

The Mirror's Guide To Good Health

VALUABLE TIPS TO HELP YOU ACHIEVE A HEALTHIER LIFESTYLE

New Mountain Biking Club Builds Character In Kids

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Like most 12-year-olds, Gaby Erickson has been riding a bike since she was in grade school, though mostly just around her neighborhood and on paved trails.

Since joining the Black Swamp Riders, Gaby is now traversing dirt paths through the woods and hills at Ottawa Park and Oak Openings Metropark.

"I like the stunts and learning things I've never tried before," Gaby said. "It's a way to face my fears. I might be afraid to do something, but after I learn how to do it, I'm not afraid anymore."

Gaby is a member of the new Black Swamp Riders, a Northwest Ohio team in the Ohio Mountain Bike League and part of the National Interscholastic Cycling Association (NICA). Started in California in 2009, NICA now has over 20,000 members in 30 states, but didn't have a chapter in this area until this summer.

The Black Swamp Riders are led by Gino Torio and several other volunteer coaches. The goal, Torio said, is to expose students in grades 6-12 to mountain biking.

"It doesn't matter if they are athletes or if they have experience beyond biking around the neighborhood. We encourage kids to set goals based on where they are, so that they grow personally and as mountain bikers."

While high-end racing and industry marketing might show riders doing crazy things, that's not representative of what NICA does, Torio said. NICA introduces kids to the sport without high pressure and high consequences.

Coming out of the woods from the single-track bike trail at Oak Openings last week, several of the members gathered to chat about challenges and successes.

Katherine Meyers, an 11-year-old from Maumee, said she'd really only biked on the paved Wabash Cannonball Trail with her family. Her dad, Greg, had done mountain biking and off-road triathlons when he was younger, and signed up to coach.

"I knew about this place, but I love the group biking," Katherine said of Oak Openings. "There are a lot of people who are new to biking, and this builds self-confidence."

Two years ago, 14-year-old Andrew Crabtree got into mountain biking – mowing lawns and saving his money to buy a \$400 bike. Now, he has his own YouTube channel about the sport. Since he recently moved from upstate New York, finding other teens to bike with was difficult until he heard about Black Swamp Riders.

"Now I get to ride with people, and riding with those who are above my skill level challenges me," Andrew said.

Brothers Josh and Justin Crozier of Erie, Mich.,



The Ohio Mountain Bike League and National Interscholastic Cycling Association (NICA) just launched the Black Swamp Riders, the Northwest Ohio mountain biking team for students in grades 6-12. Members practice at Oak Openings on Tuesdays and Ottawa Park on Thursdays and will begin competitive racing on Saturday, August 28.

PHOTO COURTESY OF NICA

started mountain biking two years ago, said their mom Julie, who has enjoyed the sport for several years.

"It's interesting getting to see people who have not biked a lot progress so much. They could barely ride the track and are a lot better," Josh, age 14, said of his teammates.

At the first team meeting, the students learned how to change a tire and fix a chain. From there, the focus was on riding on small drops and practicing in the grass before graduating to riding the trails.

Every team member has the option of competing in the four Ohio mountain bike races, held in Yellow Springs, Chaucney,

Carroll and Dover.

"We really want one in Northwest Ohio and we're looking at venues," said Ohio NICA executive director Jen Malik, who brought NICA to the state in 2018.

At the events, camping is encouraged, as the kids do a pre-ride of the course on Saturday, participate in team bonding experiences on Saturday night, and ride on Sunday. The cost is \$50.00 per event and students can participate in as many as they want.

These are not the type of races where riders are facing dangerous obstacles, Malik said. Mountain biking does have inherent risks, but in

this league, there are not ramps or jumps.

"A lot of times, people think of Red Bull Rampage. We're not sending children to their demise. Risk management is the No. 1 thing we focus on," she said, noting that coaches receive extensive safety training.

As some of the parents of Black Swamp Riders can attest, mountain biking is a lifelong sport. Eric Erickson bought a fat-tire bike to ride with his daughter, Gaby. Adam Slough, co-owner of Mountain Man, has also been biking for years and introduced his son to the sport.

