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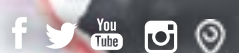
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Plan your getaway to the Laurel Highlands, the mid-Atlantic's ultimate ski destination. Experience the East Coast's only Olympic-sized halfpipe and cutting-edge terrain parks at Seven Springs Mountain Resort. Take on the state's steepest slope at Laurel Mountain. Ski, snowboard, or snow tube at nearby Hidden Valley Resort and Nemaquin Woodlands Resort.

Wind through a winter wonderland on a classic horse-drawn sleigh ride or snowmobile tour. Head to one of the region's 10 state parks and forests to take in the beauty on a snowshoe or cross country ski adventure. Relax fireside at your own mountain chalet or cottage rental. Pennsylvania's Laurel Highlands is just a short drive away, so plan your trip today!



[www.laurelhighlands.org/winter](http://www.laurelhighlands.org/winter)



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# Discover a Winter Wonderland IN PENNSYLVANIA'S LAUREL HIGHLANDS

By Anna Weltz and Cassandra Rupert

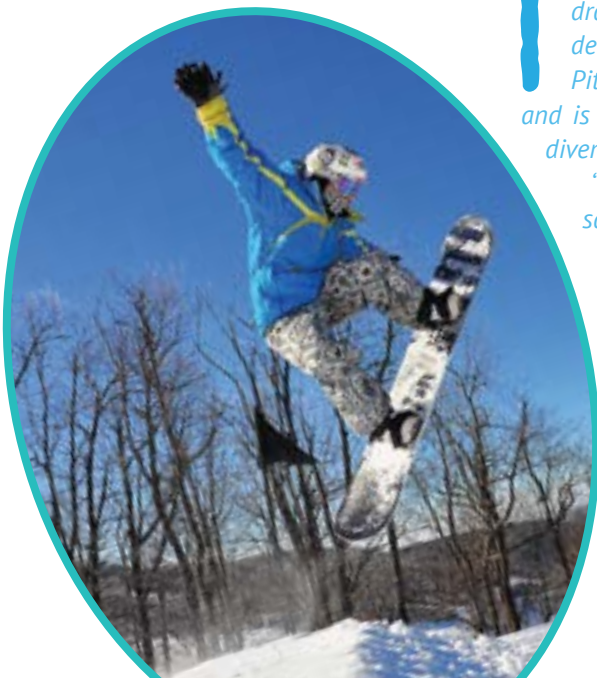
**f**rom snow tubing and snowshoe tours to skiing and snowboarding to horse-drawn sleigh rides and more, the whole family will surely love a winter wonderland getaway to Pennsylvania's Laurel Highlands. Located just east of Pittsburgh, the Laurel Highlands encompasses a 3,000 square-mile region and is home to the state's largest cumulative snowfall, highest peak, and four diverse ski resorts.

*"In the Laurel Highlands, winter brings a wonderland of fun and excitement," said Anna Weltz, Director of Public Relations, Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau. "Snow means more than just shoveling. The crisp winter months are full of activities that the entire family can enjoy. Plan a ski trip or find tons of outdoor adventures to keep you busy this season."*

## SKIING AND SNOWBOARDING

No matter how you choose to tackle the mountain, on a snowboard or skis, you will find a downhill thrill for every ability level. Mother

> CONTINUED





# Discover

> CONTINUED

Nature teams up with some of the best snow making on the East Coast for wonderful ski conditions all season long. Discover winding trails, challenging slopes, glades, terrain parks, and more at four resorts – Seven Springs Mountain Resort, Hidden Valley Resort, Laurel Mountain, and Nemacolin Woodlands Resort.

Pennsylvania's largest ski resort and home of the East Coast's only Olympic-size halfpipe, Seven Springs Mountain Resort is located in the heart of the Laurel Highlands. The resort offers 33 slopes and trails, seven terrain parks, and tons of winter fun. Whether a wind-

ing trail is more your speed or you are prepared for a more intense incline, you will find it all at Seven Springs, with a 2,994' elevation, a 750' vertical drop, 285 acres of skiable terrain, 10 chairlifts, and four surface lifts. The first resort in Pennsylvania to host a major international snowboarding competition, Seven Springs is on the cutting edge of terrain park design, making it a "must-do" for snowboarders and free-style skiers.

With slopes and trails for every ability, visitors to Hidden Valley Resort can explore gradual meandering trails and work their way up to a more difficult descent, making this resort an ideal winter destination for families. With 26 slopes and trails, two introductory terrain parks, and a comfortable learning environment, Hidden Valley is the perfect place to develop skiing and

snowboarding skills. Hidden Valley has a 470' vertical drop, 110 skiable acres, nine chairlifts, and two surface lifts to get you all over the mountain for a fun-filled day.

The iconic and revered ski area, Laurel Mountain, originally opened in 1940, is celebrating a grand reopening this year after more than a decade of dormancy. Once an exclusive club, Laurel Mountain was gifted to the state of Pennsylvania in 1964. Seven Springs Mountain Resort has partnered with the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to bring this classic destination back to life. Just 72 miles east of Pittsburgh, Laurel Mountain boasts the highest vertical drop and the steepest slope in the state with a 761' vertical drop, a must-do for the avid skier. Laurel Mountain is the only upside down ski area in the region, with the lodge at the top of the mountain at 2,766 feet.

Consistently rated as a top luxury destination, Nemacolin Woodlands Resort offers a bevy of winter activities





# a Winter Wonderland



including skiing and snowboarding at Mystic Mountain. With seven slopes, three lifts and a terrain park, Mystic Mountain provides a great learning environment for first-time skiers and snowboarders.

## **SNOW TUBING**

Quite possibly the easiest winter activity, snow tubing in the Laurel Highlands takes the days of childhood sled riding to a whole new level of excitement and ease. Simply pick up a tube and hop on a surface lift ride from the base of the park to the top. No need to hike uphill! Then tuck yourself into your tube, hold onto the handles, and feel the crisp winter air on your cheeks and nose as gravity sends you sliding

down hill. Look no further than Seven Springs, Hidden Valley and Nemaocolin resorts for your snow tubing adventure!

## **FOCUS ON THE KIDS**

Snow tubing, sleigh rides, and so many downhill thrills make the Laurel Highlands the destination to bring the kids. All three resorts in the Laurel Highlands also have a plethora of other fun activities for the entire family, from indoor swimming pools to arcades and bowling alleys. Looking for a more relaxed family weekend? Spend a classic day at the park sledding. Laurel Hill State Park and Ohiopyle State Park have designated sledding areas. Ohiopyle even lights their sled hill for fun that lasts into the evening hours.

## **CROSS COUNTRY SKIING AND SNOWSHOE TOURS**

With miles upon miles of trails, snowshoers and cross-country and telemark skiers (skiers who use a special type of ski, which allows their heel to lift for a deep lunge style of skiing) flock to the Laurel Highlands each winter. Here visitors can find five Pennsylvania Cross Country Skiers Association ski areas – Forbes State Forest and Kooser, Laurel Ridge, Laurel Mountain and Ohiopyle state parks. Not to mention, the Great Allegheny Passage, open to traditional cross country skiing, Seven Springs Mountain Resort, Nemaocolin Woodlands Resort, and Savage River Lodge.

*> CONTINUED*



an experience you  
won't soon forget!

> CONTINUED

### UNIQUE WINTER EXPERIENCES

**Dog-Sledding** - If you've ever wanted to lead a team of dogs across a white sweep of open territory, here's your chance. Book your reservation in advance to experience dog-sledding at Nemaocolin Woodlands Resort. A team of seasoned sled dogs from the nearby Wildlife Academy will lead the way. All you have to do is hold on and enjoy the cool rush of wind in your face. It's an experience you won't soon forget.

**Snowcat Tours** - Every night after the skiers and snowboarders have cleared the slopes of Seven Springs, the resort's on-mountain team uses snowcats or groomers to create smooth and impeccable conditions for the next day. Climb aboard a specially-designed snowcat for a late night ride! On this tour, visitors take in remarkable nighttime views

from the top of the mountains and even descend down the steepest slopes.

**Snowmobile Tours** - Seven Springs' exclusive snowmobile tours are a thrilling way to enjoy the snowy scenery of the snow-capped Laurel Highlands. Wind along the 15 mile trail for an hour of guided fun for an adrenaline-pumping view of the winter wonderland.

**Horse-Drawn Sleigh Rides** - Oh, what fun it is to ride! A classic winter experience offered at Seven Springs, horse-drawn sleigh rides are fantastic fun for couples and families. Sit back and relax as a pair of horses wind through a winter wonderland of snow-laden evergreens, snow-covered branches, and wonderful views. This romantic and traditional holiday activity is great for couples as well as the entire family.

### SPECIAL SAVINGS PACKAGES

Save big at Seven Springs and Hidden Valley with the Family Memories Package. With this deal, two kids 11 and under ski for free! Want to hit as many slopes as possible? Check out the Highlands Ski Package. This package includes two nights of lodging at Seven Springs, and unlimited skiing and snowboarding at Seven Springs, Hidden Valley, and Laurel Mountain. This is your one-stop-shop for all things winter fun, with mid-week and weekend package options. Head out mid-week to avoid the weekend crowds and save even more on your winter getaway. ✨



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Webster defines a snowmobile as an open vehicle for usually one or two persons with steerable skis on the front and an endless belt at the rear used for travel on snow. However, if you ask any snowmobile owner, they'll tell you it's much more than that. They describe it as an **exhilarating ride on top of the snow** where you experience all the **elements of nature** with cold air and **snow brushing against your face**.

By Doug Kish, MA

# Snow fun Snowmobile

**U**sed for either pleasure riding or work and hauling, snowmobiles are powered by gasoline engines that propel them over the snow. There are numerous types of snowmobiles for youth, performance and utility use. Although most snowmobiles are designed for a driver only, some models are equipped with a seat large enough to accommodate a passenger behind the driver. All riders are required to wear a helmet, and there are full face coverage and open face helmets as windshields on snowmobiles are an option.

You can choose an electric start model, one with a reverse option or a model with studs on the track, enabling you to travel on ice. When choosing your snowmobile, you can add numerous





# Fun



allowed to use streets and highways and each vehicle is required to be registered with the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles or equivalent state bureau for out-of-state visitors. There is no age requirement for passengers, thereby allowing the youngsters in the family the chance to experience a fun ride.

When you purchase a snowmobile, the dealer will review all the controls and the engine with you before you start out. If you already own a snowmobile, be sure to check all fluids and refill anything necessary before your first ride of the season.

There are designated snowmobile trails in numerous Ohio State Parks, including Alum Creek, Barkcamp, Buck Creek, Deer Creek, East Harbor, Geneva, Mosquito Lake, Punderson, Salt Fork, Sycamore and West Branch. The trails range from 3.5 miles to 20 miles in length. In addition, snowmobiling may be permitted on the frozen surface of many state park lakes in designated areas when the lake is posted for snowmobiling. Hours are limited to 6 am to 11 pm. In Ohio State Parks children under age 12 must be accompanied by an adult, and youth ages 12 to 15 must be closely supervised by an adult when operating a snowmobile within the park. For Ohio State Park locations and additional information, see their website at <http://ohiodnr.gov/winter>.

options and customize it by choosing the color and the type of seat you want, as well as racks, bags or a windshield. Snowmobiles are equipped with headlights and taillights, which enable you to ride at night, and disc brakes for stopping.

