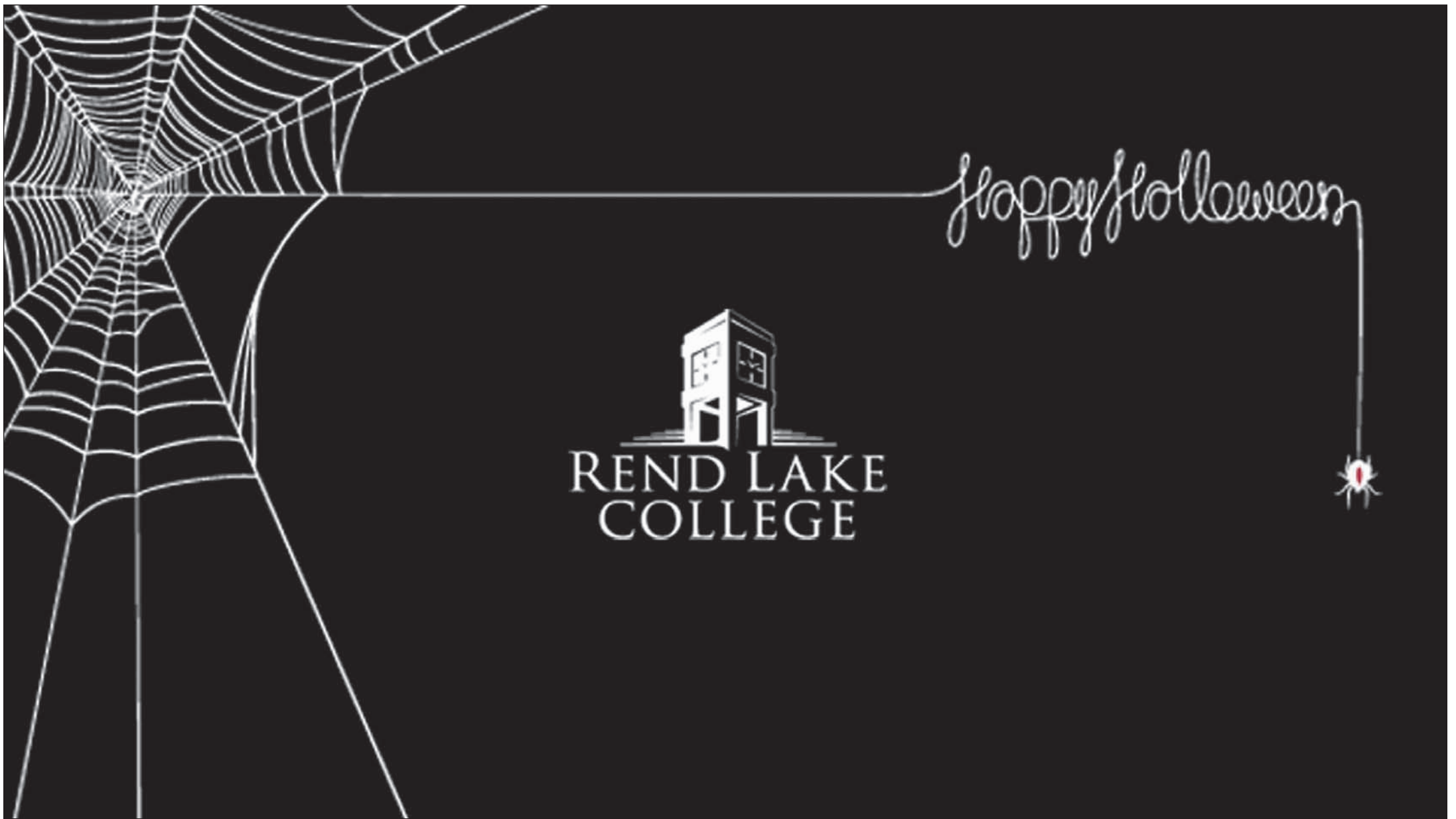




CLOCKTOWER CHRONICLE



RLC awarded Gold recognition for Worksite Wellness program

BY REANNE PALMER
RLC PUBLIC INFORMATION

Rend Lake College is leading the way in employee health and wellness, thanks to the "We Choose Health" grant, funded by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. RLC received the highest recognition — Gold — for the Illinois Department of Public Health's Illinois Healthy Worksite Designation.