Torio, who was a wrestler before graduating from

Macomber High School, sees mountain biking as a sport that can last a lifetime – far beyond what he calls "stick-and-ball sports." He recalls one of his first mountain biking forays, to Great Seal State Park in Chillicothe.

"We were stopped, resting on a hill, and an old guy – he was 70 – rode right past us. That guy became my hero that day. You can keep doing this sport deep into your senior years," Torio said.

Malik, who joined a mountain biking group for women in order to improve her cycling during triathlons, found a great group of people who became friends and encouraged her. At 32, she continues to bike on a regular basis.

"With a soccer or basketball team, it's just a few kids who get to play," she said. "With NICA, everyone gets to ride their bike at the event if they want to race. This is focused on building a life-long advocacy and a love of the outdoors. We want people to come and be happy."

New members are welcome until the week before the Saturday, August 28 race in Yellow Springs, as long as they have an opportunity to attend just one practice prior, Torio said. Interested riders can sign a waiver and try out a practice before paying the \$150 fee.

While bikes and gear can
(continued on page 7)

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Health Department Issues Recommendations For Mask Use

In accordance with the most-up-to-date CDC guidance, the Toledo-Lucas County Health Department has compiled recommendations for mask use to decrease the spread of COVID-19.

Wearing a mask is one way to protect others, as well as yourself. Science shows that wearing a mask over your nose and mouth can help prevent transmission of the respiratory droplets and aerosols that spread COVID-19. Protect your loved ones, neighbors and fellow community members by wearing a mask.

In areas with substantial and high transmission, the CDC recommends that everyone (including fully vaccinated individuals) wear a mask in public indoor settings to help prevent spread of the COVID-19 Delta variant and protect others.

Everyone should carry a mask with them when leaving home. If you are unvaccinated, a mask should be worn indoors, outside of your home when around non-household members, as well as in enclosed or crowded outdoor spaces, such as outdoor restaurants or bars, festivals, sporting events and concerts. If you are fully vaccinated, you should consider wearing a mask when visiting unvaccinated people who are at increased risk for severe COVID-19 disease.

It is recommended in some settings, even if fully vaccinated, to continue wearing masks:

- Health care settings.
- K-12 schools, including school buses.
- Places where masks are required by local or tribal laws, rules, and regulations, including local businesses and workplaces.
- Areas with substantial to high community transmission.
- Correctional and detention facilities and homeless shelters.
- All forms of public transportation, including planes, buses and trains traveling into, within or out of the United States and in U.S. transportation hubs such

as airports and stations.

People who are immunocompromised or are taking medications weakening their immune system may be at greater risk of infection even if they are fully vaccinated. They should continue to take all precautions recommended for unvaccinated people, including wearing a well-fitted mask, until advised otherwise by their health care provider.

Vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals don't need to wear a mask in the following settings:

- Inside your home around your household members.
- Outdoors where it is possible to maintain 6 feet of distance from others. If you are unvaccinated and plan to attend an outdoor event or gathering with other unvaccinated people, even one where physical distancing is planned, a mask is recommended.

The health department understands that not everyone can wear a mask for medical or safety reasons (for instance, children under 2 years old and people who cannot safely wear a mask for reasons related to a disability). People 2 years of age and older who can wear a mask should do so to help stop the spread of COVID-19.

For additional information on selecting, cleaning and storing of masks, please visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html>.



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HEALTH CARE

Calendar

GriefShare Program Set At Monclova Baptist

The Monclova Road Baptist Church GriefShare ministry support group will start a new series of online weekly meetings, conveniently using Zoom, beginning on Monday, September 13 at 8:00 p.m.

The ministry is for those who are grieving the loss of a family member or friend. There is no time limit on how long ago your loved one may have passed; you are welcome. GriefShare is a nondenominational group that features biblical teaching on grief and recovery topics. Each week is a different topic, and you may join the group at any time during the 13-week program. To preregister or for more information, call (419) 346-6991.