In order to ride, there must be at least 4-6 inches of snow and long-track models are best for deep snow. Some snowmobiles can reach speeds well over 100 mph and a tank of gas can go far depending on the snow conditions and how you use the throttle. Most people tow their snowmobile on a trailer to the area where they intend to ride. Snowmobiles are technically not

The Ohio State Snowmobile Association (OSSA) has several individual clubs in the area. This organization supports many local charities and even offers a charity-matching program to member clubs. The OSSA periodically holds free snowmobile safety classes for riders ages 10 years and older. They are also involved in the 2017 Ride-In, a weekend event scheduled for January 26-29 in Chautaugua, New York. For more information about this organization, visit [www.snowmobileohio.com](http://www.snowmobileohio.com)

For those wanting more challenging terrain, the Pennsylvania State Snowmobile Association offers maps and updated local conditions for trails through Pennsylvania's State Forests including the Allegheny National Forest, Northcentral Mountains, Laurel Highlands, Central and Southcentral Mountains, and Pocono and Eastcentral Mountains. Consult their website at [www.pasnow.org](http://www.pasnow.org).

Some ski resorts offer visitors the option to rent a snowmobile. What a great way to try the sport before purchasing your own snowmobile. In our area, Bair's Powersports has numerous snowmobiles on display and can answer your questions about the best model for your intended use. Visit their showroom at 4617 Emmett Boyd Circle in North Canton, Ohio, or check their website [www.Bairspowersports.com](http://www.Bairspowersports.com). ✨

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# SPORTS. FAMILY. FUN.



By Doug Kish, MA

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SPORTS FORCE PARKS AT CEDAR POINT  
SPORTS CENTER IS CURRENTLY UNDER  
CONSTRUCTION JUST MILES DOWN THE  
ROAD AND ACROSS THE BAY FROM CEDAR  
POINT ON CLEVELAND ROAD.

Scheduled to open for tournament play in March of 2017, this premier youth sports facility will have the ability to host all levels of baseball, softball, soccer and lacrosse games and has already generated much interest resulting in bookings and partnerships with noted organizations such as U.S. Lacrosse and more. A new partnership between Sports Force Parks and Central Alliance Soccer Association (CASA) will allow the complex to extend its season by nearly two months, adding events in March and November. The CASA network includes teams from Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York participating in various leagues.

“We’re extremely pleased with the progress of Sports Force Parks and its initial reception thus far,” said Brian Storm, President and Chief Executive Officer of The Sports Force, Inc. “We are excited about our partnership with Cedar Point and the local community, and look forward to the opportunity to create a world-class tournament experience for teams and their families. The intense interest in the project is all positive not only for Sandusky, but for the entire state of Ohio and the surrounding areas.”

Sports Force Parks at Cedar Point Sports Center will consist of nine multi-purpose synthetic turf fields, four NCAA





regulation baseball fields, eight NCAA regulation soccer, one championship baseball and softball stadium, and one ADA-accessible community-use field, as well as sport-specific training areas. It will also feature miniature golf, ropes courses, trampoline structures, and dining options.

The family recreational activity area will include an 18-hole miniature golf course, trampolines, a ropes course towering more than 25 feet into the air, and a lawn area for cornhole games or outdoor movies. There will be a Pro Shop and Photography Center where visitors can purchase tournament merchandise, equipment or professional photos taken during games. The Promenade area will feature Subway sandwiches and park merchandise located near an expansive playground area.

Cedar Point and parent company Cedar Fair Entertainment Company, headquartered in Sandusky, Ohio, are committed to community development and the youth sports space. This new facility has been made possible by collaboration with The Sports Force, local businesses, governments, community leaders and tourism organizations and is Cedar Fair's first major foray into the youth sports tourism industry. "When we think about how we can impact the communities we serve, family fun is what we do best," said Jason McClure, Vice President and General Manager of Cedar Point. "We know that time is valuable to busy families participating

in so many activities. If we can combine their sporting events with a few days at Cedar Point and our other parks, they'll be able to spend more time together and our communities will benefit immensely."

A second phase of construction in the area will include the introduction of a new Erie Metroparks experience, as well as development of the land at the waterfront with biking trails, scenic spaces to relax and unparalleled views of Lake Erie and Cedar Point in the distance.

An additional benefit for teams that participate in tournaments at Sports Force Parks will be free admission to Cedar Point, the Roller Coaster Capital of the World®, and Cedar Point Shores Waterpark during the length of their events. Family members who visit to support teams and watch tournaments will have the opportunity to purchase discounted tickets for admission to Cedar Point and Cedar Point Shores Waterpark. Special rates and ticket packages are also available for tournament families at the Cedar Point Resorts hotel properties.

Construction of the Sports Force Parks at Cedar Point Sports Center is nearing completion and they are accepting reservations for 2017 tournaments at this time. There are discounts available for teams that sign up for weeklong tournaments by July 15. For more information or to schedule a tournament or multi-day visit, consult their website at [sportsforceparkssandusky.com](http://sportsforceparkssandusky.com) or contact them at 844-737-2757. ✨



**We've had an amazing fall,** but now the weather is changing and winter is here. What do you do to keep from getting cabin fever? There are many activities available in our area to entertain and excite the whole family. We will be exploring which stores have free or inexpensive craft projects for kids, the diverse selection of indoor sports and physical activities that are available in our area, and family-friendly museums.

There are several stores in the area that have kids' crafts for free or at a minimal cost. At Michael's Stores you can do things like painting and drawing, jewelry making, and paper and mixed media projects. Home Depot has building workshops with projects that can range from making picture frames to tool boxes. Lowe's has a build and grow program. You register to make wooden projects (at a minimal cost), and Lowe's gives each child a free apron, patch, and safety goggles. Each of these stores have different crafts, activities, and schedules. Check their websites or call the stores directly for class activities, schedules, and availability. Do you think you may have a budding chef in your family? There's a Young Chef's Academy with locations in Solon and Strongsville. These classes not only teach food preparation but kitchen safety, table settings, and manners. Check pricing and schedules at [www.youngchefsacademy.com](http://www.youngchefsacademy.com).



By Mary Vlahos

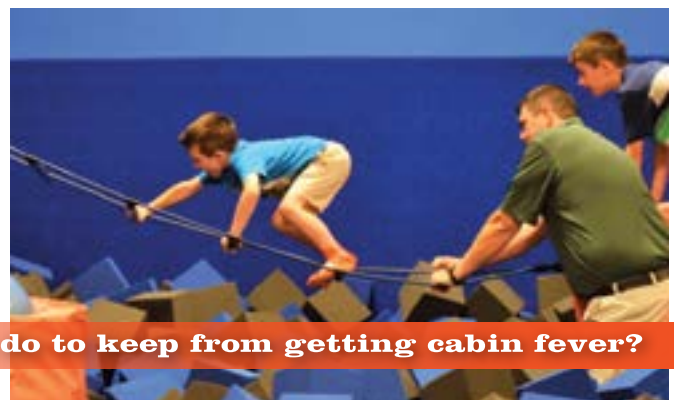
# Play Indoors

## Winter Fun for the Whole Family

Indoor sports have grown from bowling and roller skating to indoor ice skating rinks, glow in the dark miniature golf, and rock climbing. Indoor ice skating rinks are plentiful in Northeast Ohio. There is the Kent State Ice Arena in Kent, Center Ice Sports Complex in North Canton, Alice Noble Ice Arena in Wooster, and Brooklyn Ice Skating Rink in

Cleveland, to name just a few. They all have lessons and programs for kids from hockey to figure skating, as well as open skating times. There are also hockey leagues for boys and girls in various age ranges. This can also be an activity the whole family can enjoy. Parents, dig out those ice skates or rent skates there.

Do your kids like to play in the dark? Alien Vacation Mini Golf in Medina and Ghostly Manor Thrill Center in Sandusky



What do you do to keep from getting cabin fever?



**Have you ever tried laser tag sports centers or trampoline parks?**

### **Do your kids like to play in the dark?**

have indoor glow in the dark miniature golf. This is 18 holes of black light, interactive, 3D fun! Kendall Cliffs is a professionally designed indoor climbing gym in Peninsula, Ohio. They have classes for beginners and even families. The family lesson is designed to teach parents how to belay their children and climb on their own. There is also the Rock Mill Climbing Gym in Akron and the Cleveland Rock Gym in Euclid. All of these facilities have lessons and group rates available.

It can be difficult to incorporate any physical activity in the winter time. Here are a couple of options that meet that challenge and are also fun. Have you ever tried laser tag sports centers or trampoline parks? Sky Zone is a trampoline park franchise that has exploded in our area. This is a great way to wear out your kids with intense physical activity. Adults, don't count yourself out on this one. One hour of trampoline jumping can burn up to 1000 calories. Laser tag combines the games of hide and seek with high tech tag. Laser Quest, with locations in Akron and Canton, and Laser X Treme in Cleveland are all indoor laser tag facilities that offer hours of fun for the whole family. All of these facilities are also great places to host a child's birthday party.

Many of our area museums are



family friendly. The Troll Hole Art Emporium in Alliance has the world's largest collection of troll dolls and would be great to pair with the new animated Trolls movie that just came out. It's like taking your child right on the Troll movie set! There is also the Great Lakes Science Center in Cleveland and COSI in Columbus to teach as well as entertain the kids. The McKinley Museum and Discover World in Canton has an animatronic dinosaur, a hands-on science center, and a planetarium to name just a few of their exhibits. Can't get enough Christmas? It's Christmas all year round at Castle Noel in Medina. It's the largest indoor Christmas entertainment attraction complete with props from your favorite Christmas movies. These are just a few choices for you and your family. For more

information about what's available in your area, visit the website of your county Convention and Visitor's

### **Can't get enough Christmas?**

Bureau (CVB) or the county you are planning to visit. Many of these museums have special activities for children throughout the year that are listed on the CVB's calendar of events.

As you can see there are many ways to stay active throughout the winter without even going outside. Many of these activities are for the whole family. It's a great way for adults to stay active as well as kids. Try a new craft, sharpen your skating skills, play in the dark, or experience a new exhibit at a museum. Grab your kids, and go and play indoors! ✨

**NEWS. OPINION. INSIGHT.**

Hugh Hewitt, Bob Frantz, Mike Gallagher,  
Dennis Prager, Michael Medved & Larry Elder!

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# SARTA ... Rolling into the Future

By Kristie Petty-Cox

**I**n July 2016, SARTA announced that it was seeking to renew its ¼% sales tax levy for a ten year term versus the five years we had done in the past. Chuck DeGraff, SARTA's Board President stated, "Renewing the levy for ten years will provide the reliable revenue stream we need to fund current operations, enable us to draft and implement long-range plans and give voters the opportunity to hold us accountable on a regular basis."

On November 8th, Stark County voters approved SARTA's renewal of the sales tax levy. "We provide safe, reliable, affordable rides to 10,000 people each day and support approximately 5,000 jobs," CEO Kirt Conrad said, "We've been able to expand our role as a transportation provider and are thankful that the residents of Stark County have once again provided the resources we need to meet their needs and to continue to grow."

So what is next for SARTA? Well that's simple, we keep moving forward with projects and start planning for our future. Our mission is to provide services and programs that encourage an independent, healthy life with access to work, school, medical appointments, shopping and much more. Projects we have been working on and hope to implement soon are:

- Installing Wi-Fi at the islands at Cornerstone so that our riders can stay connected. We recently installed Wi-Fi in the lobbies of our Cornerstone, Massillon and Alliance Transit Centers. The Belden Village Transit Center has had Wi-Fi since it opened in 2011.
- Increasing the Saturday 102 from a 60 minute route to a 30 minute route. We are evaluating the budget to determine the funding for this route change.
- Working to expand our contract services such as those with SarahCare and Kent State Stark's Global Initiatives.