The Illinois Healthy Worksite Designation was created this year to recognize workplaces with healthy practices that benefit employees and employers alike. The 3-year award includes three achievement levels, Gold, Silver, and Bronze, to be based

on criteria met by the organization.

"Everyone at Rend Lake College is excited to be awarded Gold recognition, and I'm proud of the Worksite Wellness Committee and the progress they've had here with promoting employee health," said RLC President Terry Wilkerson. "It's important to promote faculty and staff health and wellness for our long-term success and for the well-being of RLC as a whole."

At RLC, the Worksite Wellness Committee was formed to improve the health and happiness of employees by helping them reach wellness goals through motivation, encouragement, and informational activities. Some of the activities

include a monthly Lunch-N-Learn with guest speakers, weekly Walk-N-Talks among employees, and a monthly newsletter.

"RLC has promoted worksite wellness for years, and we recently formed a committee whose mission is to improve wellness at Rend Lake College and increase awareness," said Lori Ragland, Dean of Community and Corporate Education. "Some of the programs and activities the Worksite Wellness Committee puts together include weekly 'Walk-N-Talks' through campus, monthly 'Lunch-N-Learn' workshops that cover a variety of health-related topics, and a newsletter sent out to all our faculty and staff. They've

done a great job since the committee's inception, and I'm excited to see so many faculty and staff participating."

RLC met the criteria in all three levels to receive Gold recognition. These qualifications include: Promoting and supporting healthy nutrition at work; Providing and encouraging opportunities for physical activity at work; Developing a 12-month Health and Wellness Calendar and an ongoing communication plan to promote employee health and well-being; Demonstrating a commitment to employee health and well-being by making it part of the organization's mission statement, goals, and operations; and developing lifestyle and disease management

strategies, and measuring their success annually.

"With health and obesity constantly in the headlines, it's great to see the faculty and staff here at RLC coming together to support one another in creating and maintaining healthy lifestyles," said Kim Robert, Dean of the Allied Health Division. "It's a wonderful community to be a part of and we encourage everyone to participate."

RLC is one of only five organizations to receive recognition in Southern Illinois. The other four are gold recipient Southern Illinois Healthcare in Carbondale, Clinton County Government

Recognition continues on page 2



COUNT ON IT — Steven Tate, a Rend Lake College grad turned accountant with Kemper CPA, takes questions in Mark Jornd's financial accounting class recently at the Ina campus. Tate's visit, to discuss leveraging education toward a career in the field, inspired at least one student, Cassidy Neal, to major in accounting at a university after RLC. (Nathan Wheeler / RLC Public Information)

RLC alumnus Tate talks shop with accounting class

BY CASSIDY NEAL
RLC STUDENT

Steven Tate, a graduate of Rend Lake College, recently spoke to my financial accounting class with instructor Mark Jornd. Tate talked about how his time at RLC was the perfect

starting point to a university program and position as a Certified Public Accountant at Kemper CPA in Mount Vernon.

Tate explained how his experience at RLC con-

Tate continues on page 2

RLC FCA asking for toy donations for Operation Christmas Child

With Christmas around the bend, Rend Lake College's Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) are looking to get a jump start on giving. A toy collection called Operation Christmas Child is hoping to bring in small toys to send to underprivileged children around the world. RLC's FCA is hoping to donate 50 boxes of toys to the

fundraiser, and is asking for help. Bring in new stuffed animals, toy cars, dolls, art supplies, and oth-

er items to place in donation bins across campus. Bins are located in the Administration building, Aquatics Center Lobby, Gymnasium, North Oasis, South Oasis, and Student Center. Collections will end Monday, Nov. 10. Money will also be accepted in the donation bins to help with shipping costs. Military and war-related items are prohibited, including but not limited to toy guns, knives, and army figurines. For more information, contact Sara Dixon at (618) 663-2033.

Relax. Massage therapy lab now open

BY TI'ERRE HARRIS
CLOCKTOWER CHRONICLE STAFFWRITER

Treat stress with RLC's massage therapy open lab, open from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., every Wednesday in the Advanced Technology Center. It will run through the remainder of the semester. Walk-ins will be accepted in the order received.

