

Norm Cates' CLUB INSIDERTM

The "Pulse" of the Health, Racquet, and Sports Club Industry Worldwide

Established **1993**

APRIL 2008



(Front Row L to R): Kevin McHugh, Kristin McConnell, Patricia Laus, Kelly Fair, Ellen Veprek and Nancy Ehrola
(Back Row L to R): Jessica Hayes, Jamie Byrnes, Kathy Guibord and Jennifer Stavinsky

Clubs for the Cure Produces Massive Effort To Attack ALS

*Goal is for Augie's Quest to Benefit From Clubs for the Cure Events
at Over 1,000 Clubs... but We Need You!*

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Clubs for the Cure

Produces Massive Effort To Attack ALS

Goal is for Augie's Quest to Benefit From Clubs for the Cure Events at Over 1,000 Clubs... but We Need You!

By: John McCarthy

Last December, report-



John McCarthy

ing on groundbreaking research funded by Augie's Quest, Sharon Hesterlee, head of Translational Research for MDA, announced that researchers had identified the 50 genetic markers that characterized and distinguished men and women with ALS.

Commenting on the importance of this research, Hesterlee said, "As a result of this research funded by Augie's Quest, the question is no longer whether we're going to defeat this disease; rather, the question now becomes simply when or how soon we will be able to do this."

It was about this time

that Pat Laus, a former IHRSA Board member, and the owner of two highly-renowned New Jersey health clubs, experimented with a new way to support Augie and his Quest. She invented a program that would come to be called "Clubs for the Cure."

It was designed to be as simple as possible - One Day, One Event - to raise money for Augie's Quest... She tried it at her own club by having a master spin class in which the participants could sponsor themselves or have others sponsor them. The result: \$4,000 for Augie's Quest... \$4,000 in one hour.

So, Pat asked herself a question. What if 100 clubs did this, or 500 or 1,000 or 2,000? In terms of raising money for research, the results could be phenomenal.

So, Pat began her own quest. Her quest was to involve as many clubs as possible in the program, as quickly as she possibly could.

She developed a website, www.clubsforthecure.com, that gave clubs a simple blueprint as to how they could get involved, and how easy it is... And, she began a non-stop e-mail, telephone, and

(See *The Cure* Page 16)



Patricia Laus

BOSTON, MA. - The International Health, Racquet & Sportsclub Association (IHRSA)

Total U.S. Membership Grows About 3%

announced on March 17, 2008 that early estimates from an annual tracking study indicate health club

membership in the United States increased by three percent last year, from 42.7 million members

(over the age of six) in 2006 to 44.1 million in 2007, while industry revenues increased by

5% to \$18.5 billion. This growth in health club membership rep- (See *3% U.S. Growth* Page 8)

The "INSIDER SPEAKS" - A Recession In Our Minds? See Page #6



(L to R) Jeff Long, Gale Landers, & Gary Mancuso

Fitness Formula Oak Park Receives Oak Park Nicholas Award!

On February 25th, Fitness Formula Clubs (FFC) Oak Park received the prestigious Nicholas Award, named after a prominent Oak Park businessman. The presentation was made at the Carleton Hotel, and the award is given annually to enterprises that have made a significant investment toward improving the business climate in the Oak

Park community. The new FFC Oak Park Club has reached all age groups, with thousands of members devoted to a healthy lifestyle.

FFC has been consistently recognized for creating leading, culturally relevant health and fitness facilities in multiple communities throughout Chicagoland with nine locations.

See Norm's Notes

Dangerous Industry Germ Loose in Australia!

• • •
Grondahl's Planet Fitness Continues to Hit Home Runs!

• • •
Free Online Trial!
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Norm's NOTES

Thank You

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•**Hello everybody!** This is your *Club Insider Publisher Since 1993* checking in! Well folks, the beat goes on and our industry is hopping with news, a bit of it bad. Read on!

