GO WHERE THE COWBOYS GO
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RAWLINS -- Adrenaline will pump. Muscles will burn. Known as “four wheelers,” these 500-cylinder machines are what keep Tony Romero, a 36-year-old Rawlins package delivery driver, father and all-around garage geek, rolling.

With the nose of his pickup truck pointed north toward Seminoe Reservoir, a grapevine-like body of water carved by Mediterranean-esque coves and beaches, which eventually ascend into white-sand towers and pine-ridden mountains, Romero explained on an early April morning why he loves so much to constantly make this trip -- even when it’s 45 degrees out.

“I’ve never rode anywhere better,” he said, his sunglasses scanning the long, high desert road for loose antelope pronghorn and free ranging cattle, his ATV in the bed. “You get the best of both worlds here. You have mountains if you wanna go mountain riding. Then you get the sands if you wanna go hit the sands and the lakes.”

The multifaceted
May 2019

WELLNESS WYOMING

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The multifaceted topography of Carbon County is a big reason why there’s such thick off-roading culture in the Rawlins area.

Most spring and summer days, Highway 71, or “South Road,” a picturesque roadway south of Rawlins intersected by networks of trails and dirt roads branching into Medicine Bow National Forest, loads with ATVs, UTVs and classic dirt bikes.

Same goes for Seminoe. Highly noted for its seemingly boundless opportunities when it comes to all things off-road, hordes of riders flock each year to this sanctuary to feed their need for speed.

Beyond the surrounding soundscape breaking with high-pitched moans of their motors, however, comes the physical and psychological benefits of tearing through terrain, kicking up dust, and zooming into the sunset.

According to Romero, whose daily life is typically made up of street signs, bills and various stressors, getting out to Seminoe acts as a sort of faceless psychologist.

“It’s helping me because I get be free for a minute,” he said. “I get to go let open that throttle, and just go hit a few jumps, go do a few cookies and just enjoy life.”

Much of the medical world also agrees that time spent in the outdoors is conducive to enhanced mental well-being. Complementing stress release, riders get to refine their motor skills as tackle all sorts of obstacles in split-second fashion.

The human body, meanwhile, exerts an entire array of physicality.

Of the 650 muscles found in our anatomy, almost every one of them gets put to good use while riding any sort of off-road vehicle.

Forearms, triceps and biceps harden at every turn of the handlebar.

Abdominal muscles retract into leaner calories as the rider clings onto the seat for dear mercy. Quadriceps, calves and the human core also feel the deep burn after a long day’s ride.

But, according to Romero, the hard work is worth it once you ascend to the top of any various sand hill that Seminoe boasts, soak in the grand view, and merely glide down the other face of the hill as if nothing’s there.

“It’s a wonderful feeling,” Romero said. “I don’t think there’s any other feeling you can get coming off a hill on a quad. Once you know that you’re coming from the top and that you’re going to the bottom? Oh, man, it’s just an adrenaline rush. It’s just a really, really good feeling.”

Remember: Always wear a helmet.

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Get fit by...

**Fishing!**

As a summer activity, fishing offers a different kind of exercise

By Ann Jantz
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ROCK SPRINGS — Summer is the time to put down electronic devices, get up off the couch and go outdoors for a bit of activity. With so much to choose from, the hard part is deciding what to do.

**Why not try fishing?**

Fishing is a sport that can be exciting and relaxing at the same time. It is also a wonderful and often overlooked way for anyone to burn calories while having fun in the outdoors, according to fix.com.

"Many people assume fishing just means sitting around in a boat or on the bank waiting for a bobber to go under, but it can be so much more than that," the website says. "In reality, there are many types of fishing that challenge you both physically and mentally. From stalking rising trout while wading in a mountain stream to kayaking on the open ocean while trolling for yellow fin tuna, there is a type of fishing that will keep your mind and body engaged no matter your interest or experience level. If you are looking for a way to de-stress, stay fit, and enjoy being outside, fishing might just be for you."

Actively fishing — wading in a stream or river, hiking to a remote lake, and/or repeatedly cashing and reeling — is a great way to get a workout. During a morning or afternoon of fishing can burn 500-1,500 calories.

**Whole body benefits include:**

- **Arms:** Casting, rowing and climbing work the small and large muscles in your hands, wrists, forearms, upper arms and shoulders.
- **Core:** Working to stay upright against the force of water tightens abdominal muscles as you fight for balance. Moving along rocks also work the core.
- **Back:** Using correct posture while wading strengthens lower back muscles. Fighting for fish and casting use upper back and shoulder muscles.
- **Legs:** This is one of the most utilized muscle groups while fishing as you walk, balance, jump and leap along rocks and the resistance of the water.

There are mental benefits to fishing, as well. Fix.com notes fishing by its nature is a reflective and meditative activity "that forces you to slow down and enjoy your surroundings." This study says anyone who fishes can attest to the sense of relaxation and calmness this particular activity lends to those who partake.

"This very activity makes fishing a popular therapeutic exercise used by counselors and therapists who work with veterans, people with chronic illnesses, and others who have experienced trauma in their lives," according to the study.

