

PASSPORT TO

Winter Wonder



Start a healthy habit and win prizes!

Blue Zones Albert Lea: Passport to Winter Wonder

Introduction

The Blue Zones Leadership Team encourages you to stay active even during the typically coldest month of February. Embrace the cold with scarves, hats and mittens. If there's snow, head out with skates, skis and snowshoes. Snuggle in with hot soup, game nights and soothing meditations. And yes, think ahead to spring by planning a garden or long-distance bike ride.

Start
a healthy
habit and win
prizes!

How to participate:

- Complete and check off at least 1 activity per week from Feb. 1 - 29
- At the end of each week, enter the prize drawing via email or Facebook post
- You may win more than once so keep participating
- All submissions will be entered into a drawing for the grand prize!

Email: bluezones@ci.albertlea.mn.us

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/BlueZonesProjectAlbertLea

Website: cityofalbertlea.org/bluezones



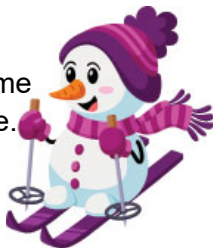
Contest rules

This contest is open to all residents of Freeborn County, and will run from Feb. 1 - 29, 2024. You may enter by completing an activity and then contacting Blue Zones Albert Lea via email (bluezones@ci.albertlea.mn.us) or Facebook (www.facebook.com/BlueZonesProjectAlbertLea) with the activity completed and your name. You may enter for each activity completed on a weekly basis. Entries are due at 8 p.m. on Sunday of each week.

Members of the Blue Zones Leadership Team will randomly draw a name each Monday for winning a prize. Winners will be notified via email or Facebook Messenger with a request for a mailing address, and prizes will be mailed unless making other arrangements with Blue Zones Albert Lea.

On March 1, members of the Blue Zones Leadership Team will randomly draw a name from all entries received for the grand prize.

Visit <https://cityofalbertlea.org/bluezones> for details and contact information.



Week 1: Feb. 1-3

- **Thursday:** Lace up your skates at an outdoor rink: Academy, Hawthorne, Hayek or Lakeview park.
- **Friday:** Warm up with laps around the indoor walking track at the Albert Lea Family Y. No charge if showing the punchcard below! See when the Y is open by visiting its website: <https://ymcaal.org>.
- **Saturday:** Climb a wall at the Community Ed Rock Gym from 6 - 9 p.m. (bit.ly/ALrock-gym). There is no fee for students in Albert Lea Area Schools, but registration is required. See how to register on Community Ed's website: AlbertLeaCommunityEd.org.

Albert Lea Family Y

2021 W. Main St., Albert Lea, MN
ymcaal.org

Punch pass for indoor track

Good for 1 hour of walking on the track per week



1

2

3

4

5

Week 2: Feb. 4-10

- **Sunday:** Join the Family Dominoes Event at the Albert Lea Public Library! The fun starts at 2 p.m. in the Children's Library, 211 E. Clark St. No fee or registration is required.
- **Monday:** Walk indoors at the Albert Lea Family Y (see free pass on Week 1), the Northbridge Mall, 2610 Bridge Ave. or Skyline Plaza, 1739 W. Main St.
- **Tuesday:** Do not pass go on your way to Board Game Night at the Albert Lea Public Library. The event, which is free of charge, runs 6 - 8 p.m.
- **Wednesday:** Outdoor ice rinks at Academy, Hawthorne Hayek and Lakeview parks offer a great way to get some fresh air and exercise. Skates are available to use for free at Lakeview and Hayek parks, though sizes are limited.



Thursday: Bonus day with 2 free events!

- **Noon:** Join the Albert Lea Public Library's "Bring Your Own Lunch and Learn." Master Gardener Don Smith will share information about winter seed sowing. Attendees will discover the basics of this seed starting method along with tips and tricks that can be used in their garden. Get started on your summer produce this winter! Event is held in the Council Chambers on the top floor of City Hall, 221 E. Clark St. No fee or registration required. More details online: <https://alponline.org/events-calendar>.
- **2 p.m.:** Recipe Swap and Cookbook event at the Freeborn County Historical Museum, 1031 Bridge Ave. Bring your recipe, photos, special ingredients, tools of the trade and samples to share. These will be incorporated into a cookbook. Once the cookbook is ready for sale, the museum will hold a cook-off. See the details online: www.fchmmn.org.
- **Friday:** Eat until you're 80% full by splitting a meal with a friend or family member.
- **Saturday:** Check out the Big Freeze at various locations for fun for all ages! The festivities include a chili cookoff, hockey, live music and a visit from Elsa. Follow "The Big Freeze - Albert Lea" on Facebook for details.



Week 3: Feb. 11-17

- **Sunday:** Spend at least 10 minutes in prayer or meditation.
- **Monday:** Pack nuts for a nutritious snack at work or school.
- **Tuesday:** Use a fitness tracker to plan walking routes at your worksite. Then add signs to encourage co-workers to take extra steps. For example, you could mark the 500-step route to the restroom.
- **Wednesday:** Volunteer with the Freeborn County United Way (www.unitedwayfc.org), Freeborn County Humane Society (www.freeborncountyhhs.org/) or a service club (cityofalbertlea.org/serviceclubs).



- **Thursday:** Valentine's Day! Take a few moments to write or text a note of appreciation for loved ones. Even a short message like "I'm so glad you're in my life" can really sweeten a friend or relative's day.
- **Friday:** Rock on ice! The City Arena, 701 Lake Chapeau Drive, will host a special Valentine skate from 7 - 9 p.m. Admission is \$5 per participant and includes skate rental.
- **Saturday:** Play disc golf at the Tall Grass Course, Bancroft Bay Park, 900 Hammer Road. If there's snow on the ground, amp up the challenge by wearing snowshoes.



