

Katie Johnson: Good morning and welcome to Apple A Day, Lake Region Health Care's health and wellness segment where we feature news and information that you can use to live a healthier life. I am Katie Johnson, your host. My guest today is Tom Rufer. Tom is the executive assistant at Lake Region Health Care and the host of its new vlog video series, the Pursuit of Healthiness. Good morning, Tom.

Tom Rufer: Good morning, Katie. Thanks for having me.

Katie Johnson: Thanks for joining us. I am so anxious to tell our listeners about vlogging. Let's start by telling them about you and how your interest in vlogging got started.

Tom Rufer: Yeah, certainly. I was approached by actually you and Larry Schulz, our CEO with the idea. Right away it sounded like something that would be right up my alley.

A vlog is a video blog. A blog, being short for a web blog, it's a video web blog. Basically what it is, it's a regular series that I do. I've got a list of topics that some very creative people have put together. I also ask for topic suggestions from the audience as well.

Katie Johnson: It's hard to explain isn't it?

Tom Rufer: Yeah, it doesn't have a definite format. It's something that I can take and run with, which I like the concept of that. There's just so much to learn about. Sometimes I'll do an episode and that will give me an idea for another episode that takes that one off into a tangent.

Katie Johnson: It's just you and your camera, your iPhone, looking at the world of Lake Region Health Care and healthy living through that lens in an informal way is how I would describe it. Why do you think that you're the guy we thought should have the job?

Tom Rufer: It's great to use the word informal. I'm an informal guy. I like to have fun. I think what's important about doing this is I'm not afraid to look silly when I'm doing something. The way that I really look at the whole thing is that if I can do it, I figure that just about anybody can do it. I really don't mind putting myself out there. I'm willing to be the guinea pig.

For instance, one of the upcoming episodes that I'm planning on doing is Crossfit. I'm not a terribly athletic person. What I really want to do is I want to go to Crossfit, which I really believe is a great way to help someone get into shape.

I want to show that you don't have to be a super athlete to be able to do it. You can start at your own level. I believe that all of the people around me in the class, and the trainers, and the participants are going to be supportive of that.

Speaking from the perspective of someone who does one group fitness class, I do a spin class, which is a cycling class, indoor cycling. A lot of people say, "I don't think I

can handle that. I couldn't go and bike as hard as I could for an hour." Guess what? When I started, I couldn't do it either.

It's really important to know that you can go and you can get your own pace and work at your own pace and build up to it. Just like anything in life, you have to build up to it. I also really think that as a participant in that particular class is when someone new starts up, make sure they know that. Make sure they know that you're not going to be watching them and judging their workout and gauging their progress for them. You're focused on your own workout, but yet you're being encouraging to the new people in the group.

Katie Johnson: That's such an important element of health in general, that it's about our own individual health. It's not about comparing yourselves to others. You said you're not afraid to look silly. I think it's more so that you're not afraid to just be you.

You're the ordinary guy's ordinary guy. That's what's important for a genuine video series to be good is that we can relate to that person on the other side of the camera. We really appreciate that you're taking on this new project. I'm curious if you could share with us what inspired the name of the vlog?

Tom Rufer: We didn't have a name, of course, and needed one. It was really, honestly the first thing that popped into my head. You know, of course, there's the movie the Pursuit of Happiness and the phrase is around along before that movie. It's really perfect, because wellness isn't a goal, it's a pursuit.

You have to always look at it as an ongoing process. Therefore, the pursuit of healthiness is really what I'm doing with the vlog. It's I'm trying to show as many different ways as I can to build that whole wellness picture for someone.

Katie Johnson: Mm-hmm (affirmative). That is perfect, a perfect word for that. What do you hope to accomplish with this video series, the Pursuit of Healthiness?

