

LANE COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY | APRIL 2026

# MEDICAL MATTERS

## Prescribing the Outdoors

Marine veteran, Dr. Matthew Kingsbauer, believes the best prescription begins with fresh air, movement, and time in nature.



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### LCMS MISSION STATEMENT

*The Lane County Medical Society is a professional organization that represents, unifies, and supports its physician members as they practice medicine. The Society promotes the interests of member physicians and advocates for the health of the community.*



23, 25

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# MEDICAL MATTERS

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*New providers have been added to the PWP. Visit [lcmcdsociety.com/pwp](http://lcmcdsociety.com/pwp) to view the full list or for more details.*

# Opportunities Abound

When the sun is out or the temperature is at least 60 degrees, my brain says I need to be outside. I need a long walk through the trees, time to sit by the water and take deep breaths, and a moment in the garden to enjoy the daffodils, tulips, and irises as they bloom one by one. And this is not a need to have to; it's a need to want to.

Like most other Oregonians, the second the rain stops, our doors are open and our afternoon walks get longer. Trips to the park or exploring a well-loved trail are perfect opportunities to release some toddler and dog zoomies, look for cool rocks, and breathe the fresh air.

One of the many wonderful aspects of our community is the long list of activities planned as the weather gets warmer and warmer. Local festivals, fun-runs, and concerts in the park fill the calendar in late spring, summer, and early fall with so many options to get out and be active.

Each year, my list of events tends to start with the Oregon Football Spring Game. Then, an assortment of flower festivals, concerts at the Cuthbert Amphitheater, a handful of Eugene Emeralds games, and a variety of cultural festivals.

Our area has so much to offer, whether you want to be physically active or socially active. I highly recommend attending something new this year and experiencing the variety of options our area has to offer.

## Community & Well-Being

Community building is one of our key focuses at LCMS — both amongst physicians and with local partner organizations and businesses.

According to the CDC, this kind of engagement emphasizes a sense of belonging and purpose, ultimately strengthening one's mental and physical

health. It can help build resilience within groups and improve one's ability to manage stress and anxiety.<sup>1</sup>

Our events, media content, and opportunities to connect all work within the idea of connecting community and well-being.

The biennial LCMS Gala benefiting the LCMS Foundation and the Physician Wellness Program (PWP) is coming up on May 2nd. Not only is it a chance to connect with peers and other community supporters, but it's also an opportunity to learn more about the importance of wellness resources for physicians.

Through the LCMS Foundation, we provide options for confidential counseling, leadership development, conflict resolution, team building, and more. The Gala is an important event

that helps us bring awareness to these programs and allows us to share some of the things we've done to support our members in recent years.

If you haven't gotten your tickets or a table yet, there's still time. We hope you can join us for the LCMS Fundraising Gala: Derby Soiree on May 2nd (see above), an evening in support of those who take care of our community.

See you there.



Kianna

Dinner • Silent Auction • Live Auction • Races • Games

# Derby Soirée

LCMS FUNDRAISING GALA  
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Saturday, May 2nd, 2026 5:00 PM

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1. "Social Connection," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), <https://www.cdc.gov/social-connectedness/about/index.html>



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Your care is in your hands. Start slow. If it’s one block today, maybe tomorrow it’s a block and a half. Create a habit that you learn to miss when you don’t do it.”

– DR. MATHEW KINGSBAUER  
ON WHY SELF-CARE STARTS  
OUTSIDE. SEE MEMBER PROFILE  
ON PAGE 14.

## LCMS Biennial Fundraising Gala: Derby Soiree, May 2



**Tickets on Sale!** LCMS is proud to host its third biennial fundraising gala benefiting the Physician Wellness Program on Saturday, May 2nd, 2026, at 5 PM at the Eugene Country Club. Join us for an elegant evening featuring dinner, silent and live auctions, races, and games, all in support of physician wellness. The PWP provides confidential counseling and coaching to local physicians, helping combat burnout and offering care for those who care for our community. *Last day to RSVP is April 20th. Tickets will not be sold at the door. To donate, sponsor, or reserve a table, email [info@lcmedsociety.com](mailto:info@lcmedsociety.com).*



## Lifestyle Medicine & Food as Medicine Series Thurs., April 9 at the Eugene Family YMCA



Join Dr. Charlie Ross, DO, DipABLM, on Thursday, April 9th, 2026, from 5:30–7:30 PM at the Eugene Family YMCA for a Lifestyle Medicine & Food as Medicine Nutrition Series.

Discover how nutrition-focused Lifestyle Medicine can enhance patient outcomes, support metabolic health, and equip you with practical tools for lasting, sustainable habits. Register on our website to reserve your spot. Scan the QR code or visit [lcmedsociety.com](http://lcmedsociety.com) to sign up. Bring your colleagues and we’ll see you there!



### UPCOMING

**Join the Women Physicians Group on April 15 at 6:30 PM at Springfield Public House.** For questions or more information, please contact [info@lcmedsociety.com](mailto:info@lcmedsociety.com).

**Science Knight Out: Tenth Anniversary Edition** Join the University of Oregon’s Knight Campus for a special tenth anniversary Science Knight Out celebrating a decade of research and innovation. This year’s talk, “A Decade of Building Oregon’s Future,” highlights ten years of progress at the Knight Campus. The event will be held at Jaqua Concert Hall at The John G. Shedd Institute for the Arts, 868 High St., Eugene and is free and open to the public. Scan below to reserve your spot.