- Researching new transit technologies that improve our ability to provide transportation services.
- Preparing our facilities and staff for the arrival of the new Hydrogen Fuel Cell buses. The first one is due to arrive in early 2017.
- Installing new TV monitors in each transit center that will provide valuable information for riders on promotions, new programs, service changes, travel training sessions and other relevant information.

We are dedicated to improving the rider's ability to live a healthy, independent life and are working on services that will do just that. Some longer-range projects are:

- Improve the connectivity between routes by increasing the frequency of 60 minute routes by making them 30 minute routes. Routes that we are looking at are the 101, 106, 108, 117, 119 and 139.
- Develop an Employment on Demand service that is an express or direct route from Transit Centers to a specific place of employment. It would take riders to work and then back to the transit center at the end of the day.
- Explore a "Childcare Express" service that would be similar to our employment on demand. The draft idea is to take riders from Cornerstone to a specific child care center and then back to Cornerstone. We realize that many riders work and need to take their children to a child care facility and we would like to make that process easier.
- Create a Wheelchair repair program which would assist riders with wheelchairs to repair their wheelchair. At this time, we are developing the program and applying for grants that would fund this program and are hopeful that we will se-

cure the funding to further develop and implement this for our riders. We are also working to partner with organizations that can fix or replace wheelchairs.

- Work with the Hall of Fame Village to provide transportation services for the campus.
- Install the first public Hydrogen Fuel Station in Ohio.

Moving forward, SARTA is evaluating the recommendations from the 2015 Transit Development Plan (TDP). The recommendations for future service enhancements are:

- Conduct a pilot for a Dial A Ride service in certain areas that will serve the general public that do not have access to our fixed routes.
- Explore re-instating Sunday Services for riders to access church services, go to work or run errands.
- Coordinate with Communities to improve pedestrian access between SARTA bus stops, stores, medical facilities and other destinations within Stark County.
- Work with Colleges and Universities to provide transportation for their students by creating a program where students receive passes as part of their tuition.

Moving forward, we will maintain broad-based community support by exceeding the expectations of the thousands of people, including disabled individuals, seniors, veterans, students and commuters who rely on SARTA to deliver safe, reliable and affordable public transportation across Stark County and beyond. We will continue to be a leader in alternative fuels and embrace state-of-the art transit technology that will attract new business and jobs to our community well into the future. ✨

A person is shown from the side, wearing a grey t-shirt. They are holding a yellow measuring tape around their waist. The tape measure has numbers from 103 to 121 visible. In the background, another person is blurred, looking down.

# My Battle with Anorexia

By Shannon Grimes

I have always considered myself to be average in size. Growing up, I was always in the 90th percentile for height and the 50th percentile for weight at my pediatrician's office. I was tall for my age and had long limbs, so I was usually the thinnest one in my friend groups. I was a picky eater in my early years, so my parents taught me a lot about nutrition and encouraged me to eat whole grains and to stay away from too much sugar.

As I reached the age of puberty, my body began to demand more calories and I became overly concerned that I was eating too much compared to my younger sisters. I have always struggled with comparing myself to others. I don't remember exactly when I began to monitor my food intake, but it was around this time. I carefully watched what my 10-year-old sister was eating, and chose to only eat the same amounts as she did. Little did I realize that I had begun to eat less and less and was teaching myself to ignore my body's cues regarding hunger. I was tall and thin for my age, so my parents didn't notice at first - they assumed that I was fine. It wasn't until my freshman year of high school that we realized that I had a deeper issue and that I desperately needed help.

THE WINTER OF MY FIRST YEAR OF HIGH SCHOOL I WAS OFFICIALLY DIAGNOSED WITH AN EATING DISORDER CALLED ANOREXIA NERVOSA, which is described in the dictionary as, "an emotional disorder characterized by an obsessive desire to lose weight by refusing to eat." I was a 14-year-old girl who didn't want to grow up. Subconsciously, I believe that I wanted my body to stay the same size. I definitely struggled with growing up, and my body changing was very scary because I did not like change at all - I still don't! Unlike many people with Anorexia, I did not struggle with body image in the sense that I believed I was overweight. I wasn't exposed to models in magazines or celebrities at that age, so I don't think I intentionally starved myself or thought it would make me more attractive to be thinner.

I am a person who likes order and I tend to be a people pleaser. I have strong opinions, but I also want the approval of others. Those two traits were part of my struggle. In my middle school years, I found myself wanting to make my own choices regarding my clothes, screen time, bed time, friends, etc., but at the same time I still wanted to please my parents. Eating is one area where I felt I could have some control.

During the holidays, I had been sick with strep throat for weeks and couldn't seem to get better despite the use of strong antibiotics. I had lost a lot of weight, but we initially assumed that it was because of my illness. During this time, I had developed specific foods that felt "safe" to eat and was exercising more than necessary. When I went to my pediatrician's office one day in January, my parent's worst fears were confirmed. I weighed just 79 pounds and my doctor informed us that she believed I had Anorexia. We left the office and immediately drove to Akron Children's Hospital's Division of Adolescent Medicine. The doctor there was well known at the time for her successful approach to treating eating disorders. If left untreated, Anorexia can lead to the development of serious physical health problems, such as heart conditions or kidney failure. When the body is in starvation mode, the lack of nutrition can lead to death.

The staff at the hospital wanted to admit me at the hospital that day, but my parents

# ANOREXIA

✿ an emotional disorder characterized by an obsessive desire to lose weight by refusing to eat.

begged them to let us attempt the treatment together at home before I had to be admitted. The nutritionist gave us some high calorie samples of food and drink and a caloric daily requirement that had to be met. If I did not gain 2 pounds over the weekend, I would start my stay at the hospital on Monday. With this new information, we knew we needed to be a team. My whole family was in shock to face this truth about my struggle. We rallied together, but ultimately it was up to me to fight through my tendencies and habits. I had to show them that I could do this, that I was not helpless. I did not want to be like the other girls with eating disorders at the hospital who looked so hopeless and angry. My need to please others - in this case, my parents and my doctors - is what saved me. I would not let them down. "I am Shannon Heather Grimes," I thought to myself, "I am a fighter and I am brave." I left the hospital that day with a new attitude. I gained 3 pounds in just two days. It wasn't easy to force myself to consume the calories, but I knew it was necessary if I was ever going to lead a normal life. The staff agreed to let me continue my treatment at home.

With the help of my doctor, a counselor, and my family, things began to change in my life. I gained the weight I needed over a 6-month period. I went to the doctor every week and had weigh-ins and numerous talks with a nutritionist. I had gained over 30 pounds and I felt better than I had in a long time. The doctors and nurses joked with me about how I was the poster child for beating anorexia, but I

always told them that I could not have done it without my family's immense support. It was the scariest thing that I have ever been through. I did it for myself, my family and for my future. I wanted to get married and I wanted to have children. I knew that if I did not figure out how to take care of myself, that might not be a possibility for me. I was determined to be "normal" again.

That year of recovery was probably the hardest year of my life. I did not like to go out in public because people

**I** did not want to change, but I also did not want to stay the same. I was embarrassed of who I had become, but I was also terrified of who I would be when it was over.

looked at me and whispered about me. It was hard to ignore that I was 5 feet, 5 inches tall, and I desperately needed help. I looked like I was just skin and bones and I absolutely did not like who I was. I didn't like being so thin, but I was also afraid to get bigger. I did not want to change, but I also did not want to stay the same. I was embarrassed of who I had become, but I was also terrified of who I would be when it was over.

After a very long year of hard work to maintain my new weight, I was finally allowed to exercise again. I started lifting

weights and became confident with my new body. I learned that I am not defined by the way that I look and should never compare my appearance to those around me. I am uniquely me. I can remember a specific time in that journey where I was sitting on my bed thinking to myself, "I want to use my story to inspire others to be the best they can be." I concluded that becoming a personal trainer would be the perfect option for me to help others be the best that they can be!

I want the girls and boys that I work with to grow up to be content with the way God made them and to realize that healthy people can be all shapes and sizes. I have developed a passion for people who struggle with body image because I have been there myself. I realize that my story is unique and that most people do not come out of an eating disorder the way that I have. I have to constantly remind myself, that I am enough. I am beautiful and I am perfect the way that God made me.

Everyone has a story to tell and this is mine. I plan to use the experiences of my life to inspire those around me to want to live long, happy, active lives. ✨

*Editor's Note: Shannon Grimes is a student at Malone University. She has offered to tell her story with the hope that it will help others struggling with the same issue, no matter what their age. At the present time, Shannon continues a healthy eating regimen and has even coached others about the importance of fitness and exercise as an intern with a local fitness facility.*

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# WHY organic?

By Hannah Alderfer, BA, CPT, FMSC

It's a struggle to eat a healthy diet today.

More than some people even recognize. I think we can all agree on the fact that fast food, sweets, and junk food are not good for our bodies; we need more vegetables, fruits, good sources of protein, and healthy fats in our diet and less of the empty, fattening, disease-causing calories. But when someone asks me why it's important to choose to eat organic food over conventional (or non-organic) food, they might hear more than they bargained for.

Eating an organic diet is increasing in popularity, but many people may not realize why choosing organic is critical to creating a healthier lifestyle. There are many reasons to choose organic foods, but one reason in particular is to avoid Genetically Modified Organisms, also known as GMOs, which is a term you may have heard within the trendy "health food" realm. It is recognized that a GMO "is the result of a laboratory process where genes from the DNA of one species are extracted and artificially forced into the genes of an unrelated plant or

animal. The foreign genes may be from bacteria, viruses, insects, animals, or even humans." All United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) certified organic food never contains GMOs. However, if you pick up a box of cereal, for example, that has the non-GMO label but does not have the USDA certified organic seal, it is not guaranteed to be organic. Just because it says non-GMO does not mean that it's organic. I think this confuses a lot of people.

**So why is this important you may ask?** One reason is that, "Organic regulations prohibit certain toxic pesticides from being used on crops, though non-GMO only may still have been grown with pesticides." That statement in itself might not sway you to choose certified organic foods, but it should. According to the National Institutes of Health, pesticide exposure has been linked to diseases such as asthma, autism, learning disabilities, birth defects, reproductive dysfunction, autoimmune diseases, diabetes, Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease, and several kinds of cancer. To clarify where we are getting the majority of our pesticide exposure, the Environmental Health Perspectives journal records that expo-

sure to organophosphate pesticide was predominately through eating non-organic food, even if it's non-GMO. Those who eat more organic food not only have less exposure to pesticides, therefore reducing their risk of certain diseases, furthermore they avoid the risks that come with ingesting GMOs.

Certified organic foods do not allow any GMOs, but why is that? Let's find out. GMOs may seem fascinating when genetic modification includes scientific advances such as cloning, chemical and insect-resistant plants, and hypoallergenic pets, but there are more than a few concerns. First introduced in the mid 1990s, GMOs have become routine in numerous crops that are used in many of the foods Americans buy, especially processed foods. Genetically modified crops found in the US include corn, soy, cotton, canola, and sugar beets. These crops are made into products such as oils, soy protein, soy lecithin, cornstarch, corn syrup, and high fructose corn syrup, just to name a few. Take a moment and grab a few packages from your kitchen pantry. See any of those ingredients listed on the nutrition label? You're eating GMOs. That may not cause you too much anxiety, but what is startling is that many countries, including all of Europe, have banned products

## Just because it sa

made with GMOs, and for good reason.

