

Slate Valley Center residents get creative for Valentine's Day

Residents at Slate Valley Center on State Route 40 in Granville let their painting and drawing skills shine once again as they began looking forward to Valentine's Day.

On Monday, Jan. 24, creative residents attended "Painting Class with Bailey" during which participants painted their own versions of a bear with a heart.

While most of the paintings featured brown bears with pink hearts, some residents painted pink bears with blue outlines.

"I love it when the residents really concentrate on their painting," said recreation director Andrea Kelley. "With Valentine's Day quickly approaching, we wanted our residents to be excited to paint. Valentine's Day surely is a fun time."

Following the painting class on Monday, music duo Keanen Stark and Orion Kribs dropped by to entertain the residents and staff with great bluegrass and country classics.



(Left to right) 81-year-old Nancy Olsen completed a beautiful painting, Carol Cox, 87, concentrated on her painting and 79-year-old David Myette began his painting with a heart and started creating his bear.

Take care of your heart during American Heart Month

By Julia Hotaling

February has been recognized as American Heart Month by the American Heart Association since 1964. It's a time dedicated to emphasizing the importance of heart health. This means educating people on ways to achieve heart health and spreading awareness about the need for further research on the topic.

All of this is in an effort to decrease the number of people who are diagnosed with heart disease.

An estimated 16.3 million Americans over the age of 20 years old have been diagnosed with heart disease. And it is the leading cause of death in the world. That's why spreading awareness and education during the month of February is important for Americans' health.

National Wear Red Day: The best day for people to show their support for the cause is the first Friday in February. This year, Feb. 4 is National Wear Red Day, a day to wear any red clothes, accessories or makeup that will show participation in the event. Wearing red is one way to participate in the American Heart Month, another way is to practice heart healthy habits.

Heart-healthy diet: Incorporating healthy habits can look different for every lifestyle, but they all start with the same goal of taking care of the heart. Eating a heart-healthy diet is a major step, so try limiting sodium and saturated fat intake as well as increasing fruit and vegetable consumption. This means decreasing intake of highly processed foods and sugary sweetened beverages. One staple heart healthy eating pattern is the

Mediterranean diet. It focuses on a high intake of fruits, vegetables, moderate amounts of dairy, seafood and poultry, while limiting meat consumption.

Physical activity. Another main focus for heart health, and of the Mediterranean diet, is exercise. Increasing physical activity can be a challenge for many people because of their busy schedules. But exercise doesn't have to mean spending hours in the gym. It can mean a walk during lunch or playing a sports game with friends. Incorporating exercise in a way that is going to be enjoyable is much more motivating and sustainable.

Sleep and stress. Eating a heart-healthy diet and exercising more frequently can seem like major changes, but there are other ways to take care

of the heart. Having a good sleep schedule is another way to manage heart health. It's recommended that adults get seven or more hours of sleep every night. It's also important to manage stress. Try deep breathing, listening to music, spending time outside or setting aside time for friends and family to manage stress levels. Practicing mindfulness and taking the time to relax when necessary is important for keeping the heart healthy.

Remember that a heart-healthy lifestyle looks different for everybody, and any action taken to care for the heart is beneficial to overall health.

For more information contact Diane Whitten at dwhitten@cornell.edu or at 518-885-8995 or visit cesaratoga.org.

Julia Hotaling is Sage College dietetic intern for Cornell Cooperative Extension of Saratoga County.

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