# Outdoor Time as a Wellness Practice: Why I Start My Day with It

**BY JOY TURNER, MA, LPC, NCC**  
 CLINICAL DIRECTOR,  
 JOYFUL LIVING BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Most mornings, before my day as a clinical director and therapist really begins, I move my body on purpose. The start time changes depending on my schedule — sometimes it's 5:00 AM, sometimes it's later, but the pattern is the same: I get up, I get moving, and I do it before the demands of the day have a chance to pile up.

Here's the mind-set shift that made it stick: I don't negotiate with myself about how hard it is to move when it's dark outside (or when my bed is warm and the house is quiet). Instead, I focus on how I'll feel after — the steadier mood, clearer thinking, and the sense that I've already done something good for myself. That "after" feeling carries into the rest of my day, and over time it stops being a difficult effort and becomes a habit.

That personal routine is also a clinical observation I see again and again: intentional outdoor activity — especially when it's consistent and values-driven — can be one of the most reliable, low-cost supports for both physical and mental wellness.

## Why the Outdoors Help

We all know movement is helpful. What's especially compelling is that nature exposure itself appears to add measurable benefits on top of activity alone.

In a well-known Stanford-led experiment, participants who took a 90-minute walk in a natural setting showed reduced

rumination (that repetitive, self-focused loop that can feed anxiety and depression) and decreased activity in a brain region associated with rumination — effects not seen in those who walked in an urban environment.

Larger-scale research syntheses also supports an association between green space exposure and better mental health outcomes, including lower depression and anxiety overall.

Reviews of the broader nature-and-health literature suggest links between nature exposure and improvements across stress physiology and well-being markers (including mental health and sleep), with evidence strongest when people have repeated, real-world access.

In other words: when we combine movement and green space, we're often working on stress regulation from multiple angles all at once — physiological downshifting, attentional restoration, and a break from the cognitive "noise" that accumulates in high-demand lives.

## Burnout Prevention: What Nature Does that Willpower Can't

Burnout isn't just "too much work." It's often the chronic mismatch between stress load and recovery. Many of the professionals we serve — especially physicians and healthcare leaders — are extraordinarily good at pushing through. What they're frequently missing isn't toughness; it's reliable recovery.

Time outdoors can function as a recovery practice because it's concrete and bounded. For example:

- A 10–20 minute walk between sessions

- A "parking lot decompression" routine (two minutes of slow breathing, noticing the sky, feeling feet on the ground)
- A weekend hike that becomes a standing calendar appointment, not a vague intention
- Gardening that invites rhythm, sensory grounding, and visible progress

More importantly, outdoor wellness doesn't have to be solitary. Social connection is protective — so walking groups, community hikes, and recreation programs add a relational buffer against stress.

## Evidence-Based "Micro-Practices"

If you're busy (and who isn't), consider these realistic options, including the 5–4–3–2–1 Outdoor Reset (2–5 minutes), a quick sensory grounding practice that helps shift the nervous system out of "go-go-go" mode. Focus on:

- 5 things you can see (colors, shapes, light, movement)
- 4 things you can feel (air on skin, feet in shoes, temperature, texture)
- 3 things you can hear (birds, traffic hum, wind, distant voices)
- 2 things you can smell (rain, trees, grass — if you can't smell much, notice "neutral" air)
- 1 thing you can taste (sip water/tea, or simply notice your mouth's current taste)

This is especially helpful between sessions or after emotionally intense work. Here are some additional micro-practices as well:

1. Mindfulness in motion. Pair your walk with a simple cue. "Every time I notice my mind racing, I come back to my footsteps."

- Nature and reflection (not rumination). If your brain tends to spin, try a single structured prompt. “What is one thing I can influence today?” Then return to your surroundings. The goal is perspective, not problem-solving.
- Gardening as nervous-system care. Gardening and horticultural activities have been associated with improvements in well-being and, in some studies, reduced depressive symptoms — especially when done in a supportive, group-based format.

**How this Connects to Physician Wellness**

Physician wellness is not a luxury — it’s a patient-safety issue, a workforce issue, and a human issue. At Joyful Living, we see the cost of chronic stress every day: sleep disruption, irritability, emotional numbing, relationship strain, and the quiet

sense of “I’m functioning, but I’m not okay.”

That’s why we’re grateful to be part of a community that invests in wellness initiatives — and why the LCMS Fundraising Gala on May 2nd benefitting the Physician Wellness Program matters.

The gala supports physician wellness efforts that help reduce isolation, strengthen protective supports, and expand access to meaningful resources. Joyful Living’s work aligns closely with those goals: helping people build sustainable coping strategies, strengthen connection, and recover a sense of agency in the middle of demanding lives.

**A Simple Invitation**

If you want a practical starting point, borrow my mind-set shift: don’t decide based on how it feels before you go outside — decide based on the “after.” The calm that comes later is

often worth the early effort.