•**Sincere thanks** to **JOHN McCARTHY**, former *IHRSA Executive Director, PAT LAUS*, owner of the *Atlantic Clubs* in Manasquan and Red Bank, New Jersey and **KEVIN McHUGH, COO** of *The Atlantic Clubs*, for their contribution of the *Clubs For The Cure* cover story this month.



•**On January 1, 2008**, when my fine son of 23 years, **Justin Cates** (pictured above), came onboard full time with *Club Insider*, he informed me that our website, which he built when he was 16 years old, and in high school, was badly in need of a TOTAL rebuild. He said it would "cost us" somewhere between \$25,000 to \$30,000. *Choking* at those words, I replied, "Well, Dawg Dude (my nickname for him in honor of his UGA days), you're suggesting something we have NO budget for right now." So, he said, "O.K. Pops, no worries." He didn't mention it again for about two weeks. Then, he informed me that on the day of that conversation, he had gone to *Border's* book store and bought a book on high-tech website building for the investment of \$50, and during those two weeks, he had studied the book and was now fully prepared and ready to rebuild our new website instead of hiring a web firm to do the work. And folks, **REBUILD** it he did! If you have not yet logged onto our new website: www.clubinsideronline.com, I invite you to do so, and there is much more to come! If you are a paid subscriber, you should have recently received login

information in the mail. If you are not a paid subscriber to *Club Insider* yet, you have not received the login information necessary to enter the "inner sanctum" of the site, which is where the true value of a subscription investment to *Club Insider* is. If you've received *Club Insider* in print once in a while, you may not be a paid subscriber, as we mail out many promo copies each month. **\$89** per year has been our paid subscription rate for the past 12 years, and now, this price includes full online access. We also offer online-only access for just **\$49** (our original subscription rate 15 years ago!), and this provides you with full online access, which includes 12 monthly online editions and full access to the archives of 2008 (more past issues to come in the future). So that you may "shop" our new site, learn how it works and consider if you would like to invest in *Club Insider*, we are currently offering a full online trial until May 31, 2008. To take advantage of this offer, go to www.clubinsideronline.com, click login, and use the following information to gain access:

Username: CItrial, Password: subscribetoday. To read more about this offer, see the ad on Pages 36 & 37. Please note that each month, the newest Club Insider edition will be posted around the 15th of the month with the printed edition arriving 7 to 10 days later in the mail. So folks, *Club Insider Online* can provide you with the scoop 7 to 10 days before the printed edition arrives. Go to: www.clubinsideronline.com! You'll be glad you did! Additionally, check out the new formatting for this and future editions; layout work also done by Justin Cates!

•**One of the most dangerous germs to the future of this industry** has been set loose "Down-Under" in *Australia* where the government has decided they will spread the germ already damaging night clubs in Australia where they already increased fees by 1,400%. Now, the Australian government, through the current *Fitness Class Tariff*, which is paid to the *Phonographic Performance Company of Australia (PPCA)*, has looked around and found another likely

prospect for new money... the health and fitness club industry that is being asked to absorb a 3,000% fee increase! So, you're saying something like this to yourself... "Hey Norm, what the heck are you talking about? This is something that is happening so far away, surely this situation in Australia won't ever bother the health club industry in North America!" Well, let me tell you how it could. In this electronic age, in no time flat, American politicians will get a whiff of it. And, IF and when this move is actually approved, American and Canadian politicians could grab it. In Australia, thousands of clubs will have to either cease conducting group exercise classes or continue at fees only maybe 3 or 4% of the Australian member population might be willing to pay for group classes at the rate clubs would have to charge. So, what would this mean there and here? It would mean that the clubs that do go on would be restricted from providing group exercise because the cost of the music would be prohibitive. Sure, some of the group exercisers would just switch to conventional exercise on equipment in silent clubs using their own personal headsets for workout entertainment. But, the wild card would be an untold number of members would leave their clubs altogether over the fees. This could ultimately cause a colossal mass membership exit in Australia. And yes, this germ could spread to the *USA, Canada* and