Erin Morris, Community and Corporate Education Specialist and a member of the college's Worksite Wellness Committee, said, "The [committee] encourages employees to take the time out of their day to participate in the massage therapy open lab. It's a win-win situation. Employees of the college are able to receive a free stress reliever and the students get hands-on experience."

Although the program is available to everyone, Morris pointed out that it could be an even greater benefit to those involved in sports,

and the performing arts, relieving stress and muscle tension from various parts of the body. She said coordinators are looking forward to more students getting involved with the program throughout the semester.

In general, massage therapists press, rub, and otherwise manipulate the muscles and other soft tissues of the body. They most often use their hands and fingers, but may use their forearms, elbows, or feet.

Research supports the general conclusion that massage therapy is effective. According to WebMD online, a single session of massage therapy can reduce "state anxiety" (a reaction to a particular situation), blood pressure, and heart rate, and multiple sessions can reduce "trait anxiety" (general anxiety-proneness), depression, and pain.

Therapy Lab continues on page 2

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Therapy Lab
continued from page 1
According to the Britannica, massage therapy is used to relieve pain and reduce swelling, relax muscles, and speed the healing process following strain and sprain injuries. Experts estimate that upwards of 90 percent of disease is stress-related.

And perhaps nothing ages folks faster, internally and externally, than high stress. While eliminating anxiety and pressure altogether in this fast-paced world may be idealistic, massage can, without a doubt, help manage stress. Massage therapy can reduce the number of migraines a person has

and also improve sleep. Michael Adamson, an instructor for RLC's therapeutic massage program, is very excited to welcome participants to the open lab and hear later about results. He said he hopes the lab will spark interest in new students who may want to join the program.



OPEN LAB — Instructor Mike Adamson critiques one of his student's at the massage therapy lab in the Advanced Technology Center at Rend Lake College. The program is holding an open lab the remainder of the semester for students to complete clinical work. Walk-ins are accepted. (Taylor Blankenship / Clocktower Chronicle Photographer)

Recognition
continued from page 1

Offices in Carlyle, Jackson County Health Department in Murphysboro, and United Stationers in Greenville, all with bronze. There were 10 other organizations who received gold, 14 received silver, and 13 others who received bronze. Gold Recognition: American Medical Association in Chicago, City of Bloomington, Exelon in Chicago, Heartland Community College in Normal, McHenry County Government Center in Woodstock, OSF Saint Joseph Medical Center in Bloomington, RLC, Rock Valley College

in Rockford, Southern Illinois Healthcare in Carbondale, State Farm Insurance Company in Bloomington, Swedish American Hospital in Rockford, Winnebago County in Rockford. RLC and the others will be honored at the state capitol on Nov. 19, along with 32 other organizations who previously qualified for recognition in April of 2014. The Illinois Healthy Worksite Designation was created as part of the statewide "We Choose Health" community transformation grant, which was funded by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control

and Prevention and overseen by the Illinois Department of Public Health. Its purpose was to make communities healthier and reduce chronic disease. Worksite Wellness was one of the strategies selected to achieve the goal in Illinois. The Illinois Healthy Worksite Designation was created to engage employers throughout the state in worksite wellness best practices. For more information about Worksite Wellness at RLC, contact Ragland at (618) 437-5321, Ext. 1367 or like them on Facebook at www.facebook.com/rlcwellness.

Tate
continued from page 1

tributed to his success and helped prepare him for the rigors of a university. He encouraged the class to take advantage of the many resources RLC has to offer, most notably instructors' willingness to help. He went on to talk about Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, and experiences he had in the accounting program. He was honest in explain-

ing that the program was very challenging, but by working hard it would be very rewarding. Before Tate came to speak to our class, I did not consider accounting as an option. I was concerned I would not be able to devote enough time to studying as needed to get the most out of the program. Tate explained how he was able to hold down a night job, go to class during the day, and still

make it through the program with high honors. This spring I will finish my time at RLC and, thanks to Tate's encouraging words, will be transferring to SIUC to pursue a degree in accounting. Tate was recruited directly by Kemper from the accounting program at SIUC. He will graduate from the program in December with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Accountancy.