And if today is the day you can’t manage a hike, a garden project, or a group activity, make it smaller: step outside, breathe, and let nature do what it does best — remind your nervous system that it’s allowed to come down.◆

*As Joyful Living Behavioral Health partners with the Lane County Medical Society through the Physician Wellness Program (PWP), we are honored to support physicians in finding their own sustainable ways forward through confidential, no-cost counseling and a space designed specifically for you as a physician — not just as a provider of care. Information about accessing the PWP is available through the LCMS website. We encourage you to consider it as one more tool in your wellness toolkit.*

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# Strengthening Community Health— Outdoors and Together

**BY THE EUGENE FAMILY YMCA**  
FOR LANE COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY

In Eugene, the outdoors is not an amenity — it is part of the community’s identity.

When the Eugene Family YMCA conducted a community assessment before opening its new facility, it became clear that residents wanted more opportunities to gather and move outdoors such as walking groups, hiking groups, and ways to connect in nature.

“Our community was very clear,” says CEO Brian Steffen. “Before the doors even opened, people shared that they wanted more ways to get outside together. In Eugene, the outdoors often takes priority — you see it even win big in local ‘Best Of’ competitions. People value fresh air, trails, and shared movement. We knew we had to respond.”

Today, that commitment shows up in programs designed to support physical, social, and emotional well-being — beyond the walls of the Y’s Don Stathos Campus.

## Walk It Off: A Prescription for Health

One of the YMCA’s most accessible outdoor offerings is Walk It Off, a summertime Wednesday walking event. There is no competition, no required pace, and no expectation other than participation. Community members gather weekly to walk park routes, talk with neighbors, and build healthy habits together.

For many participants, the event transforms a common physician recommendation — “try walking more” — into a sustainable routine supported by accountability and belonging.



Preparing for race day: the June 2024 Butte to Butte training group in partnership with Northwest Run Hub.

*Photo provided by Beth Casper*

## Training with Purpose: 5K Preparation

For those seeking a structured fitness goal, the Y partners with Run Hub Northwest to offer progressive training programs for local 5Ks: the legendary Butte-to-Butte and the fall’s Run to Stay Warm.

Participants receive guided training plans, technique support, and injury-prevention strategies in a group setting that emphasizes gradual improvement and listening to one’s body. Whether preparing for a first 5K or returning after time away, the focus remains on sustainable movement and encouragement.

## Murph: Challenge, Adaptation, and Collective Strength

The Y has hosted a community “Murph” workout — a fitness challenge originally created to honor Lt. Michael P. Murphy, a U.S. Navy SEAL who was killed in action in Afghanistan in 2005 and later awarded the Medal of Honor. The workout traditionally consists of:

- A one-mile run
- 100 pull-ups
- 200 push-ups
- 300 air squats
- Followed by another one-mile run

At the Y, Murph incorporated trail running on nearby Amazon paths and encouraged participants to scale movements based on ability. Some completed the full challenge; others modified repetitions or partnered with friends.

The result was not competition, but collective resilience.

## A Summer Solstice Yoga: 108 Sun Salutations

Outdoor wellness at the Y also embraces restoration. Last year’s Summer Solstice Yoga celebration invited community members to mark the longest day of the year with an outdoor practice that included 108 Sun Salutations — a traditional sequence symbolizing renewal and transition.

Participants moved at their own pace, pausing when needed and breathing in rhythm with nature.

“Research shows that spending time outdoors has a powerful impact on our well-being — from reducing stress to improving mood. When combined with the benefits of yoga, the results can be even more powerful,” says Kayla Mathers, Health & Wellness Director. “Solstice

## OUTDOORS & RECREATION

Yoga is an opportunity to move, breathe, and connect, not just with yourself, but with the environment and community around you, in a way that's both accessible and deeply restorative."

### Youth Outdoors: A Foundation

Outdoor engagement begins early at the Y. In after-school programs, there is dedicated movement time — often outdoors, even in the rain! Staff incorporate both structured and unstructured physical activity to help youth regulate their energy, build social skills, and strengthen their developing bodies.

During summer camp, the outdoor experience expands significantly.

Campers explore local parks, hike wooded trails, play field games, and participate in river and nature-based adventures, including:

- Creek exploration and environmental discovery

- Outdoor team-building games
- Nature scavenger hunts and forest hikes
- Water play days and supervised river experiences

For many youth, especially those without consistent access to safe outdoor spaces, these experiences build confidence, resilience, and appreciation for movement.

"Kids thrive when they're outside," says Rachel Jackson, the Y's Youth, Teen, and Family Director. "Whether hiking, playing in a park, or exploring near the river, they develop independence and social confidence. Outdoor time isn't an add-on — it's an essential."

### Outdoor Engagement as Preventive Health

Healthcare providers understand that sustainable health outcomes rely on consistent behavior change.

