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# The history of Stress Less Week

APRIL 29, 2016 BY HANNAH BROADBENT

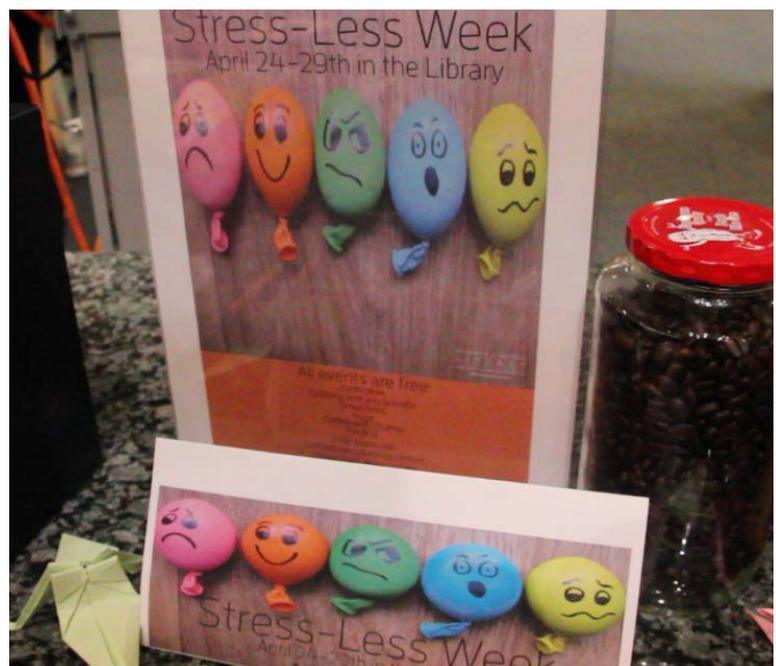
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BY EMILY NESS | the Statesman

There comes a time in every student's life when the final exams that they dread begin to loom on the horizon.

In order to prepare for these exams, every year UMD students participate in Stress Less Week.

The goal of the week is to create peace, relaxation and bliss before students take their final exams,



resulting in a beautiful picture painted across the sky.

“There are a variety of events taking place throughout the week. Some of these events include yoga, coloring and playing with animals. This year we began the week on Sunday instead of Monday... That is new. So far, so good,” reference librarian Kim Pittman said.

Stress Less Week was originally started by Dori Decker of UMD Health Services. In the fall of 2012, Pittman and Gabriel Gardner extended the idea of Stress Less Week. This will be the program’s fourth year.

Events take place the weeks before Spring and Fall finals and are free for all UMD students.

“My personal favorite event was the Zoomobile. (On this day) We brought a tortoise, a hedgehog a bunny, a ferret and a chinchilla to school for students to play with,” Pittman said.

Last year, 2,247 students attended the Spring 2015 Stress Less Week and 3,481 students attended the Fall 2015 Stress Less Week.

“It is important because the library is busiest the last two weeks of school,” Matthew Rosendahl, director of the Kathryn A. Martin Library, said. “Consistently, we have had great attendance.”

The Kathryn A. Martin Library issued a survey in which students were asked to rate their stress level after participating in activities, with one being no impact and five being high impact. The average for Spring 2015 was 3.75 and the average for Fall 2015 was 3.9.

“Since it began, Stress Less Week has grown immensely,” Rosendahl said.

All events are sponsored by the Katherine A. Martin Library, Animal Allies, KUMD Radio, UMD Employee Health and Wellness and UMD Yoga Club.

“In addition to the events taking place this week, we have some things going on all the time, such as a slideshow of baby animal pictures, coloring sheets and origami,” Pittman said.

Most events take place on the first and second floor of the library. The third and fourth floor are reserved for studying.

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