R.F.D. by Mike Marland

Crossword

Across

- Sends a letter
- Dangerous snakes
- Fellow
- Set aside
- ___ of approval
- "I always like walking in the rain, ___ one can see me crying"--Charlie Chaplin
- Casual greeting
- Tick-___
- Lemon meringue and Boston cream
- Draw pictures while you're on the phone, say
- Circle and square
- Places to live
- Daily or weekly tasks
- "Indeed!"
- Helped a broken-down car
- Food that jiggles
- Knock
- ___ Parks
- Like some faucets
- ___ occasion (never)
- Go down a mountain
- Poles on ships
- Potato ___
- Has faith in
- Mac or Madoff
- Book parts
- Oversee
- Makes up (for)
- Henry of Detroit fame
- "___ true?"
- Greeting from Bugs Bunny
- Camera part
- Car
- Abdul or Deen
- Droop
- Jury person
- Hard to climb
- Father's Day gifts
- Cincinnati's state
- Trembled
- Another casual greeting
- Part of town
- HQs
- Irish poet William Butler ___
- Benevolent lodge
- Sneaky
- Joking
- Musical about a red-headed orphan
- Mug for the camera
- ___ Vegas
- Southern vegetable
- Ponder
- Parodies
- Monthly payments
- Taverns
- Buckets at the beach
- Not on shore
- Engine
- Make an even trade
- Destiny
- Color
- Butter amount
- Word on a bill
- "Bravo!"
- Pen part, sometimes

Down

- ___-jongg
- Ginger ___
- Not feeling well
- "That's hilarious!" in three letters
- Slammed on the brakes
- Cigar stuff
- Observes
- Golf course score
- Wintertime vehicle
- Greeting in the a.m.
- Aunt's man
- Ox holders
- Got up

Solution to Crossword puzzle printed on page 3.

Rend Lake College Clocktower Chronicle

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Sudoku

1			2			3
3			4	5	6	
	4		7			1
		3	6			8
	9			2		
6		4	7			
	5		1	3		
	4	2	6			9
8		2				7

Solution to Sudoku puzzle printed on page 3.

Megamaze

Solution to Megamaze puzzle printed on page 3.

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Therapeutic Massage Conference to cover Pilossage Nov. 7-8

The first 10 registrants will receive a \$50 discount

BY REANNE PALMER
RLC PUBLIC INFORMATION

Massage Therapists can get hands-on with their continuing education at the Therapeutic Massage Conference, scheduled for 9 a.m. – 6 p.m., Nov. 7-8, at the Rend Lake College MarketPlace, Room 354, in Mt. Vernon. The theme of the conference will center on Pilossage, a new treatment sweeping the hearts and hands of massage therapists across the country.

Guest speaker and Registered Nurse Karen Kowal, LMT, will discuss the Pilossage techniques with several modules, including Shoulders to Hips; Hips, Glutes, ITBand to the Toes; The Forgotten Chest; Shoulder Therapy; Sinus Therapy; Cervical Therapy; and Self-Care Techniques. RLC Massage Therapy Professor Michael Adamson said Pilossage is one of the newest and greatest techniques in the field.

"Pilossage is a nice addition to any massage therapist's tool box because it can provide clients with an effective, comfortable, and memorable massage experience that is easy on the client and therapist as well," said Adamson.

Pilossage and Mother Earth Pillows are self-care

products that treat pain while decreasing the strain on the therapist. Pilossage Bodywork reduces numerous types of painful client conditions, directly treats dysfunctions that cause pain, improves mobility and flexibility, softens connective tissue, relaxes and lengthens muscle fibers, softens scar tissue, decreases stress and anxiety, and stimulates the release of Endorphins and Oxytocin.

The conference is sponsored by RLC, Stress Knot Massage of Mt. Vernon, and the South Central Illinois Area Health Education Center (SCI-AHEC). Certificates and 16 continuing education hours will be provided for those who complete the class. Massage tables will be provided;

however, participants are asked to bring a flat sheet and face-rest cover. Comfortable clothing is suggested.

Adamson added, "Illinois Massage Therapy license renewal is due at the end of this year. This conference will provide 16 of the 24 continuing education hours required for licensure renewal at a very affordable cost that is close to home."