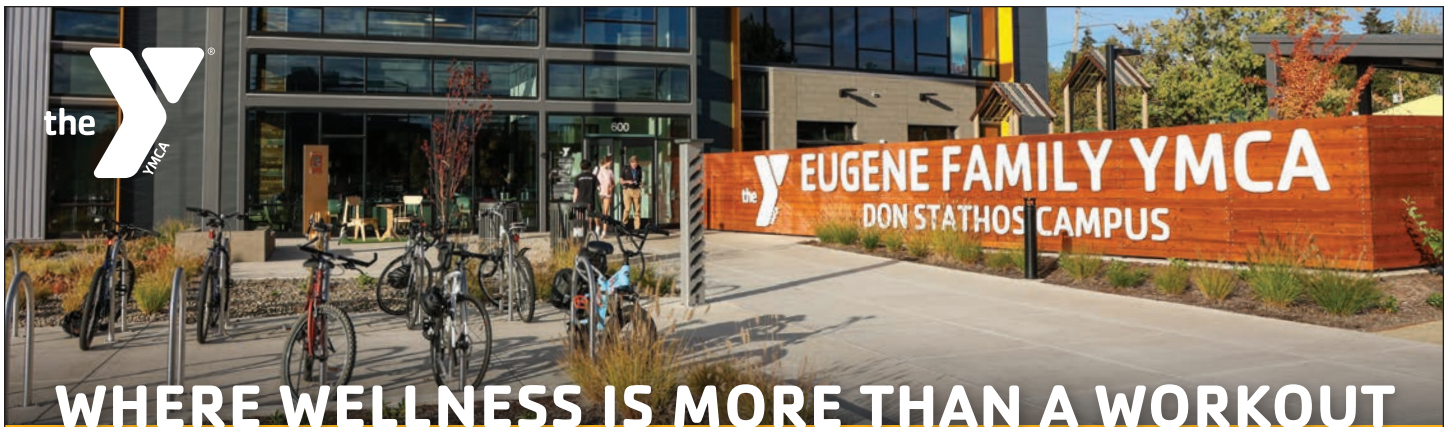
By offering walking events,

running training programs, mindful outdoor yoga, scalable fitness challenges, and immersive youth programming, the Y helps remove barriers and create positive reinforcement around movement.

Financial assistance remains available so that no one is turned away due to an inability to pay. Programs are intentionally designed to welcome individuals across generations and abilities.

"We see ourselves as a partner in community health," says Beth Casper, VP of Community Engagement. "If a provider encourages a patient to move more, reduce stress, or find social connection, the Y aims to be a place where that recommendation becomes possible."

As Eugene continues to prioritize life outdoors, the Y remains committed to strengthening Lane County — one trail, one breath, and one shared step at a time. ♦



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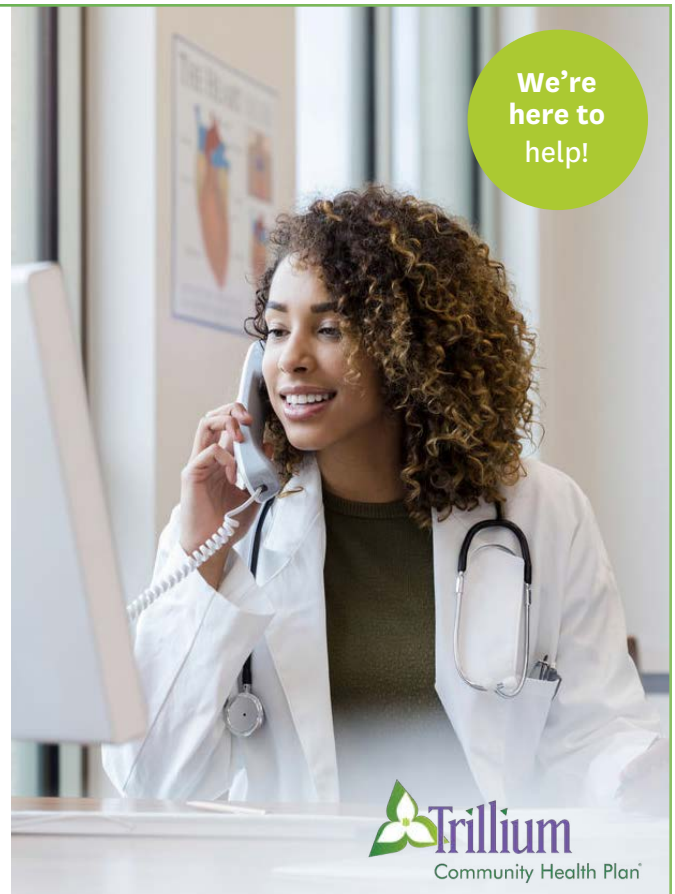
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# Prescribing the Outdoors

Dr. Matthew Kingsbauer on lifestyle medicine, preventive care,  
and why the best prescription might start outside.

BY STEVIE DAVISSON

FOR LANE COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY

**D**r. Matthew Kingsbauer is a storied man; a Marine Corps veteran and avid outdoorsman who practices Family Medicine in Eugene, Oregon following a career that's taken him across oceans. Kingsbauer dedicates much of his professional and personal time to the preventive benefits of lifestyle medicine, using his own experiences to explain to patients that healthcare starts outside of the doctor's office.

"I [worked with] patients in the hospital, nursing homes, hospice care, everywhere, even a few home visits," Kingsbauer begins. "And eventually, I said, why don't we talk about lifestyle medicine? All these people, if they slept well and didn't smoke, didn't drink and ate mostly plants... those pillars of lifestyle medicine, you put them all together, and it certainly will keep you out of our office, which is ultimately the goal," Kingsbauer laughs, then continues, "Preventive medicine is absolutely essential."



Dr. Mathew Kingsbauer enjoys a sunrise stroll through Hendricks Park with his dogs, Maui (left) and Angie (right).

