$5 box of whole-food granola bars. And when you have food allergies, the difficulty to select foods increases. (Everything seems to have gluten, dairy, soy or nuts in it.)

As more people work toward healthier lifestyles, or are diagnosed with food intolerances, budgets are stretched as we try to stock our fridges with healthier options.

As a college student, I'm always looking for a way to save. I easily could spend an entire paycheck and a portion of my college tuition on healthy foods. At a coffee shop on campus, vegetables with dip and granola with yogurt cost three times as much as a Snickers bar.

But the struggle to find affordable, healthy food is starting to become a whole lot easier to manage. What once was a \$200 grocery bill at stores such as Whole Foods or your nearest grocery store could now be less than \$100 if you visit an Aldi grocery store. In recent years, the grocery store chain has made a huge transition.

As a child, I remember finding the basics at Aldi, such as fruit snacks, cereal, milk and the like. But now, Aldi carries organic and gluten-free lines of food; cage-free eggs; and is working to stock meats without antibiotics, added hormones, steroids and animal byproducts. In the last year, stores also began to carry almond, cashew and soy milk for customers who prefer dairy-free milk options.

"Our shoppers made it clear through both social media and our customer service channels that they're interested in fresh, local produce, organic options and gluten-free foods," says Kim Morrison, a spokeswoman for Aldi. "We're one of the fastest growing retailers in the U.S. As we expand, it's important that we have food to fit every shopper's lifestyle, from coast to coast."

According to an article published earlier this year by Business Insider, the low-cost retailer is fixing its "bigness weakness," and with prices that are 30- to 50-percent lower than big-box stores, that should "terrify Whole Foods."

Being a gluten-free shopper who also tries to live a balanced, healthy lifestyle, Aldi is my go-to place for groceries. Its Live Gluten Free and Simply Nature lines are on-par with prices for non-organic, non-gluten free food, if not lower. And, according to the Business Insider article, 90 percent of the food in the store is purely Aldi brand.

Three years ago, I was diagnosed with celiac disease, so I sought a healthier, whole-food lifestyle in general to power me during my days filled with school, preschoolers and long, stress-relieving runs. The problem was, I didn't have the money to afford the more costly, less-processed food items beyond produce and peanut butter.

The same year, I stumbled into an Aldi's on a Saturday, and saw a plethora



Submitted

The folks at Aldi are working to transition its offerings to include more organic and gluten-free options.

of whole-food items marked gluten-free. I remember taking pictures thinking I was dreaming. Little did I know, it was the beginning of the big transition for the stores.

The most recent move Aldi executed for its game plan was the removal of added MSG, certified synthetic colors and partially hydrogenated oils. Morrison notes that the store will keep moving to include more "feel-good foods," in addition to its current products.

To cut out temptation, Aldi also is introducing Healthier Checklanes in select stores, with plans to reach about 1,500 locations by the end of the year, according to a news release. These lanes will be stocked with single servings of nuts and trail mixes, dried fruits and granola bars instead of candy, the release states.

According to another news release, Aldi also has earned LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Gold certification from the U.S. Green Building Council for its environmentally sustainable distribution center and regional headquarters in Moreno Valley, Calif. The building includes on-site solar panels that provide 60 percent of its electricity; electric vehicle charging stations and bicycle racks; water-efficient landscaping and plumbing and more, the release states.

"To know Aldi is to love Aldi," Morrison says, "and our shoppers know that we save them time and money while offering their families premium quality groceries at affordable prices."

*Katy Williams is an occasional Radish contributor.*

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# Holiday meal ready

## Class helps you make over menu and routines

By Chris Cashion

November is sort of the month that kicks off the holiday season. It won't be long before visions of sugarplums are dancing in our heads. With Thanksgiving just around the corner, visions of savory stuffing, mashed potatoes and homemade pies will dance there, too.

Soon, the images pirouetting in our minds will jump to our plates, and heavy forkfuls will load them into our mouths until our bodies feel sluggish and incapable of any sort of dancing at all. The holidays can wreak havoc on our healthy routines, but they don't have to.

The folks at the Milan Hy-Vee and the University of Illinois Extension in Milan have teamed up to present the Holiday Makeover class on Nov. 3, to teach attendees how to embrace healthier eating and attitudes this holiday season. It's part of the Healthy Lifestyles that Last series, a collaborative effort between the two designed to provide education on a variety of nutrition and wellness topics, says University of Illinois Extension nutrition and wellness educator Kristin Bogdonas.

Bogdonas and Milan Hy-Vee dietitian Nina Struss met in 2013, shortly after Bogdonas began working with the extension. When they realized they had similar interests in health and wellness, they developed the Healthy Lifestyles series, which debuted in January.

"It's a monthly meetup to highlight new health topics such as mindful eating, foods to reduce stress, new research in heart health, superfoods and sustainable diets. Each meeting also incorporates guest speakers from the community to promote healthy lifestyles," Bogdonas says.

For November, the Holiday Makeover topic seemed like a natural fit.

During each class, "Kristin talks about wellness while I provide nutrition and education and product recommendations specific to Hy-Vee. The Holiday Makeover class was created as a way to educate the public about ways to include



Metro Creative Graphics

### Holiday Makeover class

- ◆ **Date:** Nov. 3
- ◆ **Time:** 5:30-7 p.m.
- ◆ **Place:** University of Illinois Extension office, 321 2nd Ave., Milan
- ◆ **Cost:** \$5
- ◆ **To register:** [web.extension.illinois.edu](http://web.extension.illinois.edu).

mindful eating practices during the holidays," Struss says.

Bogdonas says there will be something for everyone, "regardless of cooking experience, because we aren't just talking about food; we'll be talking about your relationship with food and how you experience food over the holiday season."

The duo will cover everything from what to make to how to make it — and they also will offer samples of healthy treats.

"Through mindful eating, we will discuss how to enjoy all foods, especially those specific to the holidays, without the feelings of guilt and overeating. We will also discuss ways to stay active and engage in physical wellness, as the holidays seem to be when most people essentially 'give up' on being

healthy," Struss says.

Struss says she likes to "encourage people to find an outlet for activity during the holiday season instead of waiting for the New Year," including activities such as yoga, swimming, YouTube workouts or an at-home DVD, or the gym.