The conference costs \$200 per person and includes lunch both days. To register, contact Stephanie Smith in the RLC Community and Corporate Education Division at (618) 437-5321, Ext. 1714 or smithst@rlc.edu. Spots at the conference are limited to the first 20 who register by Friday, Oct. 31.

Strange BUT TRUE

BY SAMANTHA WEAVER
KING FEATURES SYND.

It was Hungarian mathematician Paul Erdos who made the following sage observation: "Problems worthy of attack prove their worth by fighting back."

Board games date back at least 5,000 years, when people were playing on a board that looks like an ancestor to backgammon.

The next time you're overwhelmed with emotion and find yourself passionately kissing your partner, you probably won't remember that one word to describe what you're doing is "deosculation."

It was in 1958 that the first stereo phonograph record went on sale.

The soft drink 7-UP was originally called Bib-Label Lithiated Lemon-Lime Soda — and it contained lithium, which is now prescribed to treat manic depression. That ingredient (which continued to be part of the formula until the 1940s) probably helped spur the drink's success, since 7-UP was introduced just

before the Great Depression. The new name was derived from the size of the soda bottle (7 ounces) and "bottoms up," which is presumably what many people did during the difficult years of the Depression.

A man in Orange County, California, stole a diamond worth \$25,000 and, despite being arrested for the crime, was able to smuggle it into prison with him by swallowing it. He then managed to hide the gem in a shower drain in hopes of retrieving and swallowing it again before his release. All that effort was in vain, however; prison guards found the diamond and returned it to the jewelry shop.

If you're using an average brand-new pencil, you'll be able to draw a line about 35 miles long before running out of lead (though you'll have to stop for sharpening breaks, of course).

Thought for the Day: "Try to learn something about everything and everything about something." — Thomas Henry Huxley

CONSUMER REPORTS

How you can get your car fixed for free

Nothing's more frustrating to a car owner than a vehicle whose paint starts peeling or whose roof is leaking just a few years after leaving the dealer's lot, says Consumer Reports. Having to make expensive, post-warranty repairs sends a signal to consumers that says: You're getting ripped off.

Fortunately, you can often save hundreds or even thousands of dollars in repair bills by taking advantage of special, unadvertised automaker programs that provide free or discounted service work. Though manufacturers often call these programs service actions or customer satisfaction campaigns, many people refer to them as secret or hidden warranties because they're rarely announced to the public.

Two examples: Owners of 2006 to 2009 Honda Civics may qualify for a free engine block, or even a whole new

engine, if their car has been leaking coolant from a crack in the block. Chrysler minivan owners may notice that the front wheel bearings on models from 2008 to 2010 are subject to premature wear, so dealers will replace them for free during a vehicle's first five years or 90,000 miles.

How do these "secret warranties" come about? They usually originate when automakers discover that some component or system in a given model is failing at a greater rate than expected. They learn about the problems from numerous sources, including complaints to their customer service departments and reports from dealers.

Programs that offer subsidized or free repairs are usually presented as a "warranty extension," since they last for a specified time and mileage. Occasionally, they're good for a limited number of years

from the original purchase date but have no mileage limit. They're often enacted in the name of good customer service. Sometimes, though, a free repair program is instituted as part of the settlement of a class-action lawsuit brought by consumers.

HOW SECRET ARE SECRET WARRANTIES?

Often, when an automaker initiates a service campaign, it sends a notification letter to all known owners. But second or third owners of that car may not receive it. Even among those who do, the letter may be mislaid or mistakenly thrown away. In other cases, though, there is no advance notice, and car owners find out about it only if a dealer tells them or they discover it on their own.

All of the warranty extensions Consumer Reports found were included in technical service bulletins that automakers send to their dealers' service departments. TSBs usually describe a common problem the automaker has learned about and provide detailed instructions on how the service technician should fix it. However, a small number of TSBs also contain information about special warranties related to the problem or other remedies the carmaker is offering to owners.

If your car develops a

notable problem that's not connected to wear and tear or collision damage, it might be worth checking whether there's a TSB related to it. Even if no warranty extension is offered, a TSB tells you that the problem is well-known to the automaker, which could give you more leverage in negotiating a discount on the repair.