One such organization that promotes the therapeutic exercise of fly fishing is Healing Waters Fly Fishing. This nonprofit organization works with active military service personnel and veterans with disabilities through fly fishing to rehabilitate the person physically and emotionally.
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Staying healthy during Road trip season

Preparation, rest can go a long way on long trips
By Chrissy Suttles csuttles@wyomingnews.com

CHEYENNE – After a wearisome Wyoming winter, many of us are antsy to shed that cabin fever and explore. Whether you’re planning a hiking trip to Grand Teton National Park ahead of peak season or heading southwest to soak up the desert sun, how you spend the long hours it takes to get there can make or break a road trip.

Staying healthy on the road guarantees that your getaway is as successful as possible. Here are some tips to achieve a balance of nutrition, sleep and exercise during this year’s trip.

Go grocery shopping
It’s tempting to indulge a little at every rest stop fast-food joint – you’re on vacation, after all – but saving your appetite for your destination’s local fare will ultimately be more rewarding. It’ll also save more money for souvenirs and experiences.

Stop by a grocery store ahead of your trip and grab the basics to mitigate hunger. Easy, affordable staples include bread, peanut butter, pretzels, yogurt, fruit, protein shakes, string cheese, jerky and protein-rich trail mix. Bring a cooler to help keep the perishable items fresh, and invest in reusable water bottles to prevent dehydration, headaches and fatigue.

If you must stop to eat out, make healthier choices such as vegetables, salad or baked items. Skip sides and choose water instead of soda or sugary drinks.

Finally, avoid too much caffeine. Although coffee and energy drinks are likely to give you a short burst of energy, it’ll be quickly followed by crashes and jitters.

Stop for exercise
Sitting for long stretches of time can cause muscle fatigue, cramps and general unease. Especially if you’re traveling with kids, it’s necessary to take breaks to alleviate some of that...
restlessness.

Go for a quick jog around a rest stop sidewalk, use playground equipment for pull-ups, or just see if you can beat your kids in a race from one side of the lawn to the other.

Do stretches, both inside and outside of the car. Switching sitting positions while on the road can reduce muscle and spine stress, too. Tightening and releasing glutes and abs while sitting can keep the muscles active.

**Keep your mind engaged**

If you’re a podcast person, download hours of interesting material to keep you focused during the drive. Make sure you’ll have access without internet, as many rural parts of the West are beyond service areas. Playlists or travel games such as Table Topics are especially good for group travel.

**Protect your skin**

Your skin is still exposed to UV rays while you’re in a moving vehicle. Don’t forget to bring sunscreen, sunglasses and protective clothing for long hours on the road. To keep your car cooler, invest in a windshield sunshade.

**Get enough rest**

It often feels easier to drive through the night and arrive at a destination early to maximize your time there. But insufficient sleep on the road can be extremely dangerous. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that most people begin to experience the effects of sleep deprivation after just 24 hours.

Staying awake for a full day is comparable to having a blood-alcohol content of 0.10%, higher than the legal driving limit in the United States, according to the CDC. The effects of going without sleep for 24 hours include drowsiness, reduced coordination, impaired judgment and a higher risk of accidents.

Even if you’re just pulling into a rest stop for a mental reset, don’t push yourself too hard.
The Schoolyard a good introduction for novice cyclists, trail-runners
By DANIEL BENDTSEN
Laramie Boomerang
LARAMIE -- With Albany County’s snowpack receding, there comes another season of outdoor activity, including mountain biking.

Some of the top destinations, like Vedauwoo’s trails, don’t open until late May or June, but there are still plenty of off-road locations primed for riding now.

And for novices looking to get into the low-impact sport, it’s fortunate that some of the most convenient locations also are ideal for beginners.

The Schoolyard Trails System east of Jacoby Golf Course is a great place to for beginners to get started, according to Dewey Gallegos, co-owner of Pedal House.

The Schoolyard’s trails, which begin at the east end of Crow Drive, are “pretty mellow,” he said, and its location in Laramie — right next to Ivinson Memorial Hospital — can provide piece of mind for beginners worried about injuring themselves on national forest or state park trails.

“The fear of it is real, but at the Schoolyard, you can see exactly where you are.”

The Schoolyard is also a great location for those who want to get a quick bike-ride but don’t have the time to leave the city.

Once the national forest roads open for the summer, Vedauwoo provides an endless network of trails. Gallegos said riders should know that e-bikes aren’t allowed in the national forest.

For those willing to drive a little farther than Vedauwoo, Gallegos said Curt Gowdy State Park is a “top 10 location” in the state.

The state’s hidden gem, he said, is Glendo State Park at the north end of Platte County.

“It needs to be ridden more,” Gallegos said. “Every time I’ve gone, there’s no one there. It’s a bit of a drive, but it’s worth every moment. I think that’s Wyoming best secret right now.”