"Let's be honest, the holidays are stressful," she says. Activity helps "to provide an energy boost. Even the little things help — parking your car farther in the lot when shopping and taking the steps instead of an elevator or escalator whenever possible."

If your holidays tend to lead to an eating frenzy, Bogdonas suggests avoiding distractions, such as the television and mobile devices.

"By keeping your attention on your meal, you will eat less and enjoy your food more," she says.

She adds that it's important to pay attention to your body as well as what you are putting on your plate.

"Pay attention to your hunger cues. We're all born with them. This could be a rumbling tummy or feelings of fullness. Remember that it takes about 15 minutes for your brain to register 'fullness,' so slow down so you don't accidentally overeat," Bogdonas says.

"Balance is key. Make sure you have a variety of color and food groups on

your plate. Avoid eating a plate full of carbohydrates and sweets by starting with the veggies and lean protein first.”

During the class, Struss says she also will showcase several recipes, including some that are “healthier takes” on common holiday dishes.

“We will talk about substitutions that make a recipe healthier or that add nutrition,” she says, including adding nuts or dried fruit to cookie recipes.

Recipe samples will be provided, she says, as well as product samples, recipe cards and coupons.

Struss plans to feature a healthy dessert, a vegetable side dish and an appetizer. One of the recipes Struss would like to spotlight is pumpkin pie dip. “One slice of pumpkin pie has 46 grams of carbohydrates,” she says. “This can be a lot of carbohydrates for a person with diabetes to consume after they have already consumed a large holiday meal.”

She also names taco dip as an example of a healthy “made over” favorite.

“It’s one of my favorite options for an appetizer,” which can be great at holiday events, she says, “especially if they contain fruits, vegetables and protein.” The balance of these foods “will help provide nutrients like fiber and protein, which will help keep guests from overeating during the main meal,” Struss says.

During the class at the extension office, Struss will talk about a number of substitutions you can use in common recipes, such as Greek yogurt, which can be used in most recipes in place of sour cream and mayonnaise.

“This provides a lower-fat option,” if you’re using low-fat or nonfat Greek yogurt, and it “also provides a boost of protein to a recipe, which is helpful in creating a feeling of satiety,” she says.

Struss encourages everyone to attend “because it’s fun,” she says. “The holidays always seem to be a stressful time, especially for those who struggle with good health and nutrition. The goal of this class is to give participants the tools needed to have a healthier holiday season.”

*Chris Cashion is a writer on staff with Radish.*

## Pumpkin Pie Dip

Makes 12 servings

**1/4 cup low-fat cream cheese, softened**

**1/2 cup powdered sugar**

**1 cup pumpkin pie filling**

**1 teaspoon cinnamon**

**1/2 teaspoon nutmeg**

**Pinch of salt**

**1 cup vanilla 0 percent**

**Chobani Greek yogurt**

**6 sliced fresh apples (1/2 an apple per person), for serving**

With an electric mixer at medium speed, beat cream cheese and sugar until smooth. Add pie filling, cinnamon, nutmeg and salt, beating well.



Todd Mizener / Radish

Pumpkin Pie Dip served with apple slices.

Fold in yogurt on low speed until fully blended. Cover and chill eight hours. Serve with apple slices.

— Recipe source: Adapted slightly from [chobani.com](http://chobani.com).

Continued on page 32



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healthy living

# Free Range Yoga

## Center offers classes and services for body and mind

By Natalie Dal Pra

**D**awn Piper may own a successful yoga studio now, but back in 2000, she was just as intimidated by yoga as any other novice.

Prior to attending her first class at Western Illinois University's Rec Center in Macomb, Ill., "I was worried it was going to be this weird class full of people chanting in a language I didn't understand, with billows of incense floating in the air and people standing on their heads," Piper says.

But it was nothing like she had imagined, and soon, yoga became her stress reliever. "I fell head-over-heels in love with it," she says. "I love how it settled my over-active and often anxious mind."

Piper took the class until the instructor, Pat McClean, told her she needed to take over herself.

A native of St. Charles, Mo., Piper ended up in Macomb after serving as an AmeriCorps Vista Leader in Anchorage, Alaska, for two years. Western Illinois hired her to run an AmeriCorps program for the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs. She received her master's degree at the college, and started teaching yoga classes at WIU from 2007 through 2013. She also taught a college-level yoga class for physical education majors.

Piper's training covers all areas of yoga therapy and fitness, including anatomy, pranayama, functional movement, sport and exercise psychology, motor behavior, and wellness program development and administration.

After toying with the idea of opening her own studio for years, Piper finally took the leap and opened Free Range Yoga in Macomb in 2013, while still working her job with the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs.

"After several years of me debating with myself, my dear friend, Anne Dixon, and I talked about it and took the plunge together," Piper says. "After a month of doing both jobs, my husband, Tim, said 'go for it.'" She and Dixon were hosting successful classes with amazing students, she says, so "I took a big breath and made the leap, and quit my full-time job at WIU to run the studio and teach yoga classes."

Piper has suffered from depression since her teenage years, and she knew she wanted to offer what she had been given all those years before in her first



Anne Dixon, Dawn Piper and Kindra Martin of Free Range Yoga.

yoga class: a way to improve mental health and wellness through physical activity.

"My dream was to create a community wellness center on the Square in Macomb so that we could help people get stronger, healthier and happier," she says.

"Yoga was a big piece in me getting myself back from depression. Pam's classes threw me a lifeline and I am so grateful. That's why I decided to teach. I realized it was my life purpose — to help other people get healthy, mind, body and spirit; ... to feel good about themselves and love themselves again so that they could do more good in the world."

Piper says the name of the studio represents to her the idea

that anyone can get healthier, no matter what shape or size. "I wanted to help people ... find new ways to stretch themselves and grow beyond the limited sense of who they were," she says. "Tim and I own free-range chickens that get to roam and do their own thing, so it just made sense."

It wasn't long before Free Range began to outgrow its space. Piper wanted to expand not only to allow for more classes, but to implement the second half of her vision: a community wellness center that could include massage therapy and other mind/body services.

A Go Fund Me page was set to help fund the expansion, and Free Range's north wing officially opened this summer, adding Community Wellness Center to the name at 118 and 122 N. Lafayette, Macomb.