According to the Institute for Responsible Technology (IRT), the most comprehensive source for GMO health information on the Internet, "Crops that are GMOs are created with herbicide tolerance, so farmers can spray directly on the crops without killing them. GMOs increase the use of herbicides because they are tolerant so that the crops sur-

vive while the weeds die off.” In addition, Monsanto, the world’s largest producer of GMO seeds and creator of the herbicide Roundup, sells Roundup Ready crops that withstand applications of Roundup. Because weeds are becoming tolerant of the Roundup as well, more and more is being used on crops and now crops contain higher residues of these toxic chemicals. The realization that we’re ingesting higher and higher amounts of these toxic chemicals without knowing their effects on our health and the environment over time is alarming.

Chemicals aside, unfortunately we still don’t fully know the long-term effects of consuming GMOs on our personal health or their effect on the environment. Several governmental studies conducted across the world—including the governments of France, New Zealand, Argentina, Austria, and Italy—are linking GMOs to various health issues. Since 1996 when GMOs were introduced, the following health issues have been on the rise: chronic diseases, food allergies, autism, reproductive disorders, and digestive problems. This interesting correlation has not been confirmed, but it is obvious that these health issues are more and more prominent, especially in the US. And considering that GMOs are highly prevalent



Yet the US Food & Drug Administration has never required any safety studies or labeling of products that contain GMOs. Companies can use GMOs in their products without notifying anyone of their use. Why choose to eat organic? I think the question has been answered. It’s more than the trending thing to do. It’s a way to not only avoid the chemicals and highly processed, toxic preservatives and additives used in conventional foods, but also a way to avoid consuming Genetically Modified Organisms and the risks that come with that.

After reading this some may find they

discussion for another time.) It is to make people aware of what’s happening within the food industries that fill our grocery shelves. With all of the information we are learning about the way our food is made, it’s easy to become overwhelmed, scared, obsessed, and discouraged by the food options available to us and the difficulty of navigating through the maze of what’s healthy and what’s not.

Don’t ever minimize your efforts to work toward a healthier diet. We often tell our clients to make the healthiest choice possible. We would rather they grab an apple over a bag of chips or candy bar any day, even if it isn’t organic, because it’s the healthiest choice they can make at that moment. You have to start somewhere, and in the mess that our food industry has created, becoming more educated about your food choices is the best strategy you can use to live a healthier life. Choosing to incorporate organic foods into your diet is one way to do just that. ✨

## ays non-GMO does not mean that it’s organic.

in processed foods and that the American diet, in general, consists of mostly processed foods, it’s easy to see that there could be a link. The IRT reports that, “genetically modified foods have been linked to toxic and allergic reactions, sick, sterile and dead livestock, and damage to virtually every organ studied in lab animals.”

are a little discouraged and possibly disturbed by what is in their pantry and fridge right now. My purpose in answering the “Why organic?” question is not to frighten consumers into purchasing organic food. (Because, let’s be honest, putting a box of organic cookies into your cart isn’t much healthier, but I’ll save that



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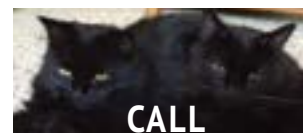
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Spay Neuter Assistance Program-SNAP OF NE OHIO (formerly known as Animal Protection Guild) is an all volunteer, non-profit organization under section 501 (c) (3). SNAP offers a low cost spay neuter program for cats and a low cost spay neuter program for dogs of low-income families to the community to help alleviate the horrific problem of pet overpopulation. SNAP also promotes and educates the public about the importance of spaying and neutering all companion animals.

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# COLD WEATHER? NO PROBLEM!

## 8 TIPS TO ENJOY THE OUTDOORS THIS WINTER

By Hannah Alderfer, BA, CPT, FMSC

*Don't let the winter months ruin your plans to stay active outside. If you're like me, you need a healthy dose of outdoor activity (you'll only find me on the treadmill under dire circumstances), and though below-freezing temperatures make it a little more challenging, it's not impossible. Follow these tips to stay safe, warm and healthy throughout your winter activities.*



# 1

## INVEST IN QUALITY CLOTHING THAT IS APPROPRIATE FOR YOUR LEVEL OF ACTIVITY.

Remember that the more intense your activity (walking, hiking, skiing, running, etc.), the more you'll sweat. You'll want to have material that will wick sweat away so that you do not end up becoming too chilled.

# 2

**DRESS IN LAYERS.** It's always easier to take layers off as you go than to leave with too little and put yourself in a miserable and often dangerous situation. When I run, gloves often get stashed in my pockets after a few miles, a light jacket may get tied around my waist, and my sleeves often get rolled up.

# 3

**WARM UP INSIDE BEFORE HEADING OUT.** With the colder temperatures you'll want your muscles to be primed so that they don't tighten up in the cold – and risk getting injured. Go through some basic dynamic warm up drills. Try doing just 2-3 minutes (just enough to be warm but not sweaty) of light high knees, butt kickers, side lunges, squats, calf raises, and upper body movements or anything else that gets your major muscle groups moving.

# 4

**TRY HAND WARMERS, AND FEET WARMERS, AND TOE WARMERS AND BODY WARMERS.** These things have saved me in past winters when the average temperatures have been in the teens. They last for hours, are inexpensive and keep those extremities from becoming numb from the cold.

# 5

**BE VISIBLE TO OTHERS.** If you find that one of the most difficult parts about winter is the lack of light, I agree. Now I wouldn't recommend for safety reasons to be out in the dark, especially on the road, so if you can avoid it, do so. If you do head out early or after dusk, find a partner and quiet roads with sidewalks. Stick to well-lit neighborhoods if you can. I've learned to combat the dark by wearing reflective clothing, a flashing clip-on light (from New Balance), a light-up vest (from Saucony... yes, a light-up vest with its very own rechargeable battery), and a very fashionable headlamp, which lights up the whole road in front of me, keeping my footing safe, and it stays in place on my head.

# 6

Wind can make a mild day bitter cold, **SO REMEMBER TO HAVE SOMETHING TO COVER ALL EXPOSED SKIN AREAS.** Make sure to check the wind-chill temperature before you head outside. You can also use products such as Vaseline or Body Glide to protect your cheeks and nose from frostbite. If that's not appealing to you, grab a scarf or, easier yet, a balaclava for face protection.

# 7

**FIND A FRIEND TO ENDURE THE COLD WITH YOU.** The cold isn't so bad when you've got a friend to talk to and help make the time pass more quickly. You'll also keep each other accountable to keep moving, even when it's mentally tough to get outside.

# 8

**CHANGE OUT OF YOUR WET CLOTHES AND GO SOMEWHERE WARM QUICKLY AFTER YOU'RE FINISHED.** It's also not a bad idea to grab a warm drink to get your core temperature back up post workout as well. ✨

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# plan ahead FOR SUMMER

What's more fun on hot summer days than swimming? More fun would be not piling everyone and everything into the car to go to the pool, and merely stepping outside your back door and into your own swimming pool. If you are planning ahead and thinking about investing in a swimming pool for your yard you should know about a new state-of-the-art water treatment system that is now available. All pools installed by Kings Precision Pools of Louisville, Ohio, are equipped with The HealthCare Water Purification System. This system produces sparkling, clear pool water with numerous advantages over chemically-treated water. Along with freedom from the constant adjustments of chemicals, it is non-toxic, non-corrosive, odorless and tasteless, and will not bleach your clothes or hair. Water feels "softer" to the touch. For the environment, the HealthCare System eliminates the need to store poisonous and unstable chemicals harmful to plant and animal life. If you already have a pool, it is easily installed onto an existing filtration system and costs only pennies per day to operate.

The HealthCare System was engineered to provide maximum automation of the day-to-day treatment of your swimming pool. This system utilizes the benefits of ionization, the strongest oxidizer available for pool use. This same technology is used to sanitize water in many different applications, including drinking water, cooling towers, fountains, fish ponds, mammal tanks, zoo features, and industrial processes of water. It will eliminate common water problems

such as red burning eyes, itchy skin, scum lines and odors, as well as reducing the cost of operation and dangerous handling of pool chemicals.

The pool water is automatically oxidized with ozone, produced naturally by lightning storms or ultraviolet rays from the sun.

The heart of the HealthCare System is a specially sealed chamber housing two electrodes. This is called an "ion chamber." It is here that a safe, low electronic charge produces a mineral ion (electrically charged atom particle) which "attacks" impurities in the water. A controller regulates the number of ions introduced by the ion chamber. Since the quantity of impurities in the water may vary from time to time, a weekly ion check is recommended. A HealthCare System dealer will demonstrate this quick and easy process which is completed by a mere turn of a knob on the controller box. The pool water is automatically oxidized with ozone, produced naturally by lightning storms or ultraviolet rays from the sun. Advances in technology have made it possible to combine these two processes into one complete treatment system designed to minimize service and maintenance.

For more information about planning a pool for your yard or for information about the HealthCare Water Purification System, visit their website at [www.kingsprecisionpools.com](http://www.kingsprecisionpools.com). ✨



*a*  
12 Month Countdown  
*to Your Wedding*

*Photos Courtesy of Terry Horner Photography*

## First Things First.

Before announcing your engagement, inform your families. Traditionally, the Bride's parents are told first, then the Groom's parents. If they have not yet met, a get-together should be arranged by the Groom's family.

## Nine to Twelve *months prior*

- Establish your budget early, with maximum amounts for each event/activity. Consider hiring a wedding consultant to help with your plans.



Determine expense responsibilities for specific events.

- Shop for engagement and wedding rings. If you want custom-made rings, plan this early in your schedule.
- Decide on the style, formality and size of your wedding, then set your tentative wedding date.
- Choose your wedding consultant.
- Prepare your tentative guest list and determine the size of your wedding events.
- Choose your attendants; get a firm commitment to each event. Determine all pertinent sizes for each.
- Select your ceremony location and consult with the officiant who will perform the ceremony, then choose a firm wedding date. Begin planning your ceremony, and determine any pre-marital requirements.
- Choose a reception location.
- Plan rehearsal dates and times with your officiant and location choices.
- Choose and reserve the location for your rehearsal dinner.



- Choose the color scheme and any appropriate style for your ceremony and wedding attire.
- Begin shopping for the bridal gown, headpiece, and attendants' attire.
- Schedule fittings, alteration fittings and delivery dates.
- Choose your attendants' dresses and accessories. Schedule fittings and delivery dates, and notify your attendants.
- Start the selection process for your wedding professionals: Contact a photographer/videographer early; some are booked as much as a year in advance. Decide your type of entertainment and choose the right professional. Choose your caterer if not included with your reception site. Select your mode of transportation.
- Begin the selection of your florist, balloonist and/or ice sculptor. Determine any party rental needs and select an appropriate professional.
- Select your stationer, style of invitations, thank you notes and any other stationery.
- Consult a travel agent or visit web-sites for honeymoon plans.

## Six to Nine *months prior*

- Begin compiling guest list names and addresses.
- Locate and choose your gift registry and begin recording your selections.
- Get engagement photographs taken by your photographer and set up your engagement announcement with your local newspaper.
- Finalize your wedding professional choices and secure with a deposit: Photographer, Videographer, Caterer, Florist, Ceremony Music, Reception Entertainment, Party Rentals, Stationer, Others
- Select Groom's attire. Set up fittings, alterations and delivery or pickup dates.
- Select and order the Groom's attendants' attire. Schedule fittings and delivery or pickup dates, and notify the attendants.

