

2006 diet news brought us fish, veggies, wine, chocolate

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CHICAGO—Order from a menu of vegetables, fish, wine and chocolate, but hold the trans fats and sugary sodas. That might best sum up the diet headlines of 2006.

The year's biggest nutrition news sometimes echoed what moms and food scientists

have been harping on for years. Other times, it seemed too good to be true.

Often, the news centered on food choices many want removed from the table, but in a year that included white-bread icon Wonder Bread baking two whole-wheat versions, there were still plenty

of healthy options available.

The year started out sweet—more data suggesting dark chocolate might be good for the heart—and ended with trans fats grabbing big headlines—New York City became the first in the nation to ban these unhealthy fats in restaurant food.

Although moms say save dessert for last, chocolate news deserves the first look. It made lots of mouths water, but nutrition experts say it needs to be taken with a grain of salt.

A study published in February found lower blood pressure and lower risk of

death in older Dutch men who ate the equivalent of one-third of a chocolate bar daily. And research later in the year found improved blood flow in adults who drank flavanol-enriched cocoa. Flavonols are compounds also found in red wine that researchers believe help keep blood vessels

healthy.

The two studies build on previous suggestions that chocolate, especially the dark variety, might be good for the heart. But the research is not conclusive and scientists still don't know if there really is a connection.

Poet Adele V. Holden, 87, dies

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BALTIMORE—Adele V. Holden, a retired teacher who wrote of growing up in segregated Pocomoke City, died Dec. 22 at the Gilchrist Center for Hospice Care, she was 87.

In her book, "Down on the Shore: The Family and Place that Forged a Poet's Voice,"

published in 2000, she wrote of Pocomoke City in the 1920s and '30s, where her father worked as an auto mechanic and vowed that his children would get a proper high school education.

He persuaded Worcester County officials to add a 10th-grade teacher for black students and drove his daughter

20 miles to Snow Hill High School, where she graduated in 1936.

"I never doubted my worth as a person. My father was a good person, but he was very stern about certain things," Holden said in a 1999 Sun interview. "He taught us to value ourselves. We had enough guidance to know we

were as good as anybody else out there, black or white."

Holden moved to Baltimore in the 1930s, graduated from what is now Morgan State University and joined the city school system. She later earned a master's degree in writing from Johns Hopkins University.

Survivors include a brother

New year brings smoking bans at N.C. hospitals

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MOREHEAD CITY—Smoking at a hospital in the nation's top tobacco-producing state will become more difficult starting New Year's Day.

On Monday, Carteret General Hospital goes completely tobacco free. It joins 59 of the state's 134 hospitals that have adopted policies against smoking and tobacco use anywhere on campus and have started or are in the process of starting those policies. Another 26 hospitals have publicly announced their intention to pass such policies.

"We think it makes a strong statement as a role model in the community about how serious the effects of tobacco are on the community," said

Beth Besweick, spokeswoman for Carteret General Hospital.

In tobacco-rich eastern North Carolina, Pitt County Memorial Hospital in Greenville has already banned all smoking on its property. Craven Regional Medical Center has designated smoking areas outside the building.

The smoking restrictions have been promoted by the Healthy Hospital Initiative, funded by The Duke Endowment in partnership with the NC Hospital Foundation.

"Tobacco-free policies encourage people to quit smoking and protect patients, visitors and employees from second-hand smoke," said

Jennifer Hastings, prevention and communications manager for NC Prevention Partners.

In June, the U.S. Surgeon General issued a strong warning on the dangers of secondhand smoke. The report said even a small amount can cause health problems such as heart disease and lung cancer, and called for a smoking ban in public places.

Dozens of hospitals in the western part of the state either bar all tobacco or plan to do so.

Cleveland Regional Medical Center, Kings Mountain Hospital and Gaston Memorial Hospital are among those who will ring in the New Year by becoming 100-percent tobacco-free. By

July 4, Duke University Health System, UNC Health Care and WakeMed health care systems will restrict smoking.

Raab Clinic file clerk Dottie Gowens was among the 40 or so employees who participated in a hypnosis class offered by Carteret General Hospital in May to quit smoking.

The 74-year-old said she smoked from the time she was a teen but has quit.

"There have been three occasions since then that I'd crave one, light it and put it out," Gowens said.

She sees the hospital's new policy as an educational opportunity for the community.

"I just feel that if I quit, anyone could," she said.