Besides standard yoga classes, Free Range class offerings include dance; conditioning; personal and strength training; walk/run training; nutrition education; trauma-sensitive yoga; Tai Chi and Qigong, as well as a series of online classes to help reach more people.

"It is hard work, and the hours are long," Piper says. "But even when times are really tough, I know this is my life's mission — to help people grow healthy and strong and find their own sense of power; their own light."

*Natalie Dal Pra is a regular Radish contributor. For more information about Free Range Yoga and Community Wellness Center, visit [freerangeyoga.us](http://freerangeyoga.us), or call 309-333-5069.*

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# Spice is nice



Todd Mizener / Radish

## Putting five pumpkin drinks to the test

By Laura Anderson Shaw

I cannot put into words how much I love coffee and fall. Once the temperature strikes 70 degrees, I'm ready for all things autumn, including pumpkin coffee in all of its forms — iced, hot, or otherwise. Pumpkin spice lattes, regular coffee with pumpkin spice creamer, I don't care — I'll drink it all.

For me, there's something nostalgic about the drink, especially in its pumpkin form. It reminds me of cozy sweaters and chilly days. It's comforting, it gets me going and it makes me happy.

Like many pumpkin coffee lovers, I have drank the Kool-Aid, or the

Starbucks' Pumpkin Spice Latte, as it were. I am head-over-heels obsessed with it. Many of my friends and family members balk at the price tag and the amount of sugar they pack, and prefer cheaper, healthier versions. I, however, treat myself to the expensive, sugary coffee drink once a week throughout the season, and maintain that Starbucks' version is the best when it comes to pumpkin coffees.

But recent discussions have caused some doubt. Do I like Starbucks because of its name or its product? Is there another nearby option that also would be a quick drive (or drive-thru) away, where perhaps the coffee wouldn't be any more nutritionally sound, but cheaper? I wanted to know, once and for all.

What a better way to answer these questions than to hold a super scientific taste test? I asked my unbiased coworkers to help, and we chose four coffee spots sort of near our homes and office that we figured may also be close to yours. We threw in a make-it-yourself drink you can snag at Target for good measure, too.

We sat around our office's conference table, five piping hot drinks in the center: a Pumpkin Spice Latte from Starbucks, a Pumpkin Pie Latte from Caribou Coffee, a Pumpkin Swirl Latte from Dunkin' Donuts, a Pumpkin Spice Latte from McDonald's and an Archer Farms Pumpkin Spice Latte Instant Coffee.

I poured each variety into smaller cups for our taste testers, and then, a chorus of "mmm," "yuck" and "hmm" ensued.

Just as I had suspected, five out of eight taste-testers (myself included) confirmed that the Starbucks Pumpkin Spice Latte essentially was the favorite among the contenders (depending on how you shook out the responses).

Instantly, I breathed a sigh of relief. I now had confirmation that when I blow \$5-plus on a coffee — the 12-ouncer we sampled was \$4.25 before tax, but the 16-ouncer is my standard! — and more than double the amount of the American Heart Association's recommended daily added sugar limit for women, it at least is on the best of the best!

Of the three taste-testers who did not choose Starbucks as their favorite, only one didn't like it — and she doesn't like coffee. That tester did say, however, that "the pumpkin spice flavor was nice."

Other taste-testers say they would "definitely" buy it, and that the "color looks good — something I'd expect when I see (a) #basic girl walk down the street with this in hand."

Another says that it had a "light pumpkin flavor — (a) good balance of flavors."

Caribou's Pumpkin Pie Latte clocked in at \$3.99 before tax for a small, and received some good, but mixed reviews, too. It definitely either tied with Starbucks for first place, or it was a close second. Five of the testers say it was OK, but noted it was a little more bitter than the other offerings,

with a slightly artificial taste.

"I'm not getting the fresh pumpkin flavor that I like," one tester says.

"More bitter," but "very pie-like," says another.

The Dunkin' Donuts latte, which was \$2.59 for a small, struck out with many of our taste-testers, who say it was bland, milky, and far too sweet. One taste tester says it was lighter in color — like coffee with cream in it, whereas many of the others had a bit of an orange hue to them.

"Didn't taste like coffee, but didn't taste good, either," says the tester who isn't a giant fan of coffee.

"It tastes a bit off," says another.

With exception of two of the eight testers, McDonald's Pumpkin Spice Latte was a no-go for our group, too. It cost \$2.69 before tax for a small.

One tester says that she was "pleasantly surprised" by its flavor. Another says that while it had a "very off-putting color," it was her favorite as long as she couldn't see the vivid orange liquid.

The rest of the taste testers had other things to say about it, though. "Loaded with sugar as I expected. Wow. Tasty treat, but not a coffee drink," one says.

"Bad taste," says another. "I'm NOT lovin' it."

The worst of the spread by far was the Archer Farms Pumpkin Spice Latte Instant Coffee, which was \$4.99 before tax for five packets of mix. It was thin and watery, and tasted like a combination of cinnamon and clove spices — not pumpkin.

"Nope," says one tester. "Can't taste the sweetness. Tastes like cardboard. Whoever thought this should go on (the) market should rethink their career."

"Tastes like cinnamon water," another says.

"Didn't taste like coffee," adds another.

While Starbucks seemed to be the overall winner, the best pumpkin latte or coffee pick really comes down to preference. If your pumpkin latte needs an emphasis on the coffee or espresso flavor, the Caribou version might be your best bet. If you're looking for more of a sweet treat, perhaps you should try the McDonald's take on the drink. If a good mix of the two is what you seek, go for Starbucks.

Most of these drinks' nutritional values also may be altered by swapping out 2-percent milk for skim or a dairy-free milk, or by substituting sugar-free flavoring for the full-flavored versions. Check with the location of your choice to learn about the options.

*Laura Anderson Shaw is the editor of Radish.*

**"Can't taste the sweetness. Tastes like cardboard. Whoever thought this should go on (the) market should rethink their career."**

— Taste tester on Archer Farms Pumpkin Spice Latte Instant Coffee

body, mind & soul

# A force for good Mama Bear will lead the way

By Leslie Klipsch

**I**n the wild, it is widely known that if something comes between a bear and her cubs, the mother will attack to protect her young. Female bears are defensive of their offspring and will strike viciously at the first glimpse of a threat. A 300-pound mass of anger seeking vengeance; it is not a passive scene.