*Photos provided by Angel Montes*

While a consistent sleep schedule and plant-based diet are high on his list of recommendations, the lifestyle medicine Kingsbauer finds himself pushing the most is exercise, particularly the kind that gets people outside and in the presence of trees. “I am constantly trying to encourage my patients to get outdoors; to be active and keep moving no matter what,” he says. “I think it’s one of the most important things that they can do for themselves.” He adds with a laugh, “Beyond ‘Don’t smoke!’”

### From the Marines to Medicine

Due to Kingsbauer’s dedication and passion for his work, one would never get the impression that medicine was not his first choice of careers, and yet Kingsbauer earned an undergrad degree from Penn State and joined the Marines before medicine ever crossed his mind.

As the Gulf War was winding down, Kingsbauer quickly found himself occupied with humanitarian work while deployed. Rubbing shoulders with Navy physicians at the Turkish and Iraqi border, Kingsbauer became fascinated by the science and challenges of medicine. “I thought, what a great job, that you can just help people,” Kingsbauer remembers, “I think I’d like to do that.”

After serving his four years with the Marines, and thoroughly questioning the doctors he served with about the profession, Kingsbauer came home and started his medical career journey at age 32. “I applied to medical school, and the rest is, still, being history!” Kingsbauer jokes.

He attended the University of Kansas City Medical School, followed by residency at Michigan State, and opened his first practice as a solo provider in rural Tennessee a year after graduating. From there Kingsbauer moved into group practice;

“Even 20 minutes in the trees is always good for our souls. Whether it’s an ancient stone stairway or the sidewalk outside your apartment, just start moving.”

finding work from Vermont all the way to New Zealand, experiencing diverse medical systems and making the most of the outdoor environments along the way.

### A Life Shaped by the Outdoors

Kingsbauer’s love for the outdoors has been a lifelong affair. “I grew up in a single parent home with four other brothers,” Kingsbauer says. “So for my mother’s sanity, she said, ‘You gotta get outside!’”

Growing up in the suburbs of Philadelphia, in a time when suburbs were still surrounded by farms and undeveloped land, Kingsbauer spent those early years enveloped in nature and playing make-believe with friends. This instilled an innate appreciation for the stress-relieving benefits of outside exercise, which has followed him throughout his career and informed his belief in the power of lifestyle medicine.

### Running Toward Health

After a stint of inactivity, Kingsbauer hard-launched himself back into exercising by signing up for the Detroit Marathon during his internship. “I think I was in the worst health of my life [in medical school,]” Kingsbauer says.

Despite it being one of the busiest times in a person’s medical career, Kingsbauer was determined. He balanced a 100-hour workweek with sporadic training on a treadmill, though admittedly he would have preferred running on trails.

For Kingsbauer, the benefits of exercise outweighed his desire to

collapse into bed after a shift. “There should be a huge priority on self-care with students and getting outside and taking a breath and realizing there’s big things out there too. Because if you’re not feeling well, how do you care [for patients] as well?” Kingsbauer points out.

“Being sedentary is an absolute death sentence. I’m always encouraging my patients to get outdoors, be active, and keep moving.”

From then on, he signed up for a marathon every year of his internship and residency, and he hasn’t stopped moving since.

In 2021, Kingsbauer embarked on a 2,193-mile thru-hike of the Appalachian Trail with his wife, two children, and their dog. “It’s almost like a pilgrimage,” Kingsbauer reminisces. “It took us six months on the trail, from Maine to Georgia.” It’s a truly impressive feat, and also a reflection of how Kingsbauer has made space for nature in his life.

In Tennessee it was mountain biking, then skiing in Vermont, surfing and paddleboarding in Hawaii; wherever they ended up, Kingsbauer and his family threw themselves into the outdoor activities they found. “[My

wife and I] really got into rock climbing here in Oregon because of Smith Rock,” Kingsbauer says.

He’s also worked CrossFit into his schedule, five days a week, and knows he’ll always have a daily walk with his two dogs, Maui and Angie, to look forward to.

### Lifestyle Medicine in Practice

Kingsbauer knows his level of activity isn’t achievable for everyone, especially medical students and physicians, but as a staunch believer in the preventive care of lifestyle medicine, he implores patients and colleagues alike to find some time for the outdoors.

“[Issues with] lifestyle medicine are what bring 70 to 80 percent of the people through our primary care door,” Kingsbauer says. “Your care is in your hands, and I encourage them to make it easy, to start slow.” Even if it’s a short

walk on a lunch break, Kingsbauer encourages people to begin where and how they can. “If it’s one block today, then maybe tomorrow it’ll be a block and a half. Create a habit that you learn to miss when you don’t do it.”

### Starting Small, Moving Forward

Outside of exercise, a good diet is paramount in Kingsbauer’s pitch for lifestyle medicine. He serves on the board of Live Lifestyle Medicine in Eugene, which provides information and resources to the public about preventive care.

One program he mentions is the Eugene Plant-Based Provider course, a 13-week class that gives the public a chance to learn about nutrition. “It’s free for anybody,” Kingsbauer says. “Every Tuesday, [people] get to chat with a physician... hear a talk on a topic in lifestyle medicine, we do grocery tours, and we do a walk once a

month for our people. They can come walk with the Doc!”

Reflecting on his career and the unique opportunities he’s had to experience how the outdoors and lifestyle medicine can change a person’s life, Kingsbauer reiterates that it doesn’t have to be as overly complicated as a pilgrimage through the mountains. “Even 20 minutes in the trees is always good for our souls,” he says. For Kingsbauer though, a grand outdoor adventure is always on the table, and his next one will take him to Machu Picchu in 2027, to hike the long mountain path up the Inca Trail with his wife and some dear friends.