WHERE TO LEARN MORE

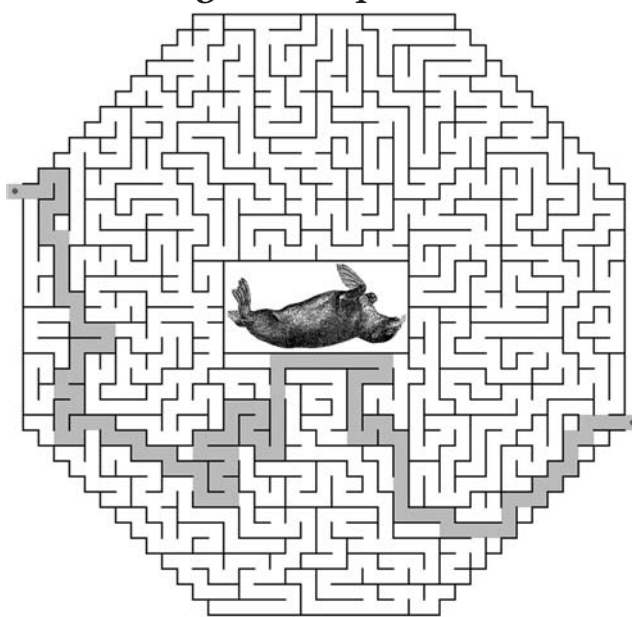
Technical service bulletins can be hard to come by. You can search for free summaries of them at safecar.gov, the government's auto-safety website. Enter your car's make/model/year in the "Owners" section, and click on the "Service Bulletins" tab. But be warned, the summaries are often vague. You can order the full TSB text (free up to 100 pages) by mail, though that may take four to six weeks. However, a dealer or repair shop may share them if you ask. You can also purchase current TSBs for your car from Alldatadiy.com or Mitchell 1 DIY at eautorepair.net.

You can find more information about auto repairs and maintenance on Consumer Reports' website. Also, go to ConsumerReports.org/car-recalls to check recalls on your car with plain-English interpretations prepared by certified mechanics.

Solution to page 2 Sudoku puzzle.

5	7	6	4	3	2	1	6	8
1	6	8	5	9	7	2	4	3
4	2	3	8	1	6	9	5	7
6	5	1	7	2	4	3	8	9
9	3	2	1	8	5	6	7	4
8	4	7	9	6	3	5	2	1
2	1	6	3	7	8	4	9	5
7	9	5	6	4	1	8	3	2
3	8	4	2	5	6	7	1	9

Solution to page 2 Megamaze puzzle.



Solution to page 2 Crossword puzzle.

P	E	E	T	S	R	E	P	G	V	S
A	T	U	P	O	A	V	S	N	E	L
C	L	A	P	D	O	C	I	S	I	T
F	O	R	D	F	O	R	D	S	I	O
E	G	A	N	G	E	S	P	A	G	E
E	I	N	R	B	S	T	S	T	R	U
S	N	I	K	S	T	S	T	S	K	I
O	N	N	O	A	K	A	K	L	E	A
R	A	P	O	T	L	E	J	E	D	M
O	D	I	S	E	S	E	R	O	H	C
S	E	M	O	H	S	E	P	A	H	S
E	T	D	O	O	D	S	E	I	P	E
K	C	O	T	R	E	R	E	H	T	O
O	N	O	S	T	L	S	E	A	L	T
Y	U	G	S	P	S	A	S	L	S	M

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ATHLETICS

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And the Warriors home opener against Jefferson City Tech at 6 p.m. Nov. 10



RLC getting ready for upcoming games

Here's a look at upcoming games for RLC. Men's basketball opens its regular season at Illinois Central College (Nov. 5). Women's basketball will open its regular season at

home with Lindenwood University (1 p.m., Nov. 1) and play at St. Louis Community College (Nov. 5). Volleyball is in postseason play. Check RLC's website for info at www.rlc.edu/warriors.

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RLC Volleyball rallies, wins against Lincoln Trail

BY REANNE PALMER
 RLC SPORTS INFORMATION

NA, Ill. — The Lady Warriors rallied together against the Lincoln Trail Lady Statesmen Oct. 22 to bring home a 3-0 win (25-13, 25-13, 25-11). The win put RLC at 3-28 for the season.