On the playground, the bleachers or her own front porch, we know that even the most unflappable, well-mannered human mother, regardless of size or stature, possesses a similar ferocity within. If pressed, her Mama Bear will come out swinging and swiping. She will show her claws. You mess with my babies, as they say, and you'll meet my Mama Bear.

The universality of this sense of protection and anger for our offspring is familiar, so much so that the comparison often is made between human mothers and mama bears. Often, in conversation with our peers, we'll hear a tale of hurt and injustice followed by the statement of fact: "My Mama Bear came out."

At this we take a step back. We hear the phrase and we know she means business.

Each of us holds a Mama Bear within. When pressed, we've felt her stir. We know her passion is unique and ripe with potential. Though I cannot advocate for Mama Bear in all situations or champion her petty grievances, I can't help but wonder what it might be like to harness her power and set her loose to exhibit measured fury and intimidation in the right situation. What if we could somehow take the rage of Mama Bear and unleash her power when we read about injustice or hear stories that break our heart? What if Mama Bear would strike just as hotly when she learned of an inequality half a world away as she might in defense of her children at the neighborhood ballpark or play-lot? What if we could begin to take on the struggles of others with the same intensity as we attack our own?

With this in mind, I have begun to try to capture the instinct of my Mama Bear. I want to remember the rumble and rage and I want to channel it for good. I

**I want to train her to show her teeth not just when my own child is hurting, but when I see another human suffer. I'm convinced we could wreak havoc on injustice and summon radical, forceful, lumbering change.**

want to train her to show her teeth not just when my own child is hurting, but when I see another human suffer. In doing so, I'm convinced we could wreak havoc on injustice and summon radical, forceful, lumbering change. We could be the protectors of not just our own offspring, but of the

baby bears all over the world.

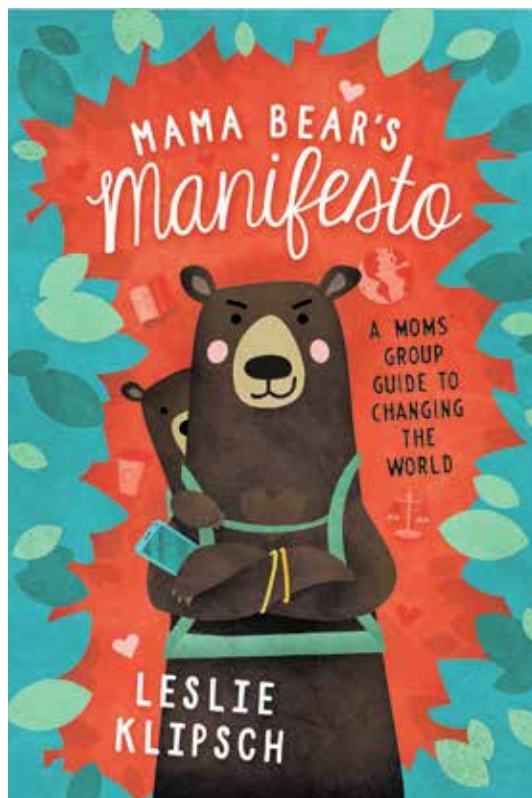
What if Mama Bear got worked up about the girls being kept from school in Pakistan? What if she noticed children in her very own school district don't have winter coats when the snow begins to fall? What if she allowed the images of Syrian refugees with no certain future to resonate? These are the things that warrant rage and anger. These are the issues that deserve a Mama Bear to come out fighting for.

There is gentleness in the way that we rock our babies. There is sweetness in the way we kiss our children goodnight. But this love, as tender as it might be, should not be underestimated. Remember that in every endearing moment, Mama Bear is lurking. We are capable of extraordinary care, and it is not limited to the way we love our own offspring. This power can transcend our own homes and communities.

We have a unique perspective and a secret weapon lurking inside, and because of the inarguable power of an individual who makes the decision to shine love into the places that are dark and broken, I am convinced that those aware of the larger world and ready to act will become a force of tremendous change and a conduit of love in action.

The power of Mama Bear lurks inside each of us. We can identify what generates our anger and take note of the stories that stir our souls and sting our eyes. Ask Mama Bear how she would react, and watch her sharp claws point to the sky. Then, let's take that impulse — that unmistakable power and passion — and use it for good.

*Adapted with permission from "Mama Bear's Manifesto: A Moms' Group Guide to Changing the World," by Leslie Klipsch. Published in 2016 by Leafwood Publishers. Available at Amazon.com.*



Submitted  
"Mama Bear's Manifesto: A Moms' Group Guide to Changing the World," by Leslie Klipsch

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## Navigating Holiday Fare with Greek Yogurt

With colder weather and seasonal indulges on the horizon; being careful to not sabotage yourself into a calorie coma can be a difficult task to navigate. Feel-good foods more often than not leave us feeling bloated and guilty. To keep a healthy regime this holiday season, try using Greek yogurt as an alternative during your holiday festivities. Try it out with the recipe below!

### Pumpkin Pie Dip

#### All you need:

- 6 ounces, low fat cream cheese, room temperature
- 1/3 cup, reduced fat Greek yogurt
- 15 ounces canned pumpkin
- 2 1/2 teaspoons cinnamon, ground
- 1 teaspoon all spice, ground
- 1 teaspoon cloves, ground
- 1/8 teaspoon, nutmeg, ground
- 3 tablespoons maple syrup
- 1/8 teaspoon sea salt

#### All you do:

1. In a food processor, place cream cheese and Greek yogurt and blend until smooth.
2. Add remaining ingredients in the food processor and blend until smooth.
3. Cover and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes before serving with sliced fruit or whole grain pretzels.

#### Nutrition Information

Serving size: 2 Tbsp

Calories: 35; Total Fat: 1g; Carbohydrate: 5g; Dietary Fiber: 1g; Sugars: 3g; Protein: 1g

Adapted from myrecipes.com



healthy living

# Game on!

## Fun and easy games for your next gathering



By Whitney Longeville and Laura Anderson Shaw

The only thing better than a Thanksgiving feast is spending time with your friends and family while you eat it. However, post-meal routines might send everyone in different directions: the football fans to the TV, the kids to a toy room and the remainder to the kitchen or dining room to chat over coffee and dessert. If you're hoping to spend a little more time with everyone gathered together, here are a few games to try. Some may even be played using materials you have on hand.