Tom Rufer: I just really want to show people that, like I said, there are a lot of different aspects of wellness and healthiness and that you can do it. It takes getting started, but once you get started, they say the journey of 1,000 miles begins with a single footstep. If I can do it, you can do it. Just get started. Get out there and just do something and then incorporate a few different aspects of that wellness.

We'll be doing episodes on diet, and exercise, and other aspects of wellness that I probably haven't even thought of yet. That's one of the reasons why I hope to get suggestions from the audience as far as what are you curious about? What are you maybe involved in that you think other people might benefit from?

Another goal that I have for the series is to show people that Lake Region Health Care isn't just about fixing and healing people once they're sick. It really is a benefit for us when people take the initiative to take care of themselves before they get sick and to keep themselves well. What's good for the community is good for us as

well, because our employees are a large part of the community.

Katie Johnson: Give me an idea of some of the topics that you've done already, or that you might have in the pipeline.

Tom Rufer: Yeah, absolutely. Our initial episode was going up to the historical society. You and I have done some cycling, bikes out there to bring awareness of our Shoot Me to The Moon competition, or community wellness challenge that we're having, trying to build up 238,900 miles as a group towards that goal.

I had the pleasure of going over to the cancer center, the cancer care and research center here and visiting with HeLa, the therapy dog and getting to know HeLa and learning about the role that a therapy dog plays in not just a cancer treatment patient's life, but in the role of the staff that helps support that individual as well.

Like I said, I'm planning on doing a CrossFit episode once the weather gets ... I've already done out on my bike a lot this year. I plan on getting the camera out. For instance, I'll be doing the 30 days of biking in April, which I will throw in a plug for now. Sign up for that, if you haven't done so already. I'll be doing that actually with my kids.

Yep, we're going to do that. I'll make an episode out of that. Yeah, that's just a few. There's a lot more to come, because I really think that's something that the community is going to benefit from.

Katie Johnson: Absolutely. What kind of feedback are you getting from viewers so far?

Tom Rufer: People like it.

Katie Johnson: You sound surprised.

Tom Rufer: I watch the episodes and it's almost painful for me. I just think I look like such a goon. People come up and say, "Great job. It was really well done." They seem pretty sincere. I'm not too terribly worried about it.

For me, it's not really about getting the feedback. It's just if I feel like I've done my best to communicate that message of whatever I wanted to get across then that's ... I think people would let me know if they thought it was pretty corny, too. At least I would trust that people would.

Katie Johnson: Tell me, how can viewers find past episodes, latest episode of the Pursuit of Healthiness video series?

Tom Rufer: Yeah, absolutely. You can visit lrhc.org. I would believe I think you can do a You Tube search too. If you just search You Tube for Lake Region Health Care, I think they would come up under that.

Katie Johnson: Tom, anything else you want to share about the Pursuit of Healthiness, your new hobby of vlogging, or anything else with our listeners today?

Tom Rufer: I actually don't really like the term vlog. It just doesn't roll off the tongue very well.

Katie Johnson: It doesn't does it?

Tom Rufer: Yeah, mom and dad, I'm doing a vlog. It just sounds harsh. Granted I'm far from perfect when it comes to being Mr. Health, but a lot of the things ... It just takes getting started. If I can encourage a handful of people just to get started and work towards that wellness goal, then I think I'm doing what I set out to do.

Katie Johnson: That's absolutely what it's all about. Meeting people wherever they are, that's our goal and helping them achieve their optimal wellness whatever place they may be at. Thank you for your willingness to help others do that.

Tom Rufer: Yeah, you're very welcome.

Katie Johnson: Tom Rufer, executive assistant at Lake Region Health Care and host of the video series, the Pursuit of Healthiness, our guest this morning. Check it out on Lake Region Health Care's You Tube channel, or at lrhc.org. Tom, thanks for joining us this morning.

Tom Rufer: Thank you. Have a great day.

Katie Johnson: Tom Rufer and Katie Johnson reminding you there is so much to do here. Stay healthy for it. Have a great day.