Whether it’s an ancient stone stairway, or the sidewalk outside your apartment complex, Kingsbauer just asks that you start moving. He says, “Being sedentary is an absolute death sentence.” ♦

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# Walk with A Doc Comes to Eugene

BY TIM WELCH, DDS, MD  
NORTHWEST ORAL & IMPLANT SURGERY

As a board-certified oral and maxillofacial surgeon, I consult with patients daily in preparation for outpatient surgery and sedation. While the majority of my focus is on the oral region, I must assess the whole body to see if patients are good candidates for surgery.

This led me (a self-admitted continuing education addict) to attend the American College of Lifestyle Medicine annual meeting in Dallas last fall. The College was founded in 2003 by a group of physicians who concentrated their efforts on six pillars of patient health: healthy eating, physical activity, sleep, stress management, social connection, and avoiding risky substances.



The six pillars of lifestyle medicine: healthy eating, physical activity, sleep, stress management, social connection, and avoiding risky substances.

As luck would have it, I met Dr. David Sabgir, who started *Walk with a Doc* (WWAD) in 2005, and he encouraged me to start a program in Eugene. WWAD satisfies two of the pillars: exercise and social connection.

Dr. David Sabgir, a cardiologist in Columbus, OH, was frustrated with his inability to affect behavior change in the clinical setting, so he invited his patients to go for a walk

with him in a local park on a spring Saturday morning. To his surprise, many patients and community members showed up, energized and ready to move.

He has now walked with patients and community members nearly every weekend since. WWAD is an international nonprofit organization whose mission is to inspire communities through movement and conversation with walking groups led by healthcare providers.

WWAD was started to “encourage physical activity and reduce the effects of a sedentary lifestyle.” While that is still 100% true, we have found that the simple act of taking a walk together has the power to transform lives and communities.

There is no question that increasing exercise, even moderately, reduces the risk of many diseases, including coronary heart disease, breast and colon cancer, and type 2 diabetes. Since 2005, WWAD has received exceedingly positive feedback from its participants.

The organization has substantially grown from its initial base in Columbus, Ohio, to become an established practice in 48 states across the US and 40 countries worldwide, hosting over 8,000 walks annually. Community feedback has highlighted that 90% of participants reported feeling more educated since starting WWAD, 71% have increased their weekly level of physical activity, and 93% of participants feel more inspired to prioritize healthier lifestyle habits.

It doesn't matter if you can only walk 100 feet or the whole hour; all are welcome and encouraged to join a group effort to improve health. People come for different reasons, but the fresh air and connection with others are hard to beat.

Dr. Lexi Mitchell Sanchez, DO,

attended the first walk last month and sees a real advantage for patients.

“The simple act of taking a walk together has the power to transform lives and communities... Wellness can be as simple as moving our bodies and connecting with others.”

“I'm thrilled to see Dr. Welch launching a chapter in Eugene. It's so important that we stay connected to our community and encourage patients to simply step outside and WALK. Spending time outdoors supports both mental and physical health, and I hope patients discover that wellness can be as simple as moving their bodies and connecting with others.”

The group meets at 9 AM on the first Saturday of each month at the Greenway Bridge at Valley River Mall, just down from the movie theaters and behind the DMV. I'm hopeful that other physicians will join in the fun. Wouldn't it be great if every Saturday morning of the month a physician were hosting a walk?

Eugene now joins a growing list of communities worldwide that have started local Walk with a Doc programs.◆

Graphic provided by Dr. Tim Welch



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# Exploring the Great Outdoors in Eugene, Cascades & Coast

BY EMILY FORSHA

VICE PRESIDENT OF INTEGRATED MARKETING, TRAVEL LANE COUNTY

You're in one of the most naturally rich regions in the Pacific Northwest: the Eugene, Cascades & Coast region stretches from the South Willamette Valley to the Cascade Mountains and west to the Oregon Coast — much of it within an hour of Eugene. More than 200 lakes, ten major waterfalls, eight rivers, and miles of open coastline are yours to explore. The uncrowded trails and accessible waterways here are a standing invitation to all who live here and visit.

## Getting on the Water

This region is home to the McKenzie, Willamette, and Siuslaw Rivers, along with the Pacific Ocean to the west and numerous lakes, ranging from the coast to the mountains. Getting on, in, or near the water is a great way to unwind and reconnect.

Florence is about an hour from Eugene, and the Oregon Coast here is genuinely uncrowded. The South Jetty offers miles of dunes and open beach, while Cleawox Lake at Jessie M. Honeyman State Park is a favorite swimming spot that also offers seasonal watercraft rentals.

Heceta Beach at Driftwood Shores Resort provides accessible beach access with Mobi Mats and David's Chair, a free all-terrain track chair you can reserve at [davidschair.org](http://davidschair.org).

Just west of Eugene, Fern Ridge Reservoir offers easy lake access at Perkins Peninsula Park. Waldo Lake near Oakridge — where motorized boats are prohibited — is one of the quietest and clearest lakes in Oregon, and one of the region's special places.



The footbridge at Greenwaters Park in Oakridge spans the Middle Fork Willamette River, a popular stop for hikers exploring the Willamette National Forest.