Maps with mountain-biking trails can be found at www.mtbproject.com/directory/8011095/laramie

For those who prefer their two feet over two wheels, High Plains Harriers has lists of ideal trail-running locations at highplainsharriers.org/places-to-run/je
Ivinson Memorial Hospital is proud to be in the nation’s Top 20 Rural Community Hospitals, **two years in a row.**

Ivinson Memorial Hospital was recently named as one of the Top 20 Rural Community Hospitals in the country by the National Rural Health Association (NRHA). This is the second year in a row IMH has achieved this designation. The determining factors for the top 20 rural community hospitals were based on eight indices: inpatient market share, outpatient market share, quality, outcomes, patient perspectives, costs, charge, and financial stability.
Acupuncture can help with finding balance

Stress can be reduced with treatment, lifestyle choices

By Chris Dewey
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LARAMIE — If there is one thing that almost all Americans can speak to, regardless of age or location, it is stress. We all know it, we all cruise along as though there is nothing wrong, and yet it is the elephant in the room. Stress creates all manner of havoc in our lives in both obvious and not so obvious ways. Clearly, stress can be a good thing at times, but when it is insidious and unremitting, it can lead to a variety of medical issues, and can even increase the risk factors for strokes and heart attacks. A 2017 article published in the British medical journal “The Lancet” demonstrated a link between chronic long-term stress and increased risk of heart attack and stroke. The British Heart Foundation has also recognized the relationship between the coping mechanisms in which stressed people engage (like smoking, drinking and over-eating) and the increase in risk factors.

In the clinic, I regularly see people who are stressed and present with anger, depression, fatigue, insomnia, headaches, migraines, digestive issues, hypertension, neck, shoulder and back pain and attendant issues associated with our coping mechanisms.

At its root, the stress response of the body equips us to face threats (like a sabre-toothed tiger looking for lunch). The problem in our modern, high-paced world there is a marked absence of sabre-toothed tigers, yet it is still easy to live in a state of almost constant stress. The emotional stressors can come from relationships, school, career, finances, retirement, health issues, politics, environmental issues, crowded cities, decreased personal security and so on. We also live chemically stressed lives because of the environmental pollutants we breathe and the additives in our foods. Lastly, we are physically stressed because many of us carry muscular tension in our necks, shoulders and backs.

Think of your body like a bucket that can contain stuff that you get to carry around. You can keep adding water to the bucket until it is full. If you then add a brick or you add one drop of water too much,
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the bucket overflows, because there is no more reserve. While the bucket is still partly empty it doesn’t look like there is a problem. Except there is.

Living under chronic, long-term stress is like filling the bucket and stressing the handles as you carry it about day after day. Sooner or later, the bucket will give out in some way.

So, what does stress do to us? Stress hormones affect where and how blood flows through the system, so one of the things that stress does to us is that it elevates blood pressure, while at the same time reducing blood flow to the digestive tract. Chronic, unremitting stress can eventually lead to diabetes, atherosclerosis and heart disease, all of which are risk factors for increased likelihood of a stroke.

The problem is that chronic stress is an insidious drain on body systems and we often don’t notice the cumulative effects. Chronic stress, however, continually adds cortisol to the system, which compromises both how we look and feel. Stress leaves us feeling fatigued and because we have stress hormones coursing around in the body, the number of free radicals increases, our skin dries out and we look older. When we are emotionally stressed and our sleep suffers as a result, we do not rejuvenate at night, so we wake feeling fatigued and have a reduced capacity for handling stress the following day. We become more irritable, more tense and start to experience memory issues. Additionally, stress hormones affect digestion, and can lead to acid reflux, heartburn, indigestion, or IBS. Of course, it doesn’t help if you also manage stress with some over-indulgent eating, which itself can lead to obesity and diabetes. As if that were not enough, chronic stress compromises our ability to fight disease because it depresses the immunity. Lastly, because we are full of stress hormones and ready to fight or fly, our muscles are constantly tense even when we are asleep, so we wake feeling worn out.

So, what’s a body to do? As few as two acupuncture needles can calm you and reduce your stress levels like letting air out of an over-inflated tire. It is interesting to me how often I put in those needles as part of a treatment protocol and my clients will let out a sigh as the muscles relax and they let go of their tension. It is a wonderful thing to see in my clients.

Stress may not be unavoidable, but how you choose to respond to it and what you choose to allow it to do to your life is something you can control. Lifestyle choices including activities like Taiji, healthy eating, good sleep, regular exercise, getting outside into nature, truly relaxing at the end of the day, and meditation can all help you keep a handle on your stress. In terms of wellness and personal health care, acupuncture and its allied modalities can do a lot to help you find balance.

Chris Dewey owns and operates Thirdpathway Acupuncture in Laramie. Chris is a licensed acupuncturist, graduate of the Academy of Oriental Medicine at Austin, a national board-certified diplomate in Oriental Medicine, and President of the Wyoming Acupuncture Society. You can contact Chris at 662.769.5522 or chris@thirdpathwayacupuncture.com. For a list of licensed acupuncturists in your area, please visit the Wyoming Acupuncture Society website at: http://www.wyoas.org.
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