> CONTINUED

> CONTINUED

## Four to Six *months prior*

- Meet with each of your vendors and continue to plan each event. Finalize ordering and reservations for all your event needs.
- Meet with your florist and complete your selections for bouquets, boutonnieres, table arrangements, etc. and confirm delivery times.
- Finalize guest list.
- Choose and reserve accommodations for all of your out-of-town guests. Compile a list of local activities during their stay.
- Finalize selection and order your invitations and all related stationery.
- Set up and maintain records of gifts and begin sending thank you notes.



- Select a baker, order wedding cake, groom's cake and any other confectionery needs.
- Shop for and purchase trousseau.
- Help parents select and coordinate their formal attire.
- Research all legal requirements – blood tests and marriage license.
- Don't forget ... begin your beauty regimen early.

## Two to Three *months prior*

- Make a list of who you want to speak at each event and in what order, and contact each person.
- Order favors and gifts. Purchase cake knives, ring pillow, toasting goblets, and other accessories.

- Address invitations and announcements and mail out-of-town invitations. Continue writing thank you notes.
- Finalize honeymoon and travel plans.

## *weeks*

### Four to Six *weeks prior*

- Reserve wedding day appointments with your hair stylist for you and your attendants. Get any perms, color, cut or new style done early.
- Make pre-wedding beauty appointments for you and your attendants for manicure, massage, spa, etc.
- Select a makeup artist for your wedding day and your bridal portrait session.
- Get bridal portrait taken and framed for reception.
- Make plans and reservations for an attendants' party.
- Address and mail all local invitations. Begin RSVP counts. Include maps to all event sites with invitations.
- Begin addressing wedding announcements.
- Finalize all attire fittings. Pick up wedding rings.
- Select and purchase attendants' gifts and a wedding gift for your new spouse.
- Obtain your marriage license.
- If you are moving, finalize all moving details.

### One to Two *weeks prior*

- Confirm all appointments.
- Confirm all ceremony and rehearsal details.
- Confirm all counts with food and beverage caterers.
- Plan seating arrangements.
- Finalize all rehearsal dinner details.
- Finalize all song lists and entertainment details.
- Finalize photographer and videographer details.

- Finalize arrangements for all professional services and transportation needs. Confirm guest accommodations.
- Plan honeymoon wardrobes and luggage needs. Obtain all travel tickets and confirm reservations.
- Arrange for gowns, bouquet and/or cake preservation.

## The Last *week*

- Arrange for pickup of bridal ensemble. Best Man should confirm final fittings for the Groom and Ushers; and schedule return of Groom's tuxedo and rental equipment.
- Assign post-wedding tasks to wedding party.
- Prepare envelopes for payments or donations to ceremony officials and musicians.
- Give gifts to wedding party, family and fiancé.
- Attend the rehearsal dinner and attendants' party.

## The Day Before

- Finish packing for the wedding night and honeymoon.
- Gather all wedding day items. Entrust payment envelopes to the Best Man for tomorrow.
- Assure that the "getaway" car will be at the reception site – packed and ready to go.

## Your Wedding Day (This is it!)

- See hairdresser and makeup artist early.
- The Bride should transfer engagement ring to the right hand. Be dressed and ready about two hours before ceremony for picture-taking.
- Relax ... if you followed your planned schedule, the rest of the day should be easy.

## After the Wedding

- Write and mail thank you notes.
- Take care of business, banking, change of address, etc. ✨



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# WHY DO I RUN?

By Justin Thomas

For as long as I can remember running has been something I have loved. So when I am asked “Why do you run?” as much as that sounds like a very simple question, it is not an easy one to answer. The love I have for this sport is one that is not easy to explain.



girlfriend who is now my beautiful wife and my kids have always been right by my side, but the one thing that always helped was and still is running. Through all these experiences I have been lucky enough to continue this crazy running adventure that I love. One of my favorite things to do is share my story with all of the people that I come across. From beginning to experienced runners or anyone who wants to listen, I enjoy letting them hear about my comeback and overcoming adversity. I love being able to explain that no matter how down you feel, you can always make a comeback.

Today is different though and I want to change gears. I want you to understand that running is about more than just a clock and how fast you can be or want to be. Sure I was caught in that rut for a long time; I always wanted to be faster. Trust me there is nothing wrong with that. I am as competitive as the next guy or girl, but you have to remember to enjoy what you are doing. Not everyone has this opportunity to just run. Take this from a guy who has been chasing the sub-16 minute 5K dream and comes up 20 seconds short, or the 1:15 in a half-marathon dream and misses it by 30 seconds. They are just numbers, but look around at what

You see, this sport has carried me through some of my roughest times. It was there for me when I was a young man just starting high school and my aunt/running coach died. It was there for me again when I was in college and was involved in a terrible car accident that ended with our vehicle flipping more than seven times on the highway at 70 mph and me being transported by life-flight twice. That accident ended up almost costing me the ability to walk again and I had so many surgeries, I honestly lost count but it was well over seventeen. Now is running the only thing that helped me through these times? Not even close. My family, my friends, my amazing





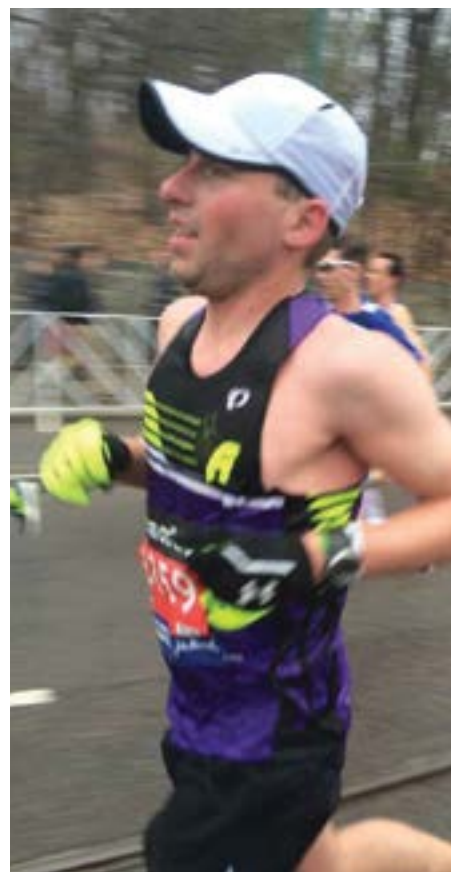
even gave you the chance to chase those dreams. Your family, your friends, your training partners, your health, and so much more! I recently lost my dad and it was one of the toughest years of my life. Once again, running was there for me. With my wife and kids by my side, and the open road, I once again have pushed through another tough time in my life. There is absolutely nothing like getting out there on the open road. Many people think once they are out on the road, it's just them and the road, but it's different for me. Every time I take a stride, it's my kids cheering me on, my wife supporting this crazy sport, and even more it's my aunt, my dad and other family members I have lost in my life looking down and pushing me toward that day's goals. I can clear my head, I can talk to anyone I want, and I can really think about what is going on in my life. Some of my best ideas and thoughts have come during a run. This leads me to another reason I absolutely love running and the running community.

As I said before, running really gets me thinking. A little over a year ago on a long run with my good friend JT Wittmann we were discussing our normal crazy ideas about what kind of business we should start together. Well, on this long run we actually got serious and thought, why not do what we love? We should start a race timing company! We immediately both agreed it was a great idea and we started thinking about names, how to get it started, and the most important question, why? That was actually the easiest part for us; we wanted to "build the best overall race experience for runners at all levels." We said from the start that would be the main goal and we would never lose sight of that goal. We talked to another

## WHY DON'T YOU RUN?

friend, David Jacobson who is the manager at Achilles Running Shop, and it took off from there. Our first year, while exciting and stressful at times, was a great experience. Each race we timed or organized, we made sure to put every runner first. We want to make sure that it doesn't matter if you are first, middle of the pack, or near the back; we want everyone to enjoy the event and realize that time does not matter. What matters is you had fun and the best experience at one of our events. We focus on feedback and looking for ways to make each event more unique than the last. In addition to the timing of events, we love to get out in the community, including coaching runners to meet their goals, giving back to different charities from events, and of course organizing group runs to bring other runners together. Great Lakes Race Timing just fits my life perfect; it took my running that I love and gave me the ability to share it with everyone.

So now I ask you a simple question -- "Why don't you run?" I think that question can easily be answered with a simple "I don't know but I think I am going to give it a shot now." Running has taken me through some of my most difficult times. Now I get to see my wife and kids supporting me at races and achieving my goals. My kids now want to start running and there is no better feeling than your own kids taking interest in something you love. I also love that I get to share my experiences with other people and hopefully impact them in a positive way that makes them want to give this crazy sport a shot. Great Lakes Race Timing has helped me make that dream impact more people than I could by just sharing my story. Remember there is always a finish line in the distance. You may not always see the finish line, but keep pushing and I promise, your legs and heart will find it. Now the next time someone asks you why you run, simply ask them, "Why wouldn't I?" ✨



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"I've lost 63 pounds by following the Whole30 plan and going to five bootcamps a week." - Stephanie K

"I've lost 70 pounds by participating in bootcamp and IMPACT sessions at Impulse 5-6 days a week. Another factor in my weightloss was changing my eating habits and making healthier choices." - Paul M

"I have lost 51 pounds and counting. I go to bootcamp

5-6 times a week and run a day or two during the week. I have also done a couple rounds of the Whole30 nutrition plan and continue to eat healthy." - Kim B

"My success began with the teaching and coaching I received during my Total Transformation Training time. I have continued to use those techniques, lifestyle changes and the expertise of the staff at Impulse to lose nearly 50 pounds and I am not done yet!" - Kerrie S



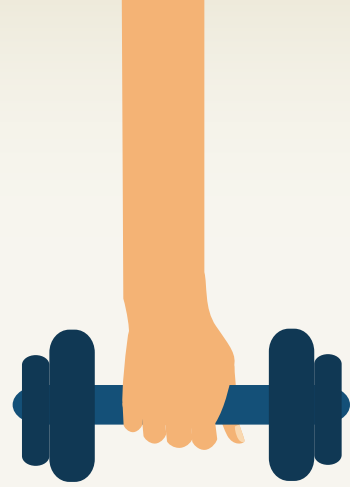
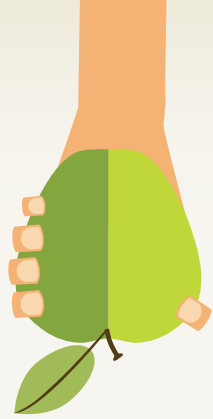
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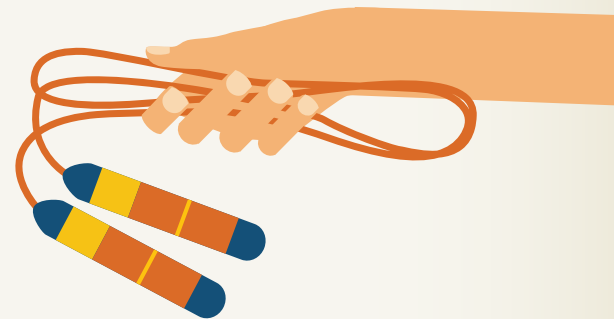
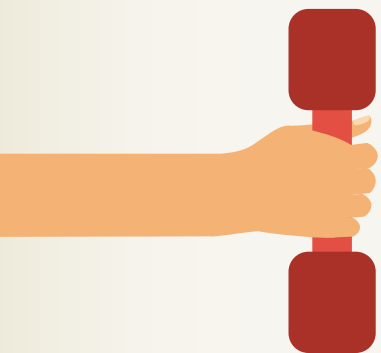
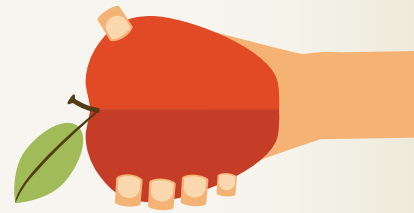
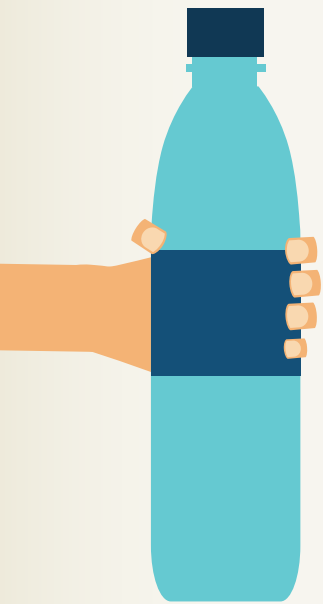
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# Is Your Fitness Trending?