other countries! **STAY TUNED!**

•**Big winner, PLANET FITNESS** continues to grow and grow, while **MIKE GRONDAHL, Founder and CEO of Planet Fitness** cuts deals with folks across the land for new PF territories and is buying into some of their existing territories. Latest Planet Fitness deal, according to **BEN MIDGLEY, President of Planet Fitness and World Gym International** is the biggest ever, a deal with **TONY RUFFO** who paid **\$975,000** to buy the 4 counties encompassing the greater Philadelphia area. And, in a real smart move, Grondahl has bought into his Planet Fitness's operator's territory in the *New York City* area, giving that owner, **JEFF INNOCENTI**, growth capital and more marketing power and Grondahl's Planet Fitness (See Norm's Notes Page 10)

Norm CatesTM
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The "INSIDER SPEAKS" *A Recession in Our Minds?*

By: Norm Cates

Last month, our terrific Contributing Author, Sales Makers' Eddie Tock, provided a super article for Club Insider entitled: "Attitude - Key To Your Success". (By-the-way, that terrific article is now available online for paid subscribers on our new website: www.clubinsideronline.com.) Tock wrote, "Selling Is Attitude! Attitude is the single most important factor when it comes to getting and keeping customers. Henry Ford once said, 'Whether you think you can or you think you can't... you are right.'"

Not long ago I was listening to financial guru, Dave Ramsey, talk on the radio about recessions. He quoted someone many of us have learned from, the one and only, Zig Ziglar. Ramsey quoted Zig as once saying, "Our government has correctly predicted 32 of the last 2 recessions!"

In his amazing book, "The Greatest Salesman in the World", Og Mandino pours on a mindset that will prepare you for a lifetime of success in anything you do. I read it many years ago. If you've not, you should. It is

timeless. If you do, you will never worry about a recession. (I'm not saying that you are... I'm just saying...)

My Take On Recessions

Now, I am going to give you my take on recessions. The reason I entitled this article "A Recession In Our Minds" is because that is precisely where recessions start, where they thrive and where they do damage to *some* of people. In the minds *some* of the people.

In my opinion... *recessions* are for *losers*. In my opinion, people who should be thinking positively, acting positively, working positively and moving forward positively for better work results, end up (because somebody has told them to think it), thinking negatively. Negativity has caused many good people in this great land to give up and quit giving their all because "we're having a recession". Hogwash! These good people get trapped because they occupy their minds with statistics, bad news and thoughts of how bad things are, and in my view, they create their own recession in their minds. Do not be one of them! In

fact, what we actually do have is a "recession of jobs" caused by scared corporate managers, people who do have a recession on their minds. For those folks, yes, it is a real recession.

An Oasis

The health, racquet and sports club industry should be an *oasis* for the successful positive people and the struggling masses who are struggling because of their minds. How many of you know that there are proven studies that show that how much you earn in America is tied directly to your physical condition? How many of you know overweight and obese people who are struggling in work and business because they are overweight or obese and they are overweight or obese because they are lazy? How many of you who sell memberships and service members constantly remind your members that their economic condition will improve right along with their physical condition because they will have more energy, will look better and will have more drive? If this is NOT a selling point in your club, it should become a BIG one today!

You, as a club owner/operator/manager or employee should set your mind everyday when you are brushing your teeth that THIS is going to be a GREAT day because I AM GOING TO MAKE IT A GREAT DAY! When you are driving to work, you should be mulling in your mind just HOW you are going to make it a great day. You should be mentally energizing yourself every minute you drive. When you get to your club and leave your car, you should hold your head up high, walk with your shoulders back and your chest out and at an energetic pace. Just the sight of how you carry yourself into the door of your club will motivate people. When you enter the doors of your club, you should blast your way into your place with an "attitude" that boils over with the thought "YES... this is going to be a GREAT DAY! YOU should be a contagious source of energy, happiness and drive for all."