## Forest and Trail Time

The Middle Fork Path runs along the Willamette River from Dorris Ranch to Clearwater Park — flat, accessible, and well-suited to a lunch break walk. Sweet Creek Falls near Mapleton links a dozen small waterfalls along connected hiking paths, a surprisingly manageable 45-minute drive from Eugene.

The McKenzie River Trail, an hour out, is a riverfront route through old-growth forest with waterfall access. Belknap Hot Springs on the McKenzie combines a forest walk with a natural hot springs soak — a particularly restorative combination after a demanding stretch of clinical work.

## Cycling the Countryside

Territorial Highway cuts through Willamette Valley wine country on low-traffic backroads ideal for a weekend ride. The Aufderheide Scenic Bikeway links Oakridge and the McKenzie River valley through forest scenery. The Covered Bridges Scenic Bikeway around Dorena Reservoir is family-friendly with dedicated bike paths. The

Connect Lane network offers signed cycling routes connecting communities throughout the region.

## Trip Ideas

No matter how much time you have, you can find a space in the outdoors to relax and reconnect. Here are a few ideas to get you started.

### An Afternoon (No Planning Required)

Travel the McKenzie River to Koosah and Sahalie Falls, or take Highway 58 to Salt Creek Falls. Both offer scenic views of the region's gorgeous waterfalls with options for shorter or longer treks depending on how much time you have for exploring.

### In One Day

Florence is about an hour from Eugene and delivers a complete change of scene without an overnight bag. Start the morning on the dunes at South Jetty or walk the accessible beach at Heceta Beach — David's Chair, a free all-terrain track chair, is available to reserve at [davidschair.org](http://davidschair.org). Have lunch in

Florence's Old Town, then spend the afternoon on the Siuslaw River boardwalk. You'll be home by dinner, and you'll feel the difference.

**In Two to Three Days**

With a long weekend, you can move through the full range of what this region offers, starting in the Cascade Mountains, ending with a sunset on the Oregon Coast, and exploring Eugene and Springfield in between. You'll have the chance to see old-growth forest, river canyons, hot springs, and ocean shoreline all close to home. ♦

*Travel Lane County promotes the Eugene, Cascades & Coast region as a premier destination for visitors, meetings, and sports events. Pick up a free visitor guide, sign up for emails filled with trip ideas, and find travel information at [eugeneascadescoast.org](http://eugeneascadescoast.org).*

*Photo by Melanie Griffin / Eugene, Cascades & Coast*

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# ShelterCare Behavioral Health Has Openings!

**BY ALYSSA GILBERT**  
DEVELOPMENT & COMMUNICATIONS  
COORDINATOR, SHELTERCARE



Photo of ShelterCare’s main office building.

Most people know ShelterCare for our housing programs, but we are excited to announce that our Behavioral Health program is actively providing mental health services and accepting new clients!

In addition to therapy, we offer case management, skill building, and peer support services to meet our clients’ treatment needs.

While our team welcomes all mental health conditions, we have a

specialty in supporting individuals who have experienced trauma or stress related to being unhoused. We offer in-person and telehealth services, and are open to all adults on OHP living in Lane County, from Florence to Oakridge, to Blue River.

**Facilitating Connection:**

We also provide a variety of therapeutic groups open to all clients.

Our current offerings include the following: Gamers Group, in which participants learn about the psychology of gaming while practicing a ‘learn-as-we-go’ philosophy. Participants develop skills and knowledge throughout the gaming experience as they discover together why ‘play’ is an essential element for well-being and growth.

The Explorers Group is focused on building interpersonal skills through experience and is informed by DBT concepts. There is exploration

around why we do what we do and what to do if we want to change. This is an experiential group that fosters growth through discussion/curriculum, arts and crafts, and visits to community resources. We have more groups coming soon.

**Our Specialties:**

We offer Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing (EMDR), and Internal Family Systems (IFS). We are committed to providing trauma-informed care through ongoing training and reflection, and providing LGBTQ+ and gender-affirming services.◆

*To schedule an intake appointment, call 541-505-5188, visit [sheltercare.org/bhservices](http://sheltercare.org/bhservices), or email our program coordinator at [intake@sheltercare.org](mailto:intake@sheltercare.org)*