SECRETS from the other side ...

*By Kim Wagler, BA, CPT*



The fitness industry has absolutely exploded over the last decade. Nationwide chains are popping up on every corner. Privately owned one-man shows are appearing in someone's garage or a friend's office building. There are now corporate wellness options as well as big box gyms starting to "specialize" in small group and personal training. Over the past 15 years being in the industry I've seen many trends come and go. We as health professionals have recommended the vibrating belts, aerobics, weight training, 7 minute abs, HIIT training, yoga, and yes even fat burning shoes! So why are you still listening to us?

Truth be told, the majority of fitness professionals are just like you. They hear something, they believe it, and they preach it until they realize it isn't working. With our society in worse shape than we've ever been we need you to help us make a change. But how???

I want to encourage you to do your own research, and become in control of your own health. While it's good to have the accountability and education from a coach, you are still responsible to make sure that what you are doing is benefiting you in the long run. So here are some upcoming trends you will see in the fitness arena and my thoughts on them.

## Nutrition, Nutrition, Nutrition:

This is becoming a main focus for many people thanks to the now common quotes, "you can't out train a bad diet" and "abs are made in the kitchen". Truth be told, this is the key to success for several reasons.

1. While you can spend 30 minutes a day exercising and then forget about it, you have to constantly be fueling your body for energy. This requires you to make a number of healthy choices throughout the day. As we get tired or stressed, our willpower declines setting us up for a bad decision.
2. What you give your body for fuel will be what leads to how much energy and focus you have. This will either allow you to accomplish your goals or not.
3. With more and more health issues related to the food we eat (allergies, leaky gut, metabolic syndrome) there is no short cut to achieving

health other than finding a nutrition plan that works for your body.

**KIM'S PREDICTION:** *Nutrition is going to continue to increase in importance and soon all fitness programs will have to have a Dietitian on hand to make sure people are getting the help they need in these areas.*

## Small Group Training:

Although this has been around for quite some time it has just started taking off in our area within the past 5 years. The concept of being able to get a personalized program with a trainer plus having a team of people to support each other is extremely motivating for many people.

**KIM'S PREDICTION** *I truly believe this style of program will help many people get the guidance and accountability they need to achieve the results they want without breaking the bank.*

## 30-Minute Sessions:

More and more studies are showing that 30 minutes of focused exercise daily is all we need to achieve wellness. If you create a game plan that includes 30 minutes of movement daily (you can even break that up into three 10 minute sessions or two 15 minute sessions), you will find yourself with a stronger heart, decreased risk of disease, improved ability to handle stress, and many other enhancements to your lifestyle.

**KIM'S PREDICTION:** *Gone are the days of hours and hours of endless cardio to burn calories. We are too busy and too smart to sit on a machine when all it takes is a structured plan to get results.*

## Body Weight Training Equipment:

Thanks to TRX (suspension training system) this has quickly become one of the hottest trends in the industry to the point that they are even offering specialized certifications. Inspired by a Navy Seal to be able to maintain physical conditioning while on deployment, this type of training includes bands, balls, and/or suspension equipment where you can leverage your body to create a higher resistance/intensity or lower depending on your fitness level or goals. This also allows you to exercise pretty much anywhere, so your excuses are now invalid.

**KIM'S PREDICTION:** *The new pieces of equipment that will come out will have multiple uses as well as be compact and easily transportable. These will be marketed to the masses through educational videos and celebrity trainer endorsements but are not completely necessary to achieving your goals. Remember, these are just tools to achieve your goals but will not do it for you.*

## Wearable Tracking Technology:

We've found ourselves with plenty of options when it comes to all the new tracking technology out there. These devices help give us a more accurate account of how many calories we are burning, how our heart rate reacts to different stresses and how much movement is in our day. These devices have evolved over the past 2 years to provide more motivation to get moving by giving us "rewards" or acknowledgment when we reach a goal and even alerts to let us know it's time to stand up.

**KIM'S PREDICTION:** *This will become mainstream and everyone will have access to knowing exactly how many calories, steps, MEPs (myzone effort points) they burn along with knowing their heart rate. I believe this industry will continue evolving to give more accurate real time feedback.*

## Simplicity:

We are finding our society trying to get back to the basics. It's tiring trying to keep up with all the new diets, fitness equipment, classes, technology, etc. People live such high strung lives so this trend is being embraced more and more to try and balance out the chaos of life. Creating a simpler game plan that includes quality movement, clean foods, and stress management techniques is the theme of this lifestyle.

**KIM'S PREDICTION:** *I am keeping my fingers crossed that this becomes more and more relevant in our society. We need to slow down and figure out what it is we are fighting so hard for. Is it more money because you will spend your health to get enough money and then spend your money to get back your health. This will take time for people to embrace and the Type A personality (like me) will always have a harder time making this a part of life.*



## Corporate Wellness:

Americans spend more time at work than any other developed country. As employers are seeing health care costs increase, there is a huge push to improve the physical health of their companies. Options such as on-site fitness classes, lunch and learns, company fitness challenges, discounts to local fitness facilities, and even on-site chefs are becoming more and more common. Employers are finding that they do have an impact on health care costs, but the improvement in company morale, absenteeism, and productivity has also improved the bottom line and created a more stable work environment.

**KIM'S PREDICTION:** *As companies employ more millennials, this will become essential to keeping good staffing. This generation is looking for more than compensation and they are more focused on their health than GenX or baby boomers were at their age.*

## Restorative/Recovery Training:

Taking time to recover from a session is the only way to rebuild tissue damage and ultimately keep your body healthy. Yoga, stretch sessions, massage, EMS (electronic muscle stimulations), sleep, hydration/nutrition to name a few are great ways to regenerate the damage that we do to our system daily.

**KIM'S PREDICTION:** *Gone are the days where beating your body to a pulp is the only way to achieve results. We are talking about maximizing your time spent in the gym and utilizing your body's capability to grow through proper techniques. We often say, "I'll stretch later," but we don't. This style of training will make sure we take the time to give our body what it needs. I hope this gets integrated into everyone's health routine.*

As the health industry continues to evolve and offer you everything under the sun just remember that each of you are unique and created differently. What works for your friend may not be the best option for you. Learn to know your body and experiment to find the best options for you. ✨



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**Winter is the perfect time for athletes to begin indoor sports training.** Mike Grady has been well aware of that fact for many years. Grady played high school baseball for North Canton Hoover before he went on to pitch for Ohio Wesleyan University. By 2005 he was playing professionally for the Washington Wild Things. Ultimately returning to the Canton area, Grady was the pitching coach for Malone University through 2009. In the summer of 2010, Grady started coaching the Stark County Terriers of the Great Lakes Collegiate Baseball League where five pitchers went on to play professional baseball. It was during that period that Grady was asked if he would be willing to coach young athletes. He helped pilot a velocity training pitching class which allowed athletes to add up to 4 miles per hour to their pitch speed and eventually Grady became a private pitching coach working with more than 100 athletes at a local fitness facility. Two of Grady's students were the sons of Mike Olivieri, which is when the subject of partnering in a new building was discussed.

**“Whether it’s pitching or bat speed or running speed or catcher pop time, it’s all about speed now.”**

*- Mike Grady*

Velocity Sports is the collaboration of co-owners Olivieri and Grady. With Olivieri’s knowledge and experience in general contracting as the owner of Olivieri Contracting, Inc., and Grady’s ten years of experience as a pitching coach and the owner of Grady’s Pitching School, it was a perfect match. They chose to locate their facility in North Canton due to its proximity to Route 77, making it a





centralized location for residents of North Canton, Jackson Township, Green and other local communities. Many of those local communities have begun utilizing Velocity Sports for their indoor workouts and upcoming seasons. The 4,500 square-foot building has three turf batting cage areas with nets that can be retracted to form one large training area which can accommodate yoga and strength classes, speed and agility training, and dodgeball. The strength training area includes free weights, a squat rack, bench press, BOSU balls, medicine balls, and more. Their mission statement is “To help athletes become faster, stronger and quicker” and their focus is on improving pitching velocity and bat speed.

Grady says, “Whether it’s pitching or bat speed or running speed or catcher pop time, it’s all about speed now.” Working with athletes as young as 8 years old, Velocity Sports currently has several college students among the 100 athletes training at their facility. They provide a range of options from group sport specific training to individual instruction. After an initial evaluation and performance

analysis, they will advise areas where improvement is needed, and students can choose individual or group training. The facility can accommodate up to 30 people at a time for a class, while they keep group training classes at a player-coach ratio of 8:1.

Grady has trained several baseball players who are currently attending Kent State, Ohio State, Butler, Earlham College, Malone University and John Carroll University. Working with Grady at Velocity Sports are three pitching coaches, a batting coach, a Certified Personal Trainer and a Doctor of Physical Therapy. Although their main focus is improving pitching velocity and bat speed for baseball and softball players, personal training sessions are also available for both young athletes and adults.

Velocity Sports is in the process of developing a curriculum to offer clinics for coaches. At the present time, 12 local teams are using the facility as their home for indoor practices. Teams and groups can rent the entire facility by the hour. A unique feature, rather than monthly memberships, Velocity Sports offers prepaid cards for up to 2,400 minutes. As minutes are used for batting cages, they are deducted and the card is merely reloaded when needed.

> CONTINUED



**Velocity Mission:**  
**“To help athletes become faster, stronger and quicker...”**

> CONTINUED

While Grady will oversee the coaching side of the business, Olivieri's role will be bookkeeping and public relations as Velocity Sports looks to add yoga and Pilates classes in the future. They are offering the facility for birthday party rentals, and have several booked already. Recently they held Friday Fun Days where parents were able to drop their children off to play dodgeball, kickball, whiffle ball and other games for a few hours. They intend to schedule additional Fun Days in the future and you can check the website and Facebook for details.

For more recreational opportunities, they are in the process of developing a summer adult dodgeball league, and are considering additional possibilities such as bocce ball, a golf simulator, and corn hole tournaments. ✨



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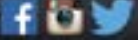
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# A lesson in chocolate

What comes to mind when you hear the word chocolate? I asked a few different people this question and here are some responses I got:

“sugar”

“immediate shame”

“guilty pleasure”

“delicious”

“yum”

By Shelley Rosenberg, BA, CPT, PN1



## Here are some facts about chocolate that might change what you think when you hear that word.

Where does chocolate come from and how do we get it? Chocolate comes from the cacao tree. These trees are grown predominantly in Central America, the Caribbean, Indonesia and Africa. Pods grow on the trees which contain what is called cacao beans. The beans are fermented, roasted and cracked before leaving cacao nibs behind. The nibs consist of 47% cocoa solids and 53% cocoa butter. The cocoa butter is the main source of fat in chocolate and where the majority of the calories come from.