Because... you know what? If you have a positive attitude when you arrive, that is going to put smiles on faces and happy feelings in the hearts of every single person you encounter all day long. Positive... positive... positive. Give 'em a smile, a handshake and pat on the back and keep on infecting everybody every day of your life, and you will never be a victim of a "recession".

Oasis... what is that? You're out in the desert. There is a clear sky, not a drop of rain in sight, it is hot as hell... maybe 115 degrees or more in the shade, if you had shade. Your horse just died. It is just you and that desert... miles and miles of hot sand... you are dragging... you are burning alive... you are parched... dried out like a prune! ...all of a sudden you spot the top of a big palm tree on the horizon. You trek on. You think it is a mirage... you keep on walking... pretty soon the palm tree becomes two, no three, no four big beautiful trees clustered together... and right below them is a cool pond of water... cool... clear... water. Good old H2O! You're gonna make it! You're gonna survive! You keep on trekking, and when you get to the Oasis, you jump feet first into the water! You're saved!

Oasis in your club... what is that? It is a place that hasn't a doggone thing to do with exercise. A club oasis is a place where your mind and your attitude make it a great day every day, a fun day everyday and a productive place every day. A mini-daily-vacation place.

Yeah, I know... you might be thinking I'm dreamin'. But, I'm not. I know what I am talking about. I know how it is if the boss has a bad attitude and how that can infect your staff. I know that if just one staff member has a bad attitude, that staff member can infect your entire staff. I know that if just one staff member has a bad attitude... that can infect not just one, but many of your members. I know that members, who day in and day out, must deal with an owner or a staff member who has a bad attitude, they are damn well gonna get the hell



outta there... and they are going to tell their friends, neighbors and work associates that you and your club sucks.

I know about hard work too. Do you? I know that if your club is not performing like it has in the past, there are two directions you can take for sure:

1. You can blame the "recession in your mind"
 2. You can examine your own attitude, the attitude of every single employee you have, and you can change yourself and them. You can't fire yourself, but you can have a real come to Jesus meeting with yourself. You can reach within in yourself and learn to really work and adopt a new attitude and work ethic. To me, work is not work unless you hate it. You can reach within yourself and literally double your workday. Maybe you're a "newbie" in our industry and haven't been through any tough times. Maybe you came into our industry thinking... heck... this is going to be a "cake walk"! Well, come to realize this. You've had it easy so far. Now is the time for you to "man-up" with yourself or "woman-up". Now is the time for you to multiply your work ethic, your work hours, your work effort, your work product and work results by at least 1.5. However, if your region is one that is now being hit by slower times, then multiply it by 2. If you don't like to work or if you think you can "get by" on your current work habits... then ride on... in a year, I promise you that you are going to wish you had listened to me.

Get to work, and don't stop until your club is booming again! It is ALL up to you! You are the leader! YOU are the one single person that can make a difference

(See *Recession* Page 8)



15 Years and Counting!!! Established 1993

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Prospecting

By: Ed Tock

Prospecting can be much like going to the health club. It's something you know is good for you and will produce excellent and predictable results, yet it is something that many salespeople seem to avoid. Your key to success in selling has more to do with your prospecting ability than any other skill!

Every time you meet someone, you should be sincerely interested in learning about who they are, how they are, what they do and whether or not you can be of service to them. Potential Members (Customers) are too intelligent to fall for manipulative tricks, but they will respond to a sincere desire to find out how your club and its services can benefit them. Never push yourself on people - this only pushes them away. Your sales goal is to attract and maintain customers/members, and in other words, to build relationships. But before you can build relationships, you

must first learn how to prospect.

Before you start prospecting, you need to have a system that has a proven success formula for prospecting and selling success. Let's start with some keys to successful prospecting:

The more you question - the more you learn!

Nowhere in sales is that statement truer than in the prospecting phase of selling. As part of that strategy, let's examine a basic but important principle of value-based selling:

In a crowded marketplace, all other things being equal, the one with the most information, who applies it most effectively, wins.