Week 4: Feb. 18-24

- **Sunday:** Mix fitness with fun at public skate from 4:30 – 6 p.m. at the City Arena, 701 Lake Chapeau Drive. Admission is \$5 at the door and includes skate rental. See the monthly public skate calendar on the city website: <https://cityofalbertlea.org/recreation>.
- **Monday:** Be a star by becoming a mentor to a student through the Stars Mentoring Program. Visit <http://starsforkids.org> for details.
- **Tuesday:** Climb a wall at the Community Ed Rock Gym from 6 - 9 p.m. (bit.ly/ALrock-gym). Did you know the gym has a tilt wall? Be sure to check it out! There is no fee for students in Albert Lea Area Schools, but registration is required. See how to register on Community Ed's website: AlbertLeaCommunityEd.org.
- **Wednesday:** Take the Blazing Star Trail from Frank Hall Park to Myre-Big Island State Park (www.dnr.state.mn.us/state_trails/blazingstar). If there's snow, try snow shoes, available at Albert Lea Community Education (AlbertLeaCommunityEd.org) or the state park (<https://bit.ly/myre-state-park>).

- **Thursday:** Walk indoors at the Albert Lea Family Y (see free pass on Week 1), the Northbridge Mall, 2610 Bridge Ave. or Skyline Plaza, 1739 W. Main St.
- **Friday:** Are you eating fish during Lent? Make it a habit all year-round, no matter your spiritual beliefs!
- **Saturday:** Go sledding at Lakeview School, 902 Abbott St., or along Frank Hall Drive across from Academy Park, 910 Frank Hall Drive. Not enough snow? Try outdoor games like tag or playing catch in the cold. Then head inside for hot chocolate and board games.



Week 5: Feb. 25-29

- **Sunday:** Take a friend or neighbor to church or other spiritual gathering, and then share a meal together. Make that meal all about fruits and veggies!
- **Monday:** Walk indoors at the Albert Lea Family Y (see free pass on Week 1), the Northbridge Mall, 2610 Bridge Ave. or Skyline Plaza, 1739 W. Main St.
- **Tuesday:** Sign up for a Community Education class to learn a healthy habit and make new friends: AlbertLeaCommunityEd.org. Community Ed also offers day trips for adults, Fat Tire Tuesdays for students in grades 7 – 12, and so much more.



Wednesday: Bundle up and get outside.

- Great places to hike, snowshoe or cross-country ski include Bancroft Bay Park, 900 Hammer Road, or Myre-Big Island State Park (<https://bit.ly/myre-state-park>).
- Edgewater Park, 1600 Edgewater Drive, is closed to motor vehicles but remains open to pedestrians. The Blue Zones Walkway around Fountain Lake is cleared of snow throughout winter, along with the figure 8 of the Blazing Star Trail off Garfield Avenue.
- **Thursday:** Challenge yourself to eat only plant-based food all day.



Enter for each activity you do!

How to enter via email – deadline is 8 p.m. Sunday:

- Send an email with the following information to bluezones@ci.albertlea.mn.us:
 - State the activity you did. For example, “We went to public skate on Sunday.”
 - Your name and address
- If your name is drawn for a prize, you will be notified via email

How to enter via Facebook – deadline is 8 p.m. Sunday:

- Follow “Blue Zones Project Albert Lea” on Facebook: www.facebook.com/BlueZonesProjectAlbertLea
- Look for the post about each week’s activities
 - Comment on that post with the activity you did to be entered into the drawing
 - Consider adding a photo to your comment
- If your name is drawn for the prize, you will be notified via Facebook Messenger

Prizes will be mailed unless other arrangements are made to pick up.

Power 9: Habits to live longer, better

Activities in this passport implement the 9 powers of Blue Zones in your life:

- **Move naturally:** Take the long way to the hydration station or restroom. Walk to do errands, even when it's cold. Go sledding or skating.
- **Know your purpose:** Need help unlocking your purpose? Take the purpose checkup at www.bluezones.com/the-purpose-checkup-2. Or watch this video: <https://youtu.be/Mwlfv8TXDAY>. The video is a bit dated, but it features Albert Lea and is still relevant.
- **Downshift:** Take breaks throughout the day, even if it's to step outside for a few invigorating breaths of air.
- **Eat until 80% full:** Take small portions and eat only until you're no longer hungry. Even better, split a meal with family and friends.
- **Put a plant slant on your diet:** Think of meat as the side dish instead of the main course.

- **Friends at 5:** End the day with a cup of tea or glass of wine with loved ones. Hold a regular game night, book club or other gathering.
- **Put loved ones first:** Build your life around family and friends. Attend your children's activities. Include aging parents in your daily meals and routines. Spend evenings with friends instead of working late.
- **Belong:** Join a spiritual group, service club (cityofalbertlea.org/serviceclubs), Senior Center if age 55 or older, or other organization.
- **Nurture an inner circle of close friends and family members:** Extend and accept invitations. Spend time together, even if doing nothing special.

For more information: cityofalbertlea.org/bluezones





Blue Zones Project Albert Lea

Email: bluezones@ci.albertlea.mn.us

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/BlueZonesProjectAlbertLea

Website: cityofalbertlea.org/bluezones

More resources to get active and get social:

- **Albert Lea Community Education:**
alschools.ce.eleyo.com
- **Albert Lea Parks and Recreation:**
cityofalbertlea.org/recreation
- **Albert Lea Public Library:** alplonline.org
- **Albert Lea Senior Center:** 1739 W Main St.,
507-373-0704.
- **Community Calendar:** cityofalbertlea.org/calendar
- **Explore Albert Lea:** www.explorealbertlea.com