After the nibs are extracted from the beans, they are ground into a paste (kind of like peanut butter). Different ingredients, such as sugar or vanilla, are added to the paste to make it a little more appealing to your taste buds. Without any ingredients added, the chocolate would taste more like unsweetened baking chocolate which is very bitter. Heating then cooling the paste with the ingredients added will give the chocolate its smooth texture. Without the heating process, the chocolate would have a very gritty texture.

What is the difference between white, milk and dark chocolate? White chocolate essentially isn't chocolate at all. The cocoa butter from the original cacao nibs is separated from the cocoa solids (which is the beneficial component) and mixed with sugar and other flavoring to give you white chocolate. Therefore, there are no health benefits stemming from white chocolate. Milk chocolate has roughly 12% milk solids and contains more sugar than dark or semisweet chocolate. This is the chocolate used for most candy bars and sweets because less real chocolate content is needed. There are essentially no health benefits to milk chocolate as well.

Dark chocolate has to contain at least 35% cocoa solids. Anything less

than that would not be considered dark chocolate and would be in the semi-sweet category. The higher the percentage of cocoa solids, the better it is for you. This means there are less ingredients added to it to get to the edible chocolate that actually tastes good. Also, the highest content of cocoa solids means the highest amount of nutrients from the original cacao tree.

Is cocoa powder safe to use? Yes. Cocoa powder is the crushed powder left over after cocoa butter is removed from the cacao nibs. It is much better to use in recipes because it contains mostly cocoa solids (the better part of cacao nibs).

Now let's get to the health benefits. When I talk about chocolate from here until the end of this article, I'm talking about high cocoa solid content chocolate or dark chocolate. Is there anything healthy about chocolate? Dark chocolate or high cacao content is what you should be looking for to receive any kind of benefit. Natural chocolate contains flavonoids. Flavonoids are a group of phytonutrients found in plants. Many fruits and vegetables contain flavonoids and so does chocolate. The fact that chocolate contains flavonoids is a large benefit in itself. Flavonoids contain antioxidants, anti-inflammatory affects, cardiovascular benefits, and nervous system support.

The health benefits from chocolate are different than the health benefits from green vegetables. Green veggies are proven to be a health benefit through their nutrient density. Chocolate is a different story. Chocolate contains different compounds that provide health benefits. Obviously, when those health benefits are mixed with sugar and additives (like milk chocolate) those benefits are null; kind of like eating celery and dipping the entire stick into ranch dressing.

Who feels better when they eat a piece of chocolate? Many people are in a better mood after consuming

chocolate. However, eating too much chocolate could obviously result in negative feelings, physically and mentally, from overindulgence. Some studies have shown that cognitive performance can also be improved by chocolate intake. Even though dark chocolate may have health benefits, be wary when indulging. Everyone knows that chocolate contains sugar--even cocoa solids contain natural sugar. Excess sugar means fat storage and weight gain. Always eat chocolate in moderation. A few squares of chocolate won't put on the pounds, just like a few celery sticks won't take them off.

Chocolate also naturally contains caffeine. Caffeine itself can be addicting and when you add the appealing taste that chocolate has to that, it's often hard to contain your consumption. On the other hand, chocolate can give you that quick little energy boost that you might need.

So, to wrap all of this information up, here are the facts. Chocolate containing high contents of cacao (dark chocolate) is the best option. For your health, chocolate may boost your mood, give you a caffeine boost, lower your blood pressure, provide antioxidants, reduce inflammation, and help curb your sweet tooth. On the other hand, consuming too much or the wrong kind of chocolate could have no benefit at all. This can increase blood sugar and cause weight gain if not eaten in moderation.

After learning about chocolate, I hope you have a different thought process about it. Now, when you hear the word chocolate, I hope you think "flavonoids," "cacao," "lower blood pressure," "cocoa butter," "cocoa solids" and "moderation." ✨



# WINTER HIKING

## HOW TO PREPARE

By Dan Mackey, MS



A musician known for his love of the outdoors, John Denver sang about the cold winter with all of its snow trying to get him down. Denver wasn't the only one who has experienced the uncertain doldrums of this season. Living in Northeast Ohio, we've all had this feeling, in one way or another. When the sun rarely shines, the wind whips and chills you to the bone, the snow piles up inch after inch, and some years, foot after foot, and Old Man Winter seems to linger on and on. They call it the Winter Blues. During this lengthy season it's easy to hunker down, build a fire in the fireplace, and fall into hibernation mode, where leaving the house even to drive to the gym seems like a great feat.

I will admit motivating yourself to venture outside during the winter months can be a very difficult task, and it can be much easier to wait out the snow inside, on your couch. However, I'm here to tell you that not only would you be missing out on some of the best opportunities to spot wildlife like Red Fox, White Tailed Deer, Great-horned Owls, and Ring-necked Pheasants, but you'd also miss out on the most beautiful moments of solitude. Throughout my years as an avid outdoorsman and my countless hikes alone in the wilderness, I've found that there's nothing quite like hiking in the winter, when all is calm and everything is seemingly at peace.

Unlike hiking throughout any other season, hiking during the winter takes considerable more preparation and understanding. Don't get me wrong, there's a lot to prep for no matter what season you're hiking in, it's just that the winter adds a myriad of other elements that pose problems needing to be addressed. First and foremost, it is crucial to have a solid grasp on where you will be hiking. Whether you're summiting Shadow Mountain in the Rocky Mountain National Park or traversing Wetmore Trail here in our own Cuyahoga Valley National Park, it is vital to be skilled in navigation and knowing how to follow trail markers, as well as being able to read a map. While these skills are important for hiking anytime of the year, the winter months lead to landscape changes and what was once an easy, familiar trail can quickly turn into the great unknown. In addition, it's important to simply know what trails are, in fact, open during the winter. Many remain open year round, but there's always a chance that some may be closed due to poor conditions, full park closures, or even due to reasons surrounding certain wildlife in that area. Anyway, be sure to always check in advance before departing on your hike.

### GET THE GEAR

A more blatant difference between winter hiking and hiking in any of the other seasons resides in the specific

gear that you will utilize in order to have an enjoyable trek. Of course there will be some overlap, but the winter calls for a number of specific pieces. First, let's talk about boots. There are specific winter hiking boots, like the Vasque Snowburban or Snowblimes, or The North Face Chilkat boots. These boots are lined with insulation designed to keep your feet warm while



trekking through snow for extended periods. In addition, they are outfitted with a waterproof liner to keep your feet dry and gaiter-compatible "D-rings." These boots are also great to wear while snowshoeing through three feet of snow. Speaking of which, this brings us to the next winter specific piece of gear; snowshoes. While designed and constructed differently than the original style of snowshoes, they function in the same manner. Snowshoes allow you to walk on top of deep snow without sinking in step after step. Most of today's snowshoes are made of lightweight aircraft aluminum and hypalon (a synthetic rubber), rather

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# HIKING

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WINTER

than wood and leather. In my opinion, the best brand of snowshoes is Crescent Moon. At Crescent Moon, they are largely focused on not only building an awesome snowshoe, but also on creating something that is super environmentally friendly. At a minimum, 85% of the aluminum and stainless steel used in their construction is from recycled metal, 100% of the energy they use is wind generated energy, the plastics in their snowshoes have no PVC, VOCs, and plasticizers and are 100% re-used or recycled, and they can repair nearly any problem that may arise with their product. These are top-of-the-line snowshoes from a company that truly



cares about saving the environment.

In addition to snowshoes, there are numerous other devices that attach to boots designed to aid in traction for slippery, icy conditions. There are a myriad of different products to choose from; MicroSpikes, NanoSpikes, Yaktrax, and Stabilicers, all of which are types of ice and snow cleats that improve traction on existing boots. So when you're



planning your hike down the Grand Canyon this winter, be sure to swipe a pair of MicroSpikes. They might just save your life.

## IMPORTANCE OF LAYERS

Lastly, and possibly most importantly, winter hiking requires certain articles of clothing and layering pieces used to not only keep your body warm and comfortable, but also safe and alive. When hiking during any season cotton can be your worst enemy. This type of fabric is known to hold moisture rather than wick it away from the skin, and does not insulate at all. Chances are you will encounter cold air, cold wind, snow, and ice. In order to maintain a safe level of warmth and comfort, layering is going to be your best bet. So, starting with your base layer next to your skin, you'll want something warm, lightweight, and capable of wicking moisture. Two of the best options are either the synthetic Patagonia Capilene, or the all-natural Smartwool merino wool base layers. Both types will provide warmth while simultaneously pulling moisture away from the body. This is important because wetness on your skin can lead to frostbite and hypothermia, as well as just make you cold. Whatever you do...stay away from

cotton! Next, as your mid layer you'll want a piece that insulates something like a Marmot windstopper jacket, or The North Face ThermoBall will suit you just fine. Lastly, for your outer layer, a lightweight hardshell jacket that is breathable will provide a garment to protect you from the wetness and keep you dry.

Now that we've gone through the proper layers of clothing for your body, it is important to note a number of other items crucial to safe winter hiking. Merino wool hiking socks are extremely important. Again, merino wool is a moisture-wicking, natural material that will prevent your feet from blistering while also keeping them warm. Winter hats and gloves are an obvious item to bring whenever hiking during the winter, but still valuable to note. Last, but not least, are gaiters. I mentioned these earlier when talking about boots. Gaiters go around your ankles and keep the snow out of your pants and boots. There are knee-high gaiters, better for really deep snow, and shorter gaiters, better for less snow. Either way, this piece of gear helps to have an enjoyable winter hike.

Now, I know that not everyone is going to have all this gear just laying around at home, waiting to get pulled out for the winter, but that's what Appalachian Outfitters is for. At our store we not only will provide you with any and all of the gear that you might possibly need for safe, fun winter hiking, but we'll also educate you about the specific gear you might be looking for. We also offer a snowshoeing and winter traction course once each winter. Stop in soon to see everything Appalachian Outfitters has to offer so you'll be ready for winter hiking. For more information about any of the items mentioned, as well as additional hiking gear for all seasons, visit their website at [www.appalachianoutfitters.com](http://www.appalachianoutfitters.com). ✨

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Have you heard of Ohio's next best overnight relay race? If not, let me set the stage for why it is so important.

By Dr. Brandy Spaulding



And the best part of this race? 100% of the profit will go to support these teens. That's right, all of it. This year, the funds raised by our race will go directly to sponsor over 1,500 high school students in Ross County who are participating in our Drug Free Clubs of America program. This is a volunteer drug testing program that is rewards based with incentives from local businesses. So by running this race, not only will you have an unbelievable experience, but you will also be making a difference in the lives of our youth.

**You might be able to relate to the “Why” of our race!** Our community like many has been faced with a drug epidemic, and even closer to home, we have young children we want to protect. After First Capital Rotary Club of Chillicothe became the Provider for our 8 local drug prevention chapters called M.A.D.E. (My Attitude Determines Everything), we needed a funding mechanism. Like many, when an issue is this vast, we wondered, how do we get involved, how do we help find a solution? So in September of 2015 our race committee was created and The Buck Fifty was born.

The what? The Buck Fifty. An overnight relay race on April 7th & 8th that will take you over 150 scenic and rolling miles in Southern Ohio. You will travel through several communities, run trails in 4 amazing National and State Parks and across several school campuses.