### Who, What, Where, When, Why

**Number of players:** 5 or more

**Necessary items:** Paper, pens or pencils

**How to play:** A favorite at slumber parties, “Who, What, When, Where, Why” requires only slips of paper, writing utensils and active imaginations. Friends and family should gather in a circle and write “who, what, when, where, why” on their paper. Each guest fills out one piece of the information, folds the paper down to hide their answer, and passes to the left.

At the end of the game, an interesting story is sure to unfold.

### Spoons

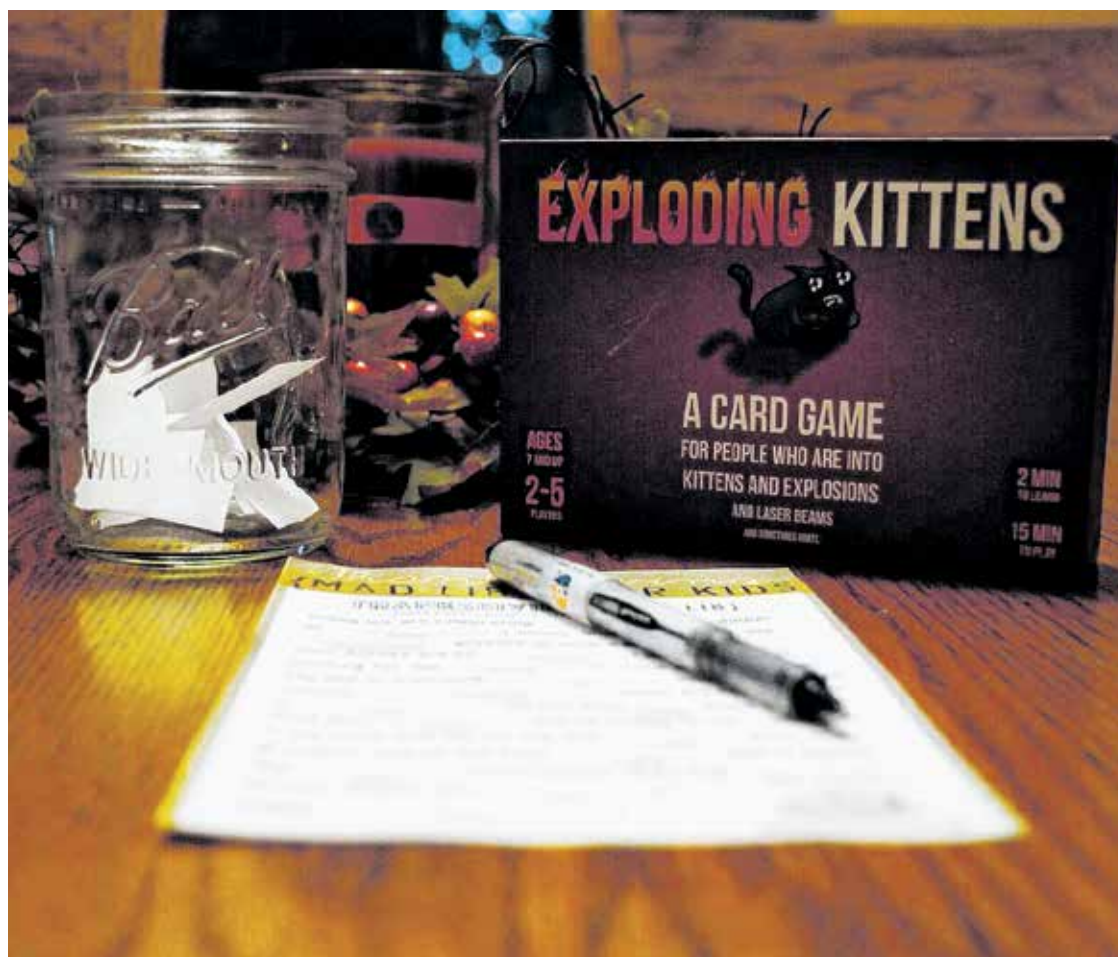
**Number of players:** 3-13

**Necessary items:** Deck of cards; spoons — one fewer than there are players

**How to play:** Spoons is a game that requires a deck of cards and, you guessed it, spoons! Be sure to clean them up after all of the feasting!

Place the spoons in the center of your table, and deal four cards to each player. The objective of the game is to make four of a kind.

The dealer takes five cards, but passes one to the left, face down. Then, each player should begin to pass a card to the left face down, until the last player discards one into a trash pile. Once one person gets four of a kind, he grabs a spoon. Once one person grabs a spoon, everyone can reach for one. The player left without a spoon has to take a letter, and the first person to spell out S-P-O-O-N is out. The last player to remain wins the game.



Looking for something to do after the turkey is consumed this Thanksgiving? Try playing some games with your friends and family.

Brandy Welvaert / Radish



Brandy Welvaert / Radish

Mad Libs is always good for a laugh!

## Exploding Kittens

**Number of players:** 2-5 players, ages 7 and older

**Where to find it:** [explodingkittens.com](http://explodingkittens.com)

**How to play:** Called a “highly-strategic, kitty-powered version of Russian Roulette,” I’ve enjoyed playing this game with my sister and 7- and 10-year-old nephews. With bright, colorful illustrations on each card and lots of laughs, Exploding Kittens will bring the fun to your holiday gathering.

This is the one game on the list that will require an advanced purchase, so get it before the holidays are upon us!

— By Whitney Longeville

## Mad Libs

**Number of players:** 2+

**Necessary items:** Paper and pen or pencil, or Mad Libs template from Pinterest

**How to play:** Studies have shown that laughing for 10 to 15 minutes can burn between 10 and 40 calories. Get a head start on burning off that extra slice of pie with some Mad Libs!

Before your guests arrive, write a narrative, but leave some blanks! Note what type of word the sentence requires, be it an adjective, noun, animal, food, etc., whatever you’d like.

When it’s time to play, one person may ask the group to help fill in the blanks. Once the puzzle is complete, he or she may read the passage aloud.

If you need inspiration, or you’re short on time to make your own, check out Pinterest. I tracked down a Thanksgiving Mad Libs for kids there, posted by [sisterssuiteblog.com](http://sisterssuiteblog.com).

