

# Celebrate

## healthy living

2018 Week 4

### Remembering a Walk Kansas Champion

*"Your health is the result of what you eat, what you do, and what you are born with."*

*Marjorie Frances Neely*

During the spring of 2012, Marge Neely traveled to Manhattan with the K-State Research and Extension agent in her local office, Tara Solomon, to meet with K-State Research and Extension professionals and talk about Walk Kansas. Marge was a true champion for Walk Kansas and passionate about active living. She did her first radio interview, with the K-State Radio Network, while on campus that day. (Listen here: [www.walkkansas.org](http://www.walkkansas.org))

Marge passed away on August 14, 2017, at the age of 97. She lived a very active life. Even when her eyesight began to fail, she continued to walk in place for exercise and added intervals (short bursts of faster walking) to improve her fitness. In remembrance of a dear friend and supporter of Walk Kansas, please enjoy this news article highlighting her visit at that time.

*(Reprinted from Walk Kansas 2012)*

Don't let Marge Neely's small stature — just 5 feet tall early in the morning and after a good stretch — or age fool you. At 92, when many of her contemporaries have slowed down, she is recruiting participants for Walk Kansas.

Neely credits much of her energy and enthusiasm for life to an active lifestyle. She grew up in rural Kansas, and, at the age of 5, convinced her parents to teach her how to milk a cow. She soon landed a regular assignment, helping her father with small jobs in the fields.

She enlisted in the Marines during World War II, and was assigned to a communications unit. After the war, she thrived on her education at K-State. She met and married a farmer, fulfilled the roles of a farm wife and partner, raised a



### In this issue:

Remembering a Walk Kansas Champion

Add Intervals

5K for the Fight

Enjoy Eating Mediterranean Style

Recipe: Mediterranean Lentil Soup

### Coming next week:

Squats for Strength

Leg Cross Stretch

Breathe Deeply Everyday

Smart Snacks

Recipe: Energy Bites

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family of six children, and has been blessed with 16 grandchildren.

She also taught school for 22 years and has earned the rank of Master Gardener. "It's never too late," said Neely (pictured on page 1). She is a 10-year veteran of Walk Kansas and recruits participants wherever she goes. "Do you know about Walk Kansas?" she asks — at the grocery store, her tax preparer's office, and so on.

This year (2012), she has recruited 10 teams (60 people) and is serving as captain for two. She has scoliosis, an abnormal lateral curvature of the spine, which she said has helped her learn to appreciate the therapeutic value of regular exercise. She can speak from experience, which explains why she makes an effort to recruit Walk Kansas participants in assisted living residences and nursing homes.

"We've got to keep moving; it makes everything easier," said Neely, who touts the benefits of stretching first (her advice, try to pull your toes to your nose), and what she calls "walking in bed" — simulated walking to use the feet, legs, knees, and hips. She also walks on a treadmill and advocates getting up to move around for every hour of sitting.

"Marge's passion for physical activity is encouraging," said Tara Solomon, K-State Research and Extension agent. "She is a leader and an energetic example for health-promoting physical fitness."

## Have you ever walked a 5K?

The Walk Kansas 5K for the Fight is held the first Saturday of May. The event this year, on May 5, will be the third annual. The distance of a 5K is 3.1 miles, and the Walk Kansas event also offers a 1.5 mile Fun Walk. Participating in one of these would be a great way for you to celebrate your health and join with others to also support cancer research at K-State, as all proceeds from the event support the Johnson Cancer Research Center on campus.

This year's fiesta themed event, in celebration of Cinco de Mayo, will offer something for the entire family — even furry four-legged walkers are welcome! Plan to participate in the 5K or the Fun Walk, and a 50-yard dash is planned for kids. The Pride of Wildcat Marching Band will perform and Sunny 102.5 will be onsite playing music. All participants receive a souvenir shirt and other goodies, as well as water and post-race healthful snacks.

More information is available at <http://cancer.k-state.edu/newsevents/WalkKansas5K.html>. To register, go to: <https://runsignup.com/Race/KS/Manhattan/WalkKansas5K>. The 5K event is \$25 and the Fun walk is \$20. Prices increase after April 24.

## Boost Exercise with Intervals

People of all ages and fitness levels can benefit from interval training, which is simply alternating short bursts of intense activity with lighter activity. In fact, interval training can be better for overall health than slow, sustained exercise.