*Image provided by Alyssa Gilbert*

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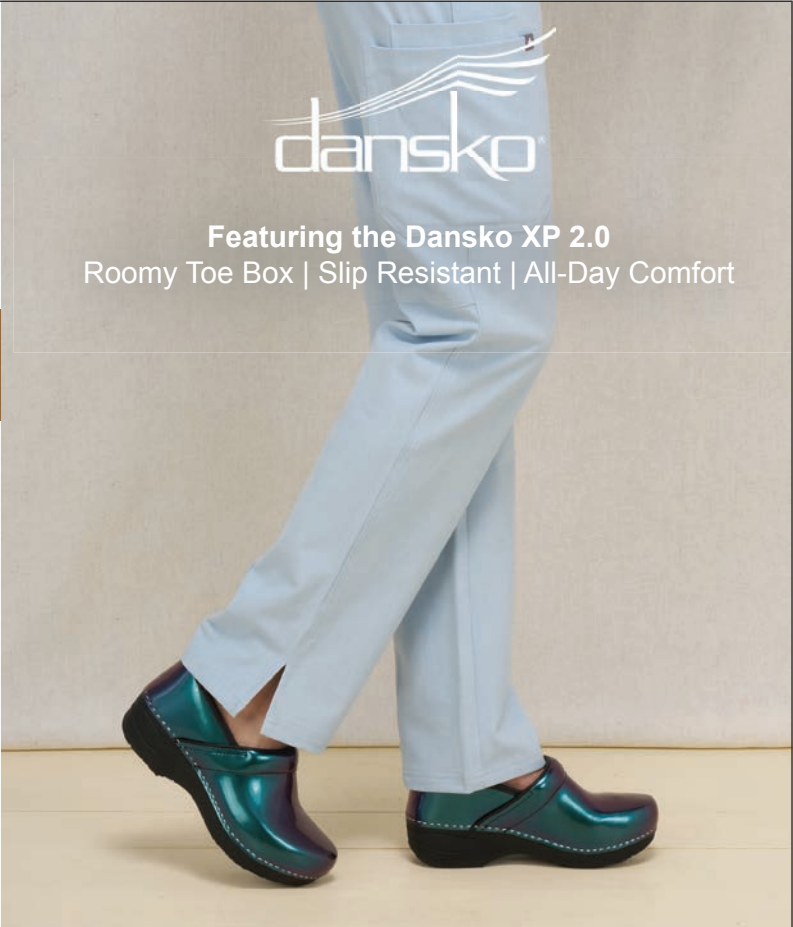


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### Lauren Dallas, DO

Family Medicine  
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360 Garden Way Ste 105  
Eugene, 97401  
P: 541-338-1241  
F: 541-431-9612

### Zachary Horwitz, MD

Family Medicine  
Springfield Family Physicians  
1800 Centennial Blvd  
Springfield, 97477  
P: 541-747-4300

### Lee McKoin, MD

Pediatrics  
PeaceHealth Pediatrics  
3377 Riverbend Dr Springfield,  
OR 97477  
P: 541-222-8500  
F: 541-222-6435

### Julian Klosowiak, MD

Plastic Surgery  
Slocum Center for  
Orthopedics  
55 Coburg Rd  
Eugene, 97401  
P: 541-485-8111  
F: 541-342-6379

### Megan Kunkel, MD

Pediatrics/Sports Medicine  
PeaceHealth Medical Group  
1200 Hilyard St Ste 400  
Eugene, OR 97401  
P: 458-205-6061

### Zoe McCracken-Schroeder, MD

Internal Medicine  
Kaiser Permanente  
360 Garden Way Ste 105  
Eugene, 97401  
P: 541-338-1241

## LCMS Events

Visit the **LCMS website to sign up for events** or email us at [info@lcmedsociety.com](mailto:info@lcmedsociety.com) for any inquiries.

### Tickets are now on sale for the LCMS Derby Soirée on

May 2nd, 2026 at the Eugene Country Club. Join us for an elegant and fun evening benefiting the Physician Wellness Program. Enjoy dinner, auctions, races, and games in support of physician wellness. *Last day to RSVP is 4/20. Tickets will not be sold at the door.*



## Community

### Join the Women Physicians Group on April 15th at

6:30 PM at Springfield Public House. For questions, please email [info@lcmedsociety.com](mailto:info@lcmedsociety.com).

### Help send donated medical supplies from area hospitals to Benin, West Africa! Dr.

Jocelyn Bonner is a volunteer psychiatry consultant for Assoc. Saint Camille, a full-service mental health NGO serving Benin, Togo, and Ivory Coast, and is seeking medical supplies to support their work. For more information, visit [www.treatmentnotchains.org](http://www.treatmentnotchains.org) or contact [treatmentnotchains.org@gmail.com](mailto:treatmentnotchains.org@gmail.com).

## NOTES

### The Lane County Healthcare Sector Partnership encourages healthcare providers and healthcare-adjacent organizations to join the

efforts toward improving access and well-being throughout our community. To join the Advocacy, Workforce, or Collaboration action committees, contact [info@lcmedsociety.com](mailto:info@lcmedsociety.com).

### Join the Healthcare for All Lane County Chapter to advocate for affordable, simplified healthcare for all Oregonians.

Meetings are the first Tuesday of each month at 7 pm at First United Methodist Church, 1376 Olive St., Eugene, and on Zoom.

Members coordinating group events have the benefit of requesting support through the LCMS Support Form, which can range from magazine announcements

to nominal financial assistance. Email us for more info.

**Let LCMS know if you're accepting patients**, and we'll add you to our Primary Care Open Practices list! You can view the list on our webpage.

**Lane County Caduceus meets every Wednesday evening from 7:30-8:30 p.m. for licensed healthcare professionals seeking peer support during addiction recovery.** Contact [info@lcmedsociety.com](mailto:info@lcmedsociety.com) for more information.

**Stay informed on statewide advocacy efforts and connect with physicians across Oregon** through the Oregon Medical Association. Learn more at [theOMA.org](http://theOMA.org).

**Medical Matters wants your feedback!** Help us maintain the magazine's quality by suggesting new themes, topics, or member profiles for 2026. Email [info@lcmedsociety.com](mailto:info@lcmedsociety.com).

**Stay in the loop!** Subscribe to get the latest LCMS event updates and community news.





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This offer is valid through April 30, 2026.

# MEDICAL MATTERS

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