## Guess-Giving

**Number of players:** 4+

**Necessary items:** Paper, scissors, pens and pencils, bowl or jar

**How to play:** Get in the Thanksgiving spirit by having everyone express what they are thankful for this year. Cut a small piece or strip of paper for each guest, and have everyone jot down their thoughts before dinner. Once they are finished, everyone should fold their paper, and drop it into a bowl or jar. Then, give the papers a good mix.

After dinner, pass the bowl or jar around. One at a time, have everyone select a piece of paper and read the note aloud. Then, the group has to guess which person wrote it.

*Whitney Longeville is a page designer for The Dispatch and Rock Island Argus. Laura Anderson Shaw is the editor of Radish.*



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body, mind & soul

# Centering prayer

## Upcoming retreat to provide the tools for the practice

By Ann Ring

When two curious people attended a workshop on centering prayer 25 years ago, it changed the course of their history.

"Centering prayer literally changed my life from top to bottom," says Dick Jensen, of Bettendorf. "Today, I feel I have a direct relationship with God."

Centering prayer is based on classic contemplative traditions in Christianity that can be traced back as far as St. Gregory the Great, pope of the Catholic Church from 590 until his death in 604. Thomas Keating, a Trappist monk, is known as one of the founders who formed the modern centering-prayer movement in the 1970s. In 1983, he presented a two-week intensive centering prayer retreat at the Lama Foundation in San Cristobal, N.M., which proved to be a watershed event.

Sister Bobbi Bussan, director of the Benet House Retreat Center at St. Mary Monastery in Rock Island, says centering prayer "is a method of prayer using silence to reach an interior oneness with God.

"It is in the quiet of this presence where we know the Lord at the greatest depth."

Bussan says centering prayer emphasizes reaching the "'inner room' Jesus calls us to in the Gospels through the use of breathing, silence and a mantra. The breathing and mantra are tools for deepening our inner quiet and taking the focus away from our daily distractions. Centering prayer leads one to 'resting in God.'"

Jensen says centering prayer "helps with your relationship with God, although the connection is not apparent at first." He also says centering prayer "unloads the unconscious" and can promote emotional healing.

"It's extremely freeing," he says.

Today, he and his wife, Marcia, are part of a service team for Eastern Iowa Contemplative Outreach, a branch of the national Contemplative Outreach Ltd., founded by Keating and others to teach centering prayer and support those who use it.

Jensen encourages two 20-minute meditation sessions a day. While the prayer's intent is to foster communion in Christ, he says for an agnostic, centering prayer would be beneficial "as long as a person is willing to have an open mind."

For the atheist, Jensen suggests mindfulness meditation, which is not

**"I needed a 'booster shot' for my prayer life. ... It was like coming home, and I knew that God was providing what I had been looking for."**

— Marie Howard



Retreatants at Benet House Retreat Center gather in the chapel for group centering prayer. A group meets there weekly on Wednesdays at 1 p.m. Submitted

God-centered.

Jensen says Marie Howard brought an introduction course on centering prayer to the Diocese of Davenport about 25 years ago. Howard, now in her 70s, can rattle off the dates in a heartbeat.

"It was actually 28 years ago" that she brought centering prayer to the QC, she says with a laugh. "My journey with centering prayer began in the fall of 1985 when I was the family life director for the Diocese of Davenport, and attending a national conference for this group.

"I was now 48 years old, married, mother of five, working in ministry in a diocese, and yet my relationship with God was stuck in the busy life. I was living with no time for prayer," she says.

"At the time, I was pretty burned out with my job and needed a 'booster shot' for my prayer life, which I received from a workshop presented by Father (Carl) Arico, where he provided a taste of this new and yet very old contemplative prayer

practice. It was like coming home, and I knew that God was providing what I had been looking for."

Howard now lives in New Jersey and is a Contemplative Outreach chapter consultant around the country. "It's a gift you just pass on," she says. "That's how we look at it."

The Benet House Retreat Center at St. Mary Monastery in Rock Island will offer a centering prayer retreat weekend on Friday, Nov. 18, through Sunday, Nov. 20. The cost is \$230.

Jensen says he's willing to provide a prerequisite on centering prayer prior to the weekend. Eastern Iowa Contemplative Outreach also offers several locations for centering prayer throughout the Quad-Cities, Iowa City and more.

Benet House, which cooperates with Eastern Iowa Contemplative Outreach and Central Illinois Contemplative Outreach, offers a yearly, one-day Introduction to Centering Prayer, plus a four-day Centering Prayer Retreat. It also sponsors a weekly centering prayer group every Wednesday, from 1 to 2 p.m.

For more information on centering prayer opportunities, visit [smmsisters.org/retreat](http://smmsisters.org/retreat), or call 309-283-2108. For more about Eastern Iowa Contemplative Outreach, visit [sites.google.com/site/easterniowaco1](http://sites.google.com/site/easterniowaco1).

*Ann Ring is a frequent Radish contributor.*

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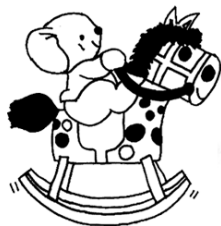
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# Choosing a personal trainer

## What to look for, what to avoid

There are more than 250,000 fitness trainers in the U.S. Finding the right one isn't always easy.

Fotolia/TNS

### Chicago Tribune (TNS)

There is a scene in the Arnold Schwarzenegger movie, “The Running Man,” in which “Captain Freedom’s Workout” comes on TV, and Jesse Ventura yells, “Are you ready for pain? Are you ready for suffering?”

If your trainer behaves like that, start running — away.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, there are more than 250,000 fitness trainers and instructors in the U.S. That’s a lot to choose from. Some of their clients have horror stories; others refer to personal trainers as lifesavers.

First, some horror.

“I have club feet, and my trainer tried to get me to do things that were impossible for me,” says Sara Ross, 34, a small-business owner in Lawrenceville, N.J. She’d had surgery as a child to synthetically lengthen her Achilles tendons, and was looking to improve her body’s functionality and flexibility. But the trainer at a

country club gym wasn’t a good listener.

“I told her my ankles didn’t have the flexibility to do a full squat,” she says. The trainer pushed her to do it anyway, with added weight. Ross heard a pop in her Achilles. The trainer asserted it was all in her head. Ross stormed out of the session, never to return. She had trouble walking for weeks.