Translating that statement into a prospecting principle, Memorize and Follow the next sentence, and you won't believe how much easier and profitable selling gets for you.

"The most productive sentence in the salesperson's vocabulary always ends with a question mark!"

Good prospecting is a matter of developing a solid game plan that works well for you, then following that game plan to the letter. As you begin prospecting for new members, ask yourself the following questions. They will help you identify and locate prospects and prepare you to be more effective.

1. What exactly do I sell?

Customers are looking for ways to solve problems or improve their lives. Be prepared to clearly state what solutions being a member of your club offers.

2. Who are my ideal customers?

Understand what market niche is your strength and first focus on growing this part of your business.

3. Why do they buy a membership here?

What are the benefits or emotional rewards they will receive?

4. Where are my prospects? What is your geographical market in terms of time or distance?

5. When do people join my club? Members join every month, but look at your market to notice trends.

6. Why don't they join our club? Find this out and your sales will improve.

7. Who are your competitors? What are their strengths and their weaknesses?

What To Do Before You Get In Front Of A Prospect

Selling successfully is like a lot of other things in life. A lot of it depends on what you do before you ever get there. Ironically, most of these activities are far too often overlooked by too many salespeople.

A lot of your success will be totally dependent upon your ability to build relationships, sustain trust, hold confidences and trust, sustain momentum,

ensure timely service. In addition, do your best to provide highly valuable, insightful information to your prospect.

To become a successful salesperson, you have to realize that your success, or lack of it, is totally 100% your responsibility! The right attitude about selling is what will carry you through, regardless of what obstacles are thrown in your way. Learning to view prospecting as natural, and selling as an ongoing event, will make you a sales superstar!

Most salespeople avoid prospecting due to a fear of rejection. The key to overcoming that fear is to alter your perception of prospecting. How can we do this? Focus on prospecting as THE WAY to make money!

Prospecting should be treated like a goal. Allow yourself to feel excited and thrilled when you schedule an appointment. Why? Because you have sold someone on the idea of spending valuable time with you. Take (See Ed Tock Page 8)



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...3% U.S. Growth

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resents an increase of more than one hundred fifteen percent in ten years, while growth in total revenues represents an increase of one hundred twenty-seven percent.

Data reported in IHRSA's annual membership report, Profiles of Success 2007 indicates that clubs have also improved upon membership retention from 2005 to 2006 by three-percentage points, increasing from 70% to 73%. Simultaneously, partici-

pating IHRSA clubs raised total revenue per member by nearly 5.5% in 2006, to \$741.80.

"As an industry, we aim to grow total membership year after year, and industry stability is in no small part dependent on customer satisfaction, membership retention and increasing revenues per member," said Joe Moore, President & CEO of IHRSA. "The dedication to customer service demonstrated by IHRSA members is clearly evident as this data shows an increase in total membership and

member retention. IHRSA health club operators across the nation are providing their members with desirable and essential services—an essential component to running a high-quality business," said Moore.

The typical club surveyed in regards to non-dues revenue reported generating nearly one-third (32.1%) of total revenues from internal profit centers. "These profit centers provide evidence of the clubs' ability to develop programs and services that meet consumers'

fitness and recreation needs," said Katie Rollauer, IHRSA's Senior Manager of Research.

Additional results found that clubs' steady improvements in revenue growth (5.4% over 2005) and membership growth (4.2% over 2005) contributed to an overall improvement in productivity and profitability. Specifically, the typical business responding to the survey reported a 6.6% increase in the revenue per square foot (\$53.50), while club profitability for the entire sample improved by better than

three percentage points to 11.3% (pre-tax earnings a percentage of revenues) in 2006. "These observations reflect a club's ability to control costs while generating overall growth," said Rollauer.

Profiles of Success 2007, as well as additional publications can be purchased at www.ihrsastore.com in a pdf version on the IHRSA Store at www.ihrsastore.com. For media inquiries, please contact pr@ihsra.org or (617) 951 - 0055.

