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‘Walk this Weigh Woodward’ starts May 13

Patti Locklear

The Partners Acting as Change Agents (PACA) and the Health and Wellness sub-committee are planning a new event for Woodward and surrounding communities beginning May 13 at the George Goetzinger Walking Trail. “Walk this Weigh Woodward” is focused on getting people up and moving - or walking.

Lana Shaffer, Turning Point Field Consultant with the Oklahoma State Department of Health, said this is an initiative through the Turning Point program.

“The Turning Point program is an initiative through the state health department that was developed to create a new way of thinking about health in Oklahoma,” said Shaffer. “It emphasizes on a collaboration of state and local partners. It has been determined that in Oklahoma physical activity and nutrition is what the health department is focusing on this year.”

Shaffer said Turning Point communities are doing the “Walk this Weigh” programs in a lot of different ways. It is all community driven and the program can be implemented in any way.

“We got together with PACA and decided that this would be a great way to get the community and surrounding areas active,” said Shaffer.

The six-week walking program is for all ages and the categories will be individual and four-member teams. Families, individuals, organizations, businesses and churches are all encouraged to participate. Prizes will also be given in both categories.

Registration forms must be turned in to the OSU Extension Office in Woodward by April 28 and the event will last from May 13 to June 23. You may also register online at www.countyext.okstate.edu/woodward.

Team members must submit minutes to their team captains at the end of each week. Team captains will then send the information in so a weekly update may be sent out. In addition to a t-shirt, participants will receive a walking calendar, pedometer and other goodies at the kick-off event on May 13.

The grand prize for the individual category will be an all-inclusive seven-day cruise for two. All participants accumulating at least 1,100 minutes of walking over the six-week competition will be entered into a drawing to determine the winner of the prize for the individual category. The team with the most total minutes of walking will receive a package of gifts including gym membership, an MP3 player, a gift certificate for walking/running shoes, a massage and a luncheon - for each member of the winning team.

The competition is based solely on an honor system and all participants should be respectful of that, said coordinators.

“The reason I think this is great is because I think it gives people an opportunity to get out and get active,” said Shaffer. “I think a lot of people want to get out and get active and this provides an incentive to do just that. The team aspect of it helps people to be held accountable - if your friend is walking then you’ll be more apt to get out and do your walking as well.”

She said that they have had a lot of great sponsors and businesses have supported the event with prizes.

“We had a lot of great sponsors so far for this event,” she said. “We couldn’t offer the prizes and the trip without their great support.”

Jolena Graves, health educator for the Woodward County Health Department is also excited about the event.

“The weather’s getting better and it’s a good way to get people started walking,” said Graves. “They say that anything that’s done regularly for six weeks becomes a habit - hopefully this will get them hooked on walking.”

For more information on the event, interested persons may contact any of the following: PACA office at 571-3240; Brent Hubbard at the Woodward Regional Hospital, 254-8665; Jolena Graves or Lana Shaffer at 921-2029.