“Training is something you do for someone, not to someone; You’re looking for a facilitator, not a dictator,” says Florida-based trainer Nick Tumminello, who was named the 2016 Personal Trainer of the Year by the National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA).

He warns people away from “push through the pain”-type trainers.

His description of a good trainer? “They make it about you. Good listener. Someone who asks you questions about what you want rather than say what they want to inflict on you.” A trainer needs to understand a client’s goals and devise the safest and most effective method of reaching those goals, he says.

Beware of the hard sell. Monica Weber, a 39-year-old midwife in Ontario, Canada, says it happened to her twice.

She’d had a membership at the GoodLife Fitness chain since 2002, doing basic workouts on her own. In 2010, she inquired about hiring a trainer. The introductory sessions, she says, “were all a big sales pitch. He made me feel like I had a lot of problems he needed to fix. It would take a year and a half and cost \$10,000.”

She balked at the cost and says no thanks. Three years later, she tried another GoodLife trainer. “She gave me an even harder sell,” Weber says. Again, it was \$10,000 to “fix” her.

GoodLife Fitness personal training divisional manager Kelly Musovic says the average personal training package costs \$4,000 and a single session can be had for \$39.

“If they say no to a particular option, we would advise them of other options,” says Musovic, who was

Continued on page 31

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# Radish WINTER WELLNESS FESTIVAL

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## Save the date!

Radish wellness event returns Dec. 10

By Radish staff

**T**emperatures are dropping fast, holiday stress soon will rise, and cold and flu season is near. With the chilly weather, snow and the joy of the season, winter also tends to bring its own health challenges. To help you find area resources to meet those challenges, mark Dec. 10 on your calendar and plan to visit the third annual Radish Winter Wellness Festival, presented by Genesis Physical Therapy and Wellness, Bettendorf.

The free event will offer an afternoon of local food, health, education and fun, all geared toward helping you improve and maintain your health and well-being during the cold months ahead.

The Winter Wellness Festival will take place from 1 to 4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 10, inside of a heated tent at Genesis Physical Therapy and Wellness, 4017 Devils Glen Rd., Bettendorf.

About 40 area businesses, organizations and health professionals will be on hand with information, demonstrations and products to share that are related to staying fit during the holidays and winter months; ways to enjoy and explore the outdoors this winter; keeping a positive, healthy state of mind; the benefits of massage, reflexology and reiki; herbal teas, essential oils and other helpful home remedies to keep winter bugs in check; and more.

The first 100 festival attendees will receive a free winter wellness gift.

The Winter Wellness Festival also will showcase healthy eating ideas for the winter months with cooking demonstrations and food samples featuring local and seasonal ingredients, and free workshops throughout the afternoon. The first 25 people to attend each workshop will receive a free gift (while supplies last).

Check out the December issue of Radish and [radishmagazine.com](http://radishmagazine.com) for more information about the Winter Wellness Festival, including a complete lineup of those who will attend. We hope to see you there!



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dismayed to hear about Weber's story. "We don't want anyone to feel harassed."

Weber insisted both trainers made her feel as though it was the \$10,000 route or nothing. She ended up leaving the gym.

Marie Rousseau, 39, is a retail worker in Bryce Canyon, Utah. She recalled a trainer who was pushing her toward a smaller dress size. At the time, the 5-foot, 4-inch tall Rousseau weighed 93 pounds and was recovering from an eating disorder that had almost killed her. Her goal was to gain muscle and strength and go up a few dress sizes, but the trainer told her she should drop to a size 6.

Says Rousseau: "He insisted I had some fat to lose" — a dangerous thing to say to someone who's battled an eating disorder.

Even though the trainer knew about her condition, he "pushed no carb," Rousseau says. "I told him right off the bat that nutrition coaching was unnecessary because I was under the care of a registered dietitian."

The trainer also pushed supplements — ones he wanted to sell her. Rousseau bailed after three sessions.

Richard Cotton, national director of certification for the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM), says his organization "does not support any supplement sales within the client-trainer relationship." He added that trainers should refer to a registered dietitian when it comes to clients' meal planning.

The horror stories make personal training seem like the Wild West. But Cotton says it's not as wild as it used to be.

"There has been self-policing to improve standards and develop best practices," he says.

Most trainers have some form of certification — ACSM and NSCA are two well-respected groups — but that doesn't guarantee quality.

Both Tumminello and Cotton recommended seeking out a trainer with relevant experience. Seniors, for example, should look for someone who understands how to work with older adults. Cotton is a big fan of word-of-mouth referrals.

That's how Ross finally landed a good trainer: from her cousin's recommendation. Her new trainer had the relevant physical therapy experience.

"He adapted the exercise to my ability," she says.

Tumminello warned against any trainer who insists exercises be done a certain way, saying it shows a lack of understanding of variations in human movement.

"He told me I didn't need to do squats," says Ross, who's been with her current trainer for three years. "He's so knowledgeable and nice to work with."

Rousseau found a better trainer, too. "He would push me just enough where I would gain confidence," she says. "He was more about good form. Working out is more about feeling good now."

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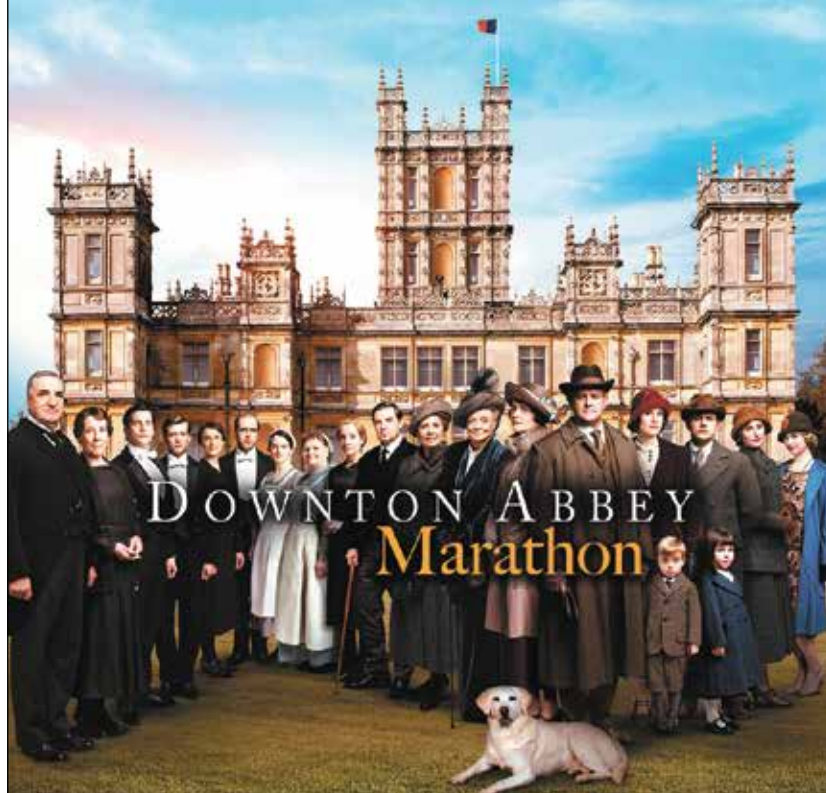
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holiday meal,  
continued from page 15