...Recession

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with that big smile on your face, a great big, happy, smiling "Hello everybody!" when you come in the door and a countenance that permeates with confidence, dedication, happiness, intense desire to do the right things and yes... love.

It is all up to you to create an Oasis in your club so that your members, the people who will or will not cause your survival during slower times, to say to themselves when driving home and trying to decide to go either

to a bar or your club, to make the right choice... that choice... your Oasis... your third place... the wonderful place that is not home and is not work... but that third place... that Oasis with a big smile.

Recession? Are you sure it is not in your mind?



(Norm Cates, Jr. is a 35-year veteran of the health, racquet and sports club industry. Cates was the Founder and is now celebrating his 15th Anniversary as the Publisher of Club Insider. He was IHRSA's 1st President, and a Co-founder of the Association with Rick Caro and five others, in 1981. In March, 2001, IHRSA honored Cates with its DALE DIBBLE Distinguished Service Award, one of IHRSA's highest honors. Cates may be reached at: (770) 850 - 8506 or email: Norm@clubinsideronline.com)

...Ed Tock

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that excited feeling and go with it - use it to transfer enthusiasm about your service to the prospective member.

The salesperson that succeeds the most is the salesperson that possesses a genuine interest in helping prospects get what they want. Try to understand your prospects' reasons for buying, and you will most certainly increase your sales success, as well as your income.

(Ed Tock is a partner in Sales Makers, an industry leader as a marketing and sales training consulting firm that specializes in on site seminars and performance & profitability programs by delivering the highest quality of staff training, proven systems and innovative marketing programs. They have worked with over 1200 clubs worldwide including 206 pre sales since 1981. Ed has spoken at over 80 Club Industry Shows & IHRSA Conventions. Sales Makers is a winner of IHRSA Associate member of the Year! Sales Makers has just introduced their 90 day Sales Express improvement programs for Independent Operators. For more information, contact Ed at 800.428.3334 or at eddie@sales-makers.com. Or at www.sales-makers.com. Email Eddie TODAY to receive the TOP 10 list that will help unlock the secrets to sales success!)

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...Norm's Notes

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Corporate, a piece of the action of his new partners ongoing success. THAT folks, is one of the most savvy moves I've seen in a while, so good on 'ya **MIKE and MARC GRONDAHL, CHRIS RONDEAU, and BEN MIDGLEY**. Midgley also tells me that **Planet Fitness** owners continue to buy rights for the new **World Gym 1440 All Access** key card clubs. **STAY TUNED!**



•**MR. RAY WILSON**, the *industry icon and legend* he is, with 60 years in this industry, has had quite a series of **80th birthday celebrations!** In March, Mr. Wilson traveled to Asia to be with his former partner in **Hong Kong** and **Tailand California Fitness Centers**, **ERIC LEVINE**. He stayed at Eric's **55,000 square-foot mansion** for a month and enjoyed himself immensely. Then, on Sunday night, April 6th, 65 people, including family and friends of Wilson's from six decades gathered at the **LaCoste Country Club** to celebrate his 80th. This was an industry "Who's Who" gathering, and amongst those in attendance were: **MR. BILL HUBNER, DR. BOB DELMONTEQUE, CHRIS DAVIS and JON THORSELL**. In an email to me, Mr. Wilson wrote, "Ron Thompson, Ival Mc Mains and Tony Dahman presented me

with a giant check for \$190,000 payable no later than June of 2008 (See Photo). They are selling the Oklahoma clubs which they started about 10 years ago (they gave me 5% for mentoring them in FFC), and the check was for my share of the profits in that sale. Also, Robert Linberger, Paul Rice and my son Packy, gave me 20% of their latest **Fitness 19** club (just opened in Temecula, California). They estimate this should pay me \$2,000 per month (again this is to show appreciation for my mentoring of them). It is great to have a lot of good friends. Fitness 19 is now approaching **one hundred clubs** and is one of the fastest growing companies in our industry. Many people at the party thanked me for what I had done for their success and many have done great favors for me over the years". **Happy Birthday and Congratulations, Mr. Wilson!**