Life is like interval training. You work and then you rest, and so on. You can include interval training in your physical activity routine at many levels, and it doesn't require special equipment. The key is to start at a level that is right for you and build from there. If walking is the activity you prefer, alternate with bursts of jogging, or brisk walking, depending on your fitness level. If walking on a treadmill, leave the speed the same, and increase the grade for short amounts of time — 30 seconds to 2 minutes — and back down again.

Interval training can jazz up your activity routine and keep it interesting and fresh. The more vigorous the activity, the more calories you burn, so it makes sense that interval training aids in weight loss. Another benefit is improved cardiovascular fitness, which will allow you to cover a specific distance in less time.

While most people can include interval training safely, it isn't appropriate for everyone. If you haven't been exercising regularly or have a chronic health condition, be sure to check with your physician before adding any type of interval training.

As with any activity, you should begin with a 5-minute warm-up, such as walking at a slower pace and light stretching. Add just one or two intense activity bursts at first. Listen to cues your body gives you to avoid injuries and sore muscles. Challenge yourself more as your stamina improves, and always include cool-down time at the end of any activity.

## Enjoy Eating Mediterranean Style

Studies show that Mediterranean-style diets are remarkably connected with good health, which is the basis for including this eating pattern in the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

Mediterranean eating patterns are associated with longevity and may decrease your risk for heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, obesity, and even Alzheimer's disease.

The Mediterranean-style diet is reflective of a way of eating that is traditional in countries that surround the Mediterranean Sea. The diet is rich in vegetables, fruits, nuts, beans and peas, whole grains, olive oil, and fish. Instead of excess salt, Mediterranean-style foods are flavored with herbs. Sweets are enjoyed in small amounts. Here are simple ideas for eating the Mediterranean way.

- Eat seafood twice a week. Tuna, herring, salmon, and sardines are rich in omega-3 fatty acids. Shellfish have similar benefits for brain and heart health. When you eat meat, choose smaller amounts.
- Enjoy a vegetarian meal one night a week or more. Include beans and legumes, whole grains, and vegetables flavored with herbs and spices.
- Choose healthy fats, such as extra-virgin olive oil, avocados, nuts, sunflower seeds, olives, and peanuts.
- Pile on vegetables. These are vitally important to Mediterranean-style eating. Start with a simple plate of sliced fresh tomatoes drizzled with olive oil and feta cheese. Enjoy salads, greens, soups and stews, healthful pizzas, and oven roasted veggies.
- Switch to whole grains. They taste nuttier and have more fiber. Traditional Mediterranean grains include bulgur, barley, farro, brown rice, and products made with whole-grain flour.
- Make fruit your dessert. Enjoy a wide range of delicious fresh fruits and pair with cheese or yogurt.

## Mediterranean Lentil Soup

*Makes 9 servings*

### Ingredients:

2 tablespoons olive oil  
1 large onion, diced  
1 stalk celery, chopped  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
1 28-ounce can plum tomatoes, coarsely chopped  
1½ cups dried lentils, sorted and rinsed  
1 tablespoon tomato paste  
1½ teaspoons dried thyme  
2 cans (14.5 ounces) low-sodium beef broth  
2 bay leaves

### Vinaigrette:

¾ cup packed fresh basil  
1/3 cup olive oil  
2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley  
2 tablespoons red wine vinegar  
Salt and pepper to taste

### Directions:

1. Heat 2 tablespoons oil in a large pot or Dutch oven. Add onion, celery, and garlic; stir and cook 5 minutes. Stir in tomatoes, lentils, tomato paste, thyme, broth, and bay leaves.
2. Bring soup to a boil, then cover and reduce heat and simmer for 25 to 30 minutes, until lentils are cooked.
3. Meanwhile, prepare vinaigrette. Combine basil, 1/3 cup oil, parsley, and vinegar in blender or food processor; cover and blend until smooth. Stir vinaigrette into soup just before serving. Season with salt and pepper to taste.



### Nutrition Information per 1-cup serving:

240 calories  
11 g fat (1.5 g saturated fat; 0 trans fat)  
27 g carbohydrates  
10 g protein  
6 g fiber  
220 mg sodium