Nearly every player logged plays on both sides of the net. Leading the offense was Koral McBride (Murphysboro) with 15 assists and Emily Green (Wayne City) with 12 assists. As for defense, Cassidy Melliére (Prairie du Rocher) added 21 digs and Kacee Roberts (Ewing) put up seven digs. Other top performers include Rowdee Sanders

(Carterville) with five kills, three blocks and an ace; Danielle Bruns (Pinckneyville) with five kills and six blocks; Sydney Crews (Mt. Vernon) with six kills and two blocks; Allie Lietz (Hoyleton) with five kills and an ace; Denise Bruns (Pinckneyville) with three kills and three blocks; Courtney Conrad (Benton) with four kills; Ashley Modglin (Shiloh Hill) with three kills; and Ashtyn Ward (Benton) with one kill and two blocks.

The RLC Volleyball team also led a close game Tuesday night against Vincennes University in Indiana, falling in the last match 2-3 (22-25, 25-19, 21-25, 28-16, 13-15).

Several players put up big numbers during the night, including Sanders with seven kills, two blocks, two aces, and nine digs; McBride with 21 assists and six digs, Melliére with 22 digs and three aces; Crews with 16 digs and nine kills; Lietz with eight kills, four blocks, and two aces; Danielle Bruns with nine blocks and six kills; and Green with 11 assists and three kills.

The Lady Warriors played Lindenwood J.V. Oct. 23, East Central College Oct. 24, and Lake Land Oct. 29. For all things athletic at The Lake, visit www.rlc.edu/warriors.



Koral McBride (Murphysboro) logged 15 assists in the win over Lincoln Trail. The Lady Warriors' last regular season game was last night against Lake Land. Visit www.rlc.edu/warriors to find out who RLC plays in the postseason.

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Rend Lake College Volleyball goes 1-1 with Lindenwood, East Central

BY REANNE PALMER
 RLC SPORTS INFORMATION

NA, Ill. — The Rend Lake College volleyball team went 1-1 last week against Lindenwood University JV and East Central College, moving their season record to 4-29.

In the first game, the Lady Warriors defeated Lindenwood 3-2 (28-26; 21-25;

23-25; 25-22; 15-12). Coach Sara Crews said the two-game winning streak was a good showing of the team's potential.

"It's nice to see them playing to their potential, even this late in the season," said Crews. "I am pleased with our effort and I wish we had played this well earlier in the season."

Leading the team was Koral McBride (Murphysboro) and Emily Green (Wayne City). McBride brought in 25 assists and 19 digs to Green's 20 assists, 11 digs and one kill. Other top performers were Sydney Crews (Mt. Vernon) with 12 kills, one block, and 25 digs; Cassidy Melliére (Prairie du Rocher)

with two aces and 46 digs; Rowdee Sanders (Carterville) with 10 kills, three blocks and an ace; Kacee Roberts (Ewing) with one kill, one ace, and 17 digs; Allie Lietz (Hoyleton) with 10 kills and one block; Danielle Bruns (Pinckneyville) with nine kills and six blocks; Ashley Modglin (Shiloh Hill) with five kills and three blocks; and Denise Bruns (Pinckneyville) with four kills and three blocks.

The Lady Warriors then fell in four to East Central College in Union, Mo. (25-18; 20-25; 21-25; 14-25). Logging plays were Melliére with 30 digs, one kill and one ace; Crews with three kills, one block, and



Emily Green (Wayne City) had 20 assists in the win over Lindenwood.

18 digs; McBride with 12 assists and 13 digs; Green with 13 assists and five digs; Roberts with 20 digs; Danielle Bruns with five kills, five blocks, and six digs; Sanders with four kills, three blocks, and six digs; Lietz with 11 kills and five blocks; Modglin with six kills and one block; and Denise Bruns with three kills and two blocks.

For all things athletic at The Lake, visit RLC online at www.rlc.edu/warriors.

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There is no one theory that can explain why we yawn



BY ANTHONY L. KOMAROFF, M.D.