## Taco Dip

Makes 12 servings

**8 ounces Greek yogurt, plain**

**1 tablespoon taco seasoning**

**1 can black beans, drained**

**1 can diced tomatoes with chilies**

**1 avocado**

**2 tablespoons lime juice**

**1/2 teaspoon garlic powder**

**1 cup lettuce, shredded**

**1 tomato, diced**

**1 cup taco cheese**



www.eatyourbooks.com

Mix together Greek yogurt and taco seasoning and set aside. In a blender, combine black beans, tomatoes, avocado, lime juice and garlic powder.

In an 8-by-8-inch dish, spread a layer of the yogurt mixture. Top it with the black bean mixture, then lettuce, tomatoes and cheese. Refrigerate dip until ready to serve.

— Recipe source: Hy-Vee Dietitians

## Green Bean Uncasserole

**1 3/4 pounds green beans, trimmed**

**1 tablespoon plus 1 1/2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil**

**2 large shallots, thinly sliced (1/2 cup)**

**3/4 cup low-sodium chicken stock**

**2 teaspoons cornstarch**

**8 ounces cremini mushrooms, trimmed and sliced 1/8 inch thick**

**1/3 cup 2 percent Greek yogurt**

**Coarse salt and freshly ground pepper**

Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Blanch beans until tender, about 6 minutes. Drain.

Meanwhile, heat 1 1/2 teaspoons oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Cook shallots, stirring occasionally, until tender and just starting to brown, 3 to 4 minutes. Transfer shallots to a small bowl, and wipe skillet clean with a paper towel.

Whisk together stock and cornstarch. Heat remaining tablespoon oil in skillet over high heat. Cook mushrooms, stirring occasionally, until golden brown, about 6 minutes. Reduce heat to low; add shallots. Whisk in stock mixture. Cook until thick, about 3 minutes more. Remove from heat. Stir in yogurt and 1/2 teaspoon salt; season with pepper. Toss in beans. Serve warm.

— Recipe source: Adapted from Martha Stewart Living

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food for thought

# Lucky day

## Finding gratitude on purpose

By Brandy Welvaert

I've never put much stock in fortune cookies, palm readings or horoscopes, but once in a while, my mile-wide silly streak takes hold — and I go looking for luck.

Such was the case recently, when I typed "Pisces September 2016" into my internet browser's search bar, and happened upon a blog entry that referenced my two luckiest days of the year: September 25 and 26. The horoscope hinted at riches and a plum assignment — it even promised that I'd be entering a particularly enjoyable social season.

It was just a random, late-night Google. Yet the dates stuck in my mind, and soon I was counting down.

When the fateful morning finally arrived, it was a good hair day. The temperature felt just right as I stepped out the back door. The pink-tinged clouds drew my gaze, and the early-morning sunlight reflected on the still surface of the water as I crossed a bridge on my way to work. Even my morning coffee, a generic brand sipped from my scratched Contigo mug, tasted richer than usual.

All day, my mind and body felt particularly in tune with each other and with my surrounding environment. After work, preparing a simple dinner, cleaning it up, and spending time with my family left me feeling particularly fulfilled, although nothing out-of-the-ordinary happened. That night, I remembered to say a quick prayer of thanks before slipping into sleep.

The next day, I woke up in a chipper mood and began to surmise that perception, not luck, was at play. My "lucky day," as it were, had opened my eyes to seeing with gratitude.

We know from widely shared research that gratitude makes us not only happier, but also healthier. And yet, if you're like me, you might struggle to give thanks as often as you want to. It's just easier, sometimes, to focus on all that's lacking — especially if you're a born "improver."

Encouragement to find gratitude can help, and the following books are a few of my favorites for delivering a much-needed attitude adjustment. No luck necessary.

*Brandy Welvaert is a former editor of Radish.*

### **"My Stroke of Insight: A Brain Scientist's Personal Journey"**

by Jill Bolte Taylor (Penguin, 2008).

In 1996 at the age of 37, Harvard neurologist Jill Bolte Taylor suffered a massive stroke, and this book is her memoir. It chronicles the stroke, its aftermath, and the author's complete recovery — including details about how she "rewired" her brain for greater happiness, gratitude and optimism.

A fascinating story with scientific underpinnings, this book provides a framework for readers who are motivated to make positive changes to their inner lives.

### **"Help, Thanks, Wow: The Three Essential Prayers"**

by Anne Lamott (Penguin, 2012).

Whether prayer is part of your life is, in some ways, beside the point here, as Lamott's unique intellect, disarming honesty, quirky humor and hippie spirituality combine in this book of short, delightful chapters that capture core truths about life and what it means to be human in a magically spare number of words. You don't have to take her advice on prayer to be grateful for this wise and entertaining book.

### **"Daring Greatly: How the Courage to Be Vulnerable Transforms the Way We Live, Love, Parent, and Lead"**

by Brené Brown (Penguin, 2012).

As a No. 1 New York Times Bestseller, this book's big-time status repelled me for a long time before I dug in. I'm glad I did.

Brown is a shame researcher, and while shame and gratitude may appear to be unrelated emotions on the surface, this book connects the dots and provides practical tools for becoming more grateful and courageous, and for living what Brown calls a "wholehearted" life.

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