•Breaking news... **JIM ROWLEY**, long time employee and **Division President at 24 Hour Fitness** has left the company, according to a source close to 24 Hour Fitness. This makes six who've exited since **CARL LIEBERT**, a nice fellow with a lot of drive, stepped in as **24 Hour Fitness' new CEO**.
IHRSA released a new publication on April 1, 2008 entitled: **"The Healing Power of Exercise: 50 Groundbreaking Studies"**, sponsored by **TechnoGym**! This new IHRSA publication reveals that exercise is the definitive solution to the nation's healthcare crisis and features 50 groundbreaking studies that explain the ways in which regular

exercise fights disease, improves the quality of life, and helps stave off the effects of aging. Joe Moore, IHRSA's President and CEO, said, "This new report further solidifies the knowledge that exercise is medicine, and through exercise we can all live happier, healthier lives. It is our hope that *The Healing Power of Exercise* will be a useful educational tool to health clubs and suppliers to the industry, as we work together to improve the health of the world through regular exercise". *The Healing Power of Exercise* can be ordered in a print or pdf format, which includes hyperlinks to all relevant studies on the **IHRSA Store** at www.ihrsastore.com. For media inquiries, please contact pr@ihsra.org or (617) 951-0055.

•In case you missed it, **BARBARA WALTERS** hosted a special TV show in early April entitled: **"Live to be 150!"** In this presentation, Walters interviewed a number of scientists involved in the world of human cell regeneration. The commentary in this report was amazing! That night, several cell regeneration scientists shared the work they are doing, and the fact that with the progress in place right now, within the next 10 years or less, **virtually every human body part, can and will be mass produced!** Everything from *hearts to kidneys*, the scientists say, *can be duplicated in mass*. They went on to say that these developments are going to make it very common for people to live to the age of 100 or more. They said millions and millions, far more than the current 400,000 Americans who are 100 or over, will reach 100 and way beyond! One scientist commented, and this is not an exact quote, "Right now, it is not at all out of the realm of possibility that some people will live to be **150 years, even 200 years of age!**" If you didn't see the show... or read or heard about it elsewhere, then you heard it here first! Think of the societal ramifications. And also, think about the ramifications to health/fitness clubs when this happens! Boggles the mind.

•Now, I know why I don't always remember all I want to remember! I'm not having **"Normal Senior Moments"** as folks my age, 62 or more, might use as an excuse for far too many gigabytes being used up in our minds! I mean... well... folks... it must be my belly! It seems, in an email memo sent to me and others by **IHRSA CEO/**

PRESIDENT JOE MOORE and sponsored by **StarTrac**, stated, "Researchers have been tracking the mental fallout of obesity for years. In 2005, Rachel Whitmer and her colleagues reported that people who were fatter in middle age were as much as 74 percent more likely to develop dementia as senior citizens." So, some day, if you get a **Norm's Notes** writing to you in **Club Insider** that begins with: **"Hello everybody!** This is your **Club Insider Publisher Since**...uh...hmmm...ah...oh yeah! **1993...checking in!**"**!**, then you will know my belly did it! If that happens, please DO get on my case with a friendly phone call or a note that says something like this: "Hey Norm, get off your big butt sitting at that computer and get out and exercise more and eat properly so you won't become senile!" And yes, I noted that the statement said, "we're fatter in middle age", meaning I acknowledge, here, **my first middle age, age 45 to age 54**, when I went through a 9-year period where I gained 80 to 90 pounds and then lost 110 pounds. Looking back, it may have been a time of more risk than I knew about then. i.e. the risk of early dementia. Not just the potential for heart attack, stroke or diabetes that I had ignored for so long before I *saved my own life* and entered into a period of my life I call, **"Leaving FAT City!"**. How did I "Leave FAT City"? I did it by changing my lifestyle from a completely sedentary one to one of absolute daily activity of walking a minimum of 3.2 miles. I would estimate, looking back, that I walked at least 3.2 miles a day, sometimes 6.4 and 9.6 miles in a day, every day but about 10 days in a period of 18 months, which is 547 days. By now, 7.5 years later, I estimate I've walked over 7,000 miles. During my 18-month, 110-pound weight loss attack that was a **"body-movement retention"** factor of **.992%**. How many members do you have that have showed up in your gym 537 days out of 547? Moreover, back to the dementia, I believe in my heart that I am now in my **"Second Middle Age"**. Some call this **62... I call it the NEW 40!** I can call it that too, because I honestly feel like I am mentally and physically 40 years of age. Actually, I don't know if I even felt as good or was as healthy at 40, as I am at 62. I mean, in the past 7.5 years since I *"Made the break to daily movement"*, I have been ill just 3 days and those 3