A LITTLE TOO PUBLIC?

Privacy a concern as social online sites become fair game

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CHICAGO—Walls of an auditorium were covered with thousands of sheets of paper—printouts from MySpace, Facebook, YouTube and other online sites that were filled with backstabbing gossip, unflattering images, and details about partying and dating exploits.

Each posting was easily accessed online, no password needed. But seeing them on paper—and in some cases, being asked to read them aloud—grabbed the attention of members of the North American Federation of Temple Youth, who gathered earlier this year at a camp outside New York City. That each of the pages mentioned their organization in some way only made it that much more embarrassing.

"They saw themselves and often their friends, completely open, all the way around the room," said Dean Carson, president of the group for Jewish youth and a freshman at George Washington University. "It was very shocking for a lot of people."

It's just one of a growing number of instances in which people who blog and use social-networking and video sites are realizing just how public those spaces can be.

That realization, in turn, is causing many of them to reconsider what they post—or at the very least, to do more to protect their privacy.

Chuck Sanchez, a 25-year-old Chicagoan, recently deleted references to his public relations firm on his MySpace page after everyone from a job applicant to his fiancée's mother found the page.

"It's simply not worth it," he

says. "I want my personal site to be just that, personal."

Rachel Hutson removed some photos from her college sorority days after she took a job as a civilian working for the military. She's also made her Facebook and MySpace profiles private, so that only friends she approves can see it.

"I just don't want certain people to find me," says Hutson, who's 23 and lives in Newport News, Virginia.

When it comes to posting personal information online, predators and other criminals are, of course, always a concern.

But it goes well beyond that as more adults—teachers, parents, university admissions counselors and prospective employers—become savvy about searching online spaces. Sometimes, personal information lives on in the archives of Google and other search engines, no matter how much people try to get rid of it.

"Everyone at this point—even if it hasn't happened to them—has heard about someone who's gotten in trouble at school, with a parent, a coach, because of something that's been posted online," says Susannah Stern, an assistant professor of communication studies at the University of San Diego who studies young people's online habits.

"They're now more conscious that information they post online can be used in ways they didn't intend it to be," she says. "And I think this awareness is healthy—for adults or kids."

Today, the rule of thumb is: If it's in the public domain, it's

fair game.

Jeff Krakauer, human resources director for the legal services company Juriscape in Pasadena, California, says he recently began looking at social-networking profiles—especially for candidates for

whom he's "on the fence."

So far, what he's seen hasn't swayed him one way or another.

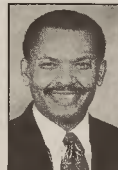
"But if something was really wild and way out there, it would cause me some concern," he says.

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Foundations for Your Dreams

Ever since we were children, one thing we did not lack were dreams. We could spend all day imagining what we wanted to be once we grew up. To the dismay of some of our school teachers, we spent time daydreaming when they thought we should have been paying more attention to what was going on in class.

As we grew older, our dreams changed. Some things we dreamed of we begin to think were unrealistic. Often times we were helped to come to that conclusion from others in our lives. We would hear them say that what we said we wanted out of life was not realistic. For some of us, we believed them and scaled down what we really wanted to achieve in life.

Yet, there are some who refused to give up on their dreams. They have not forgotten what they really want out of life. However, the dreams may not have been forgotten but for many that is all that has remained—dreams.

It seems that something always interferes with the pursuit of our heart's desire. For some of us, it seems that there just has not been the time to pursue what we really want. Something always comes up that seems more important than our dreams. We may feel that we do not have the resources to make our dreams come true. Consequently, dreams become no more than long-term wishful thinking. They are what some call castles in the sky.

But if you want your dreams to become reality, there is something that you can do. You can create foundations for your dreams. Rather than doubting the practicality of your dreams, start believing that it is possible to achieve them. Once you believe that, look for ways to make them come true. Become aware of people around you who would be supportive of your aspirations. Notice how Life brings to you just the people you need to help you succeed. Watch as doors of opportunity begin to open when you begin to act as though your dreams are possible.

The more you believe in the strength of your dreams, the more they begin to take shape right before your eyes.

Build a strong foundation for your dreams. Believe that they are possible. Take steps to strengthen your skills and develop your wisdom. The more you act on your dreams, the stronger your conviction becomes and the stronger your foundation for making your dreams come true.

It is all right to have castles in the sky. But if you really want to live, build strong foundations upon which to make those dreams reality on earth.

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