UNIVERSAL UCLICK

DEAR DOCTOR K: I get plenty of sleep. So why do I yawn all the time?

DEAR READER: We all yawn frequently, more often in the early morning and late evening. Does it

mean we're tired? Bored? Short on oxygen? As common as it is, we know little for certain about yawning.

We do know that yawning does not always indicate a need for sleep. It is true that people often yawn as they get ready to retire for the night. But we also yawn when we first arise in the morning and at other times during the day.

Past theories about why we yawn centered on the assumption that it was a reflex in response to low oxygen or high carbon dioxide levels. That's because breathing (which is what we do when we yawn) takes in oxygen and

removes carbon dioxide. When you yawn, you take in more air than with a normal breath. So it's a reasonable theory that we yawn because we need more oxygen, or less carbon dioxide.

But reasonable theories often don't prove true. This particular theory lost favor after a study in which volunteers subjected to high oxygen levels did not yawn less, and after high carbon dioxide exposure did not yawn more.

Another theory of yawning is that it protects against a condition called atelectasis (at-al-EK-tas-is), which is the collapse

of some of the lung's air sacs. The lungs are full of tiny little air sacs, but not all of them are filled with air. If an air sac remains without air, it's like a little collapsed balloon. Instead of being separated by air, the walls of the sac touch each other. If that goes on for very long, the walls can get sticky. It gets harder for the air sac to open when new air enters the lungs.

Yawning opens up tiny airways and prevents them from collapsing. So the theory that yawning is a reflex that protects against atelectasis is reasonable. This could explain why

yawning seems to occur when your breathing is shallow, such as when you're tired or bored. However, we don't know if the theory is true.

Here's another theory: Yawning might be a warning system to alert you that you're getting sleepy and you had better stay awake. If you are driving a car, for example, and relaxing to the point where you might soon fall asleep, yawning might make you more conscious of the need to take a break. Yawning is associated with stretching of the muscles and joints and an increased heart rate. That

may make you more alert. Finally, yawning may be a sign of disease.

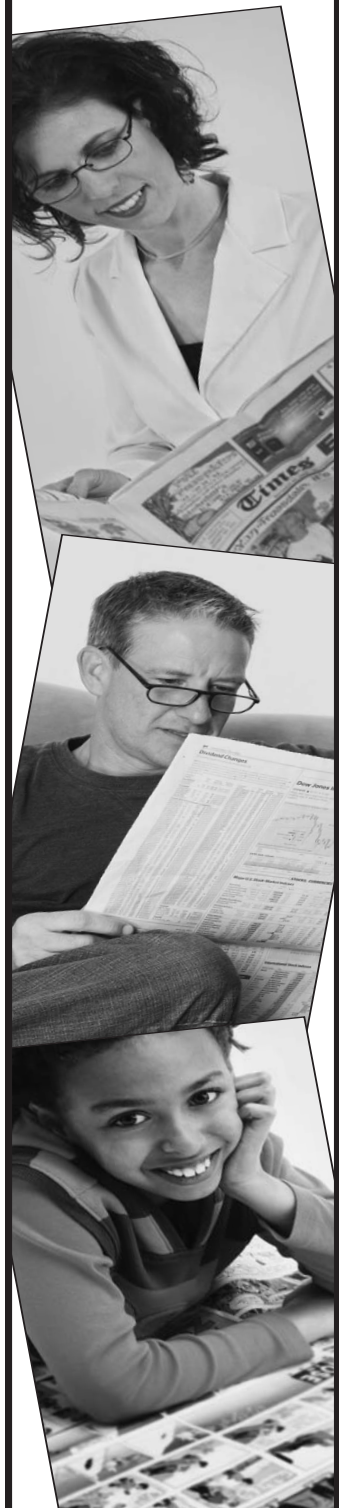
Although rarely the first sign, excessive yawning has been observed among people with multiple sclerosis, ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease) and Parkinson's disease.

To be clear, yawning is not usually a sign of disease. It's usually just a sign that you're human.

(Dr. Komaroff is a physician and professor at Harvard Medical School. To send questions, go to AskDoctorK.com, or write: Ask Doctor K, 10 Shattuck St., Second Floor, Boston, MA 02115.)

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