Grief Support Meeting Offered In Maumee

Spring Green Educational Foundation will offer A.F.T.E.R., a grief support group meeting at 2319 Detroit Ave., Maumee, from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. on the second and fourth Thursday of the month.

A.F.T.E.R. will be led by executive director Dawn Duhaime, a licensed social worker who lost her only child in 2019 and is now assisting others through their grief. This group meets bi-weekly to support one another in their journey after losing someone they love and provides tools for learning to live a new way of life inside of grief through support and activities that help lessen the pain and reduce suffering.

Spring Green Educational Foundation is a nonprofit organization that has been serving the community for 20 years and most recently released its documentary *ONE*, focusing on the opioid crisis.

Hospice Of NWO Resumes In-Person Grief Support

Effective immediately, Hospice of Northwest Ohio is once again offering in-person bereavement groups and private counseling sessions. A virtual option remains for anyone not comfortable attending the in-person sessions. Masks are required inside the hospice facilities.

Current Group Offerings

Coping With Loss – A twice-monthly interactive support group for adults who are adjusting to the loss of any loved one. Participants will learn about grief and have the opportunity to express and receive support, develop an understanding of one’s loss, learn realistic expectations for oneself and discover healthy coping skills. Offered on the first and third Tuesday of the month fro 4:00 to 5:30 p.m. at the Perrysburg Center; the second and fourth Tuesday of the month from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Toledo Center; and on the first and third Wednesday of the month from 4:00 to 5:30 p.m. at the Michigan office.

Mending Grief With Mindfulness – A twice-monthly support group for adults coping with any loss. Participants will meet in a supported environment to learn techniques – including meditation – to manage the intense emotions that come with grief. Offered on the first and third Monday of the month from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. at the Toledo center.

Spousal or Partner Loss – Twice-monthly support group for those who have experienced the death of a spouse or partner. Participants will learn ways to adapt to this life-changing event, set realistic expectations for oneself, learn to take care of one’s self, gain support in understanding of grief and live with/manage the loneliness after loss. Offered on the first and third Wednesday of the month from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. at the Toledo Center and on the second and fourth Tuesday of the month from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. at the Perrysburg Center.

To assure the best possible group experience, anyone interested in attending must first speak to a member of the Hospice Bereavement Team by phone to learn about the options and determine which group would be the most beneficial.

All bereavement services are provided free of charge and are available to anyone in the community, whether or not they have had previous involvement with Hospice of Northwest Ohio. All meetings are conducted by licensed counselors.

Contact the Hospice of Northwest Ohio Bereavement Department at (419) 661-4001.

To learn more about grief and loss, visit the Hospice of Northwest Ohio website at www.hospicenwo.org.

Hospice Offers Help For Health Care Directives

Hospice of Northwest Ohio provides free, guided conversations by trained facilitators to assist in the completion of advance health care directives. Through a series of questions, these conversations consider cultural, spiritual and religious beliefs in completing written advance directives including Living Wills and selecting a health care power of attorney.

All adults, whether healthy or coping with a serious illness, should think about, discuss and document their health care wishes. It is important to make wishes known upfront about any future medical treatment, in the event a person cannot express them themselves. These conversations have never been so important and at the forefront of everyone’s mind as during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Learn more about advance directives at www.hospicenwo.org/patient-care/advance-care-planning.

New Mountain Bike Club Builds Character In Kids

(continued from page 5)

mountain bike trails are maintained by mountain bikers. “Without trails, we would have nowhere to ride our mountain bikes,” Torio said.

As the organization grows in Northwest Ohio, Torio would like to expand the number of practices at each venue. For now, the team meets at Oak Openings on Tuesdays and Ottawa Park on Thursdays. For information, visit the Toledo Area Mountain Biking Association (TAMBA) website at toledomtb.org or e-mail ginotorio@MSN.com.

Participation in Black Swamp Riders does require a commitment to helping maintain the trails in the two parks. Jacob Slough, a 14-year-old from Waterville, has already invested nearly two weeks’ worth of time into trail work. That component is vital because

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