

Senior activities are aplenty in Anoka County cont.

Crafts, games and birthday celebrations take place the first and fourth Wednesday of the month.

Regular meetings are also held the third Thursday of the month.

For more information, call 763-434-6179.

• **Fridley Senior Center** (6085 Seventh St. N.E.)

The Fridley Senior Center is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. and offers services and activities for those age 55 and older.

There are health clinics, instruction classes, clubs, special events, wellness classes, support groups, social services, trips and more.

Clubs include cribbage on Fridays at 1 p.m., 500 on Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 9:30 a.m. and 1 p.m., bridge Mondays at 1 p.m. and whist Thursdays at 1 p.m.

There is also a book club, Hardanger Club, senior crafters, quilters club, campaign of cheer and Golden Kiwanis.

For more information, call 763-502-5150.

• **Ham Lake Senior Center** (15544 Central Ave.)

Activities abound at the Ham Lake Senior Center, with senior dining (Mondays and Wednesdays) and other

activities available.

Drop in for coffee and rolls in the morning. Fitness classes are offered Tuesday, Thursday and Friday mornings.

Bingo is also played throughout the week as are card games. There are jam session the second Thursday of the month and transportation is available.

Call 763-434-0455 for more information.

• **Oak Grove Senior Center** (19900 Nightingale St.)

The Oak Grove seniors meet at noon on the second Wednesday of the month for a potluck and the fourth Wednesday for a catered meal. Bingo is also played.

Crafters meet the first and third Fridays.

For more information, call 763-753-2973.

• **Spring Lake Park Senior Program** (1301 81st Ave. N.E.)

Regularly scheduled programming includes a card club, bingo and exercise activities.

Card club meets Thursdays 1 to 5 p.m. and bingo is held the second and fourth Mondays of the month.

Call 763-792-7201 for information.

Daily physical activity helps lessen the severity of arthritis

(ARA) - More than 46 million people of all ages in the U.S. have arthritis. A recent study from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that arthritis is the nation's most common disability.

The same CDC study showed that the number of people who report arthritis as their primary cause of disability has grown by more than 3 million since 1999. What's more alarming -- with the aging of baby boomers, the prevalence of arthritis is expected to increase 40 percent by the year 2030.

Given the pervasiveness of arthritis, many Americans understand that it is a serious health problem. However, some are unaware that physical activity can actually help lessen the severity of arthritis. In fact, increased daily movement or exercise is one of the best approaches to helping reduce stiff, achy joints caused by arthritis.

"Physical activity, including stretching and strengthening, is crucial to improving joint pain and mobility and reducing fatigue often associated with arthritis," says Dr. Patience White, chief public health officer for the Arthritis Foundation. "Moving just 30 minutes daily, even 10 to 15 minutes at a time, can reduce the impact of arthritis on a person's daily activities and help to prevent developing

more painful arthritis."

The Arthritis Foundation has created a program, Let's Move Together, which is designed to inspire people to move every day to prevent or treat arthritis. Its Web site offers helpful tips for increasing movement, including:

- **Take a hike.** Walking is one of the easiest, safest and most beneficial forms of exercise. It helps keep your weight in check and strengthens muscles, which reduces pressure on the knees and decreases pain. Walking just fast enough so that you're slightly short of breath is a good pace. The goal is to strengthen the muscles in your legs and around your knees and hips.

- **Go for a spin.** Stationary cycling strengthens your heart, hips and knees -- with less impact on joints than other forms of cardiovascular exercise, such as running. For those new to stationary cycling, start slowly with a five-minute session at a comfortable pace three times per day.

- **Make a splash.** Using a combination of soothing warm water and gentle movements helps increase joint flexibility and range of motion. Studies have shown aquatic-based exercise helps to restore and maintain muscle strength, relieve

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