So let's talk about the race. If you've never run in a relay before, let me take the fear out of that right now. It's a boat load (or two van loads) of fun. Here's how it works. Your team of 10 runners will be broken into two groups of 5. Your team will also need two non-running drivers and two vans. Van #1 with its 5 runners will begin the race at the starting line. Van # 2 gets checked in at the first transition zone where runner number 5 finishes their first leg. Runner



in historic Chillicothe. For you history buffs, here are some things that you may be interested in knowing, and seeing, when you run in our race.

Trail run anyone? We have some amazing state parks in southern Ohio and we are going to take full advantage of them. We have 23 miles of trail runs incorporated in this race, with hills, peaks and valleys that will stimulate all of your senses and challenge the



number 5 will hand off to runner 6 (the first runner of van #2) and van #1 will start their first rest period. These two vans will leapfrog each other until they complete their 150 mile journey and then will finish as a team running across the finish line together Saturday afternoon. Each runner will run about 5 miles for each of their three different legs of the race. They will have about 6-8 hours of rest between each run depending on how fast or slow their other teammates are.

Sound like fun yet? Forget about it... what's more fun than running with 10 of your best friends, running buddies, spouses or co-workers? Who cares if they are sweaty, smelly, tired and slap happy. That is what makes it a wonderful friendship, bonding, team-building experience from beginning to end.

So where will this race take place? In the beautiful, rolling, historic hills of Ross County, Ohio. 60% of the route is beautiful back country roads, 15% is trail runs, and the remaining 25% is

muscles and minds of runners of all skill levels. We are really excited to bring this component of the race to you! Learn more about the included state parks here.

**HOPEWELL** - Hopewell Culture National Historical Park is a United States national historical park with earthworks and burial mounds from the Hopewell culture, indigenous peoples who flourished from about 200 BC to AD 500. Our race route will be taking you on trails around one of these sites, Hopewell Mound Group. Learn more here. <http://www.nps.gov/hocu/learn/historyculture/hopewell-mound-group.htm>

**GREAT SEAL** - The history of the Shawnee nation and Ohio's early statehood is centered in these rugged hills. Challenging trails through the 1,862-acre park take visitors to scenic vistas of distant ridgetops and the Scioto Valley below. These very hills are depicted on the Great Seal of the State of Ohio, from which the

park gets its name. Learn more here.

<http://parks.ohiodnr.gov/greatseal>

**TAR HOLLOW** - Twisting park and forest roads pass through 604 acres of deep ravines and dense woodlands. Scattered shortleaf and pitch pines growing on the ridges were once a source of pine tar for early settlers, hence the name Tar Hollow. Dogwoods, redbuds and a variety of wildflowers color the hillsides in the springtime. Learn more here. <http://parks.ohiodnr.gov/tarhollow>

**SCIOTO TRAILS** - Small, quiet, and nestled in beautiful 9,000-acre Scioto Trail State Forest, this 218-acre state park is an undisturbed wooded refuge just south of Chillicothe. The ridgetops and winding forest roads offer breathtaking vistas of the Scioto River Valley. The beauty and remoteness of Scioto Trail offers the best of escapes to park visitors. Learn more here. <http://parks.ohiodnr.gov/sciototrail>

This race will be full of nature's beauty, sweat, maybe a few tears, hopefully lots of laughs and memories to last a lifetime. Race day is April 7th with a team registration cost of \$1,450 for 10 runners or \$850 for our Elite 5 person teams. You can use the code COMPASS to save \$200 off your first deposit. Registration is open until March 1st or when we hit our 150 team cap. Follow us on your favorite social media outlet at The Buck Fifty or find out more information at [www.thebuckfifty.com](http://www.thebuckfifty.com). We are humbled to bring this event to you and welcome you to our course, our cause, and our community! ✨



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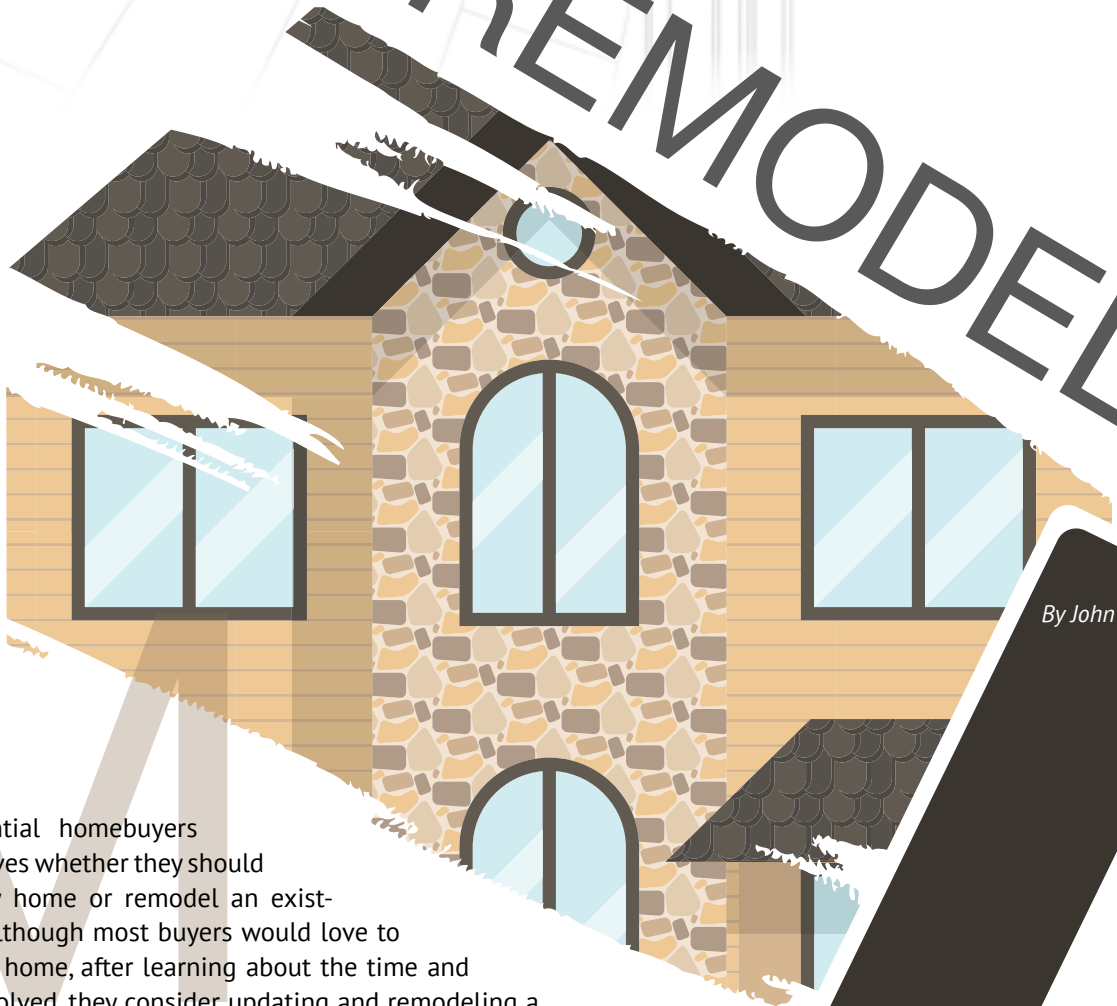
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# BUILD OR

# REMODEL



By John McCue

Many potential homebuyers ask themselves whether they should build a new home or remodel an existing home. Although most buyers would love to build a new home, after learning about the time and expense involved, they consider updating and remodeling a home as an affordable alternative. There are many things to think about regardless of which course you choose.

Proper planning and research will have a major effect in determining which route is best for you. Everyone is different. Building isn't for everyone, nor is remodeling. One of the initial steps is to establish a realistic budget. You should contact a mortgage lender and get pre-qualified for whatever you want to do. Whether it's a home equity credit line for remodeling or a mortgage for a new or existing home, knowing what your financial capabilities are will help you set realistic goals, save time, and avoid potential disappointment if you set goals that you can't afford. Once you know your financial capabilities, you are ready to start planning for what you want to do.

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There many things to consider in the planning stage. One significant item is whether you are the sole decision maker or will a significant other be involved. If there is a significant other, do you communicate well and make decisions together easily? If decisions are difficult, it could have a serious effect on the success of your project, or whether you can even pursue a buying or remodeling project.

***If you are contemplating remodeling your existing home or buying an existing home and remodeling it, here are a few tips to consider >>>***





# TIPS

- Do you plan to stay in the home for a long time – 5 years or more?
- Will the remodeling project satisfy your needs?
- Develop an idea of what you want or need to do. Look at magazines and websites to gather ideas to help convey your ideas to your contractor.
- If you are “handy” and plan to do the work yourself, do you have enough time and resources to realistically complete it? This can be particularly difficult and frustrating if you are living in the home while you are doing the work. Typically, most remodeling projects cost a lot more than expected and take far longer to complete than originally expected.
- If you plan to hire a contractor for your project, select a reputable contractor with a permanent address. Ask how long they have been in business and for past customer references. Contact those references and discuss their experience with the contractor.
- Beware of low bids and prices that seem “too good to be true.” You get what you pay for. Get all estimates in writing and be sure you understand what is included and what is not included. It always costs less in the long run to do it right the first time.
- Is the contractor experienced in the type of work you want to do?
- Contact your local Better Business Bureau to see if the contractor is a member. The BBB can alert you to any complaints.

***Once you have completed your planning and research, and have selected your contractor, your remodeling project is ready to start.*** For those who have done their homework, the project is exciting and fun, and the end result will make your home more comfortable and convenient, and make you happy to be living there.

The alternative to remodeling or buying an existing home is building a new home. Most homebuyers would love to buy or build a new home but often think it will be too expensive or take too long to complete. Plus, they will need to be involved with all of the decisions and choices that need to be made. Building a new home should be one of life’s most exciting rewards and it will be if you plan properly. There are many benefits to building a new home.

If you look at new neighborhoods where a lot of homes are being built, they are generally located in areas convenient to schools, shopping and churches. Everything is new and under warranty for a period of time so you won’t be facing unexpected repairs during the early years. Building a new home is an opportunity to do it your way with regard to design, amenities and color selections. A new home today usually costs more than a similarly-sized existing home. However, in the long run, investing more in a new home often ends up being less than the cost of the comparable existing home that requires costly repairs, replacement and remodeling expenses. Homes built

today are far more energy efficient and require far less maintenance and upkeep than existing older homes. *Most all of the tips mentioned earlier for remodeling also apply to building or buying a new home, but here are a few more to consider.*

- Are you patient? It takes several months to properly plan and build a new home.
- When you build, you are buying a service rather than a product. The quality of service the builder provides will determine the quality of the finished product and your satisfaction with the result.
- What type of home are you looking for? A production home with set plans and options with little or no flexibility or a custom home with lots of choices, options and flexibility? Look for builders who specialize in the type of homebuilding you are looking for.
- Do you feel comfortable communicating with the builder? Remember you will be in close contact with them throughout the construction process and afterward as you live in your new home.
- Ask for and receive a copy of their warranty and service policy.

Whether you choose building or remodeling, do your homework and plan properly, and you are sure to enjoy the benefits of your project for many years to come. ✨

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Winter is your wonderland in the 2017 Subaru Forester® 2.0XT. It comes with road-gripping Symmetrical All-Wheel Drive and a 250-hp Direct-Injection Turbocharged SUBARU BOXER® engine. It's also available with EyeSight® Driver Assist Technology, so you can brave winter with confidence. **Love. It's what makes a Subaru, a Subaru.**



**Forester 2.0XT. Well-equipped at \$29,295<sup>1</sup>**

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