days were the 3 days right after IHRSA 2006 when we celebrated IHRSA's 25th Anniversary in Las Vegas. And now that I am in my **"second middle age"**, I am paying a whole lot more attention to my "belly" than I did when I was 45 to 54. But, please do keep in mind that at age 45, the beginning of my first "middle age", my son, Justin and I were in a bad auto accident when a drunk plowed into the back of my station wagon that was sitting still and he was going at least 50 mph! Thank God Justin was not hurt because he had his seat belt on, and fortunately, I spotted the drunk driver in my rear view mirror just in time to reach across and brace Justin's neck and head against the back of the car seat (he was 6 then). I suffered a very bad whiplash and lower back injury. I gained about 80 to 90 pounds over the next five or six years and I wasn't well and able to move for years until my friend **BIG JIM FLANAGAN** helped me out by sending me to a local doctor who had a **MEDX Lumbar Machine**. Two sessions on that big 'ol **MEDX Lumbar Machine** invented by our friend, the late **ARTHUR JONES**, and I could start exercising again! And, exercise I did and do virtually every day now! Frankly, until this day I *credit Arthur's MEDX Lumbar Machine for saving my life!*

•**SUSAN PUCKETT** is the **Editor** of the **Atlanta Journal Constitution's** weekly **Better Health** special section. This week she introduced her readers to Better Health's new weekly **"My Favorite Workout"** features. "A road to finding your workout", as Puckett's intro article was entitled, provided profiles sharing the experiences of three individuals who found their favorite workout. These experiences were: "Exercise ideas that will help put some fun into your fitness." according to Puckett. Sound familiar folks? As you know, I've published little ads saying: **"Make It Fun!"** every month for 15 years! The three parties found fun in: a **YMCA** with **Zumba** dancing class, a **military style boot camp** and in **spinning classes**. My Favorite Workout is walking 30 or minutes every day. What's your's?

•**"It's Never Too Late to Get Active"** By: **MEGAN RAUSCHER** is an article published by **REUTER'S** telling a story that should serve as great *(See Norm's Notes Page 12)*



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...Norm's Notes

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encouragement to my **DAD, NORM CATES, SR.**, age 90 as of December 27, 2007, and his wife, **LOUISE** and many other senior citizens. During the past 3 years, my Dad and his wife, Louise, have become involved in exercise. I acquired a **NuStep Machine** for my dad, and during most of the past 3 years, he's used it 4 to 6 days a week. However, during the second half of 2007 Dad developed a bad problem with his right hip, so he had to curtail, temporarily, his almost daily exercise. With **hip surgery on December 18, 2007**, Dad celebrated his birthday in the Rehabilitation Center with his wife, Louise, my brother **DAVE** and his sister, **MELBA KELLEY**. After coming home, and about a

month of recovery and rehab, Dad got back on his NuStep, and he is now hitting it six days a week for about 30 minutes a day. Last year, his wife Louise, a grand lady who has never exercised in her life (except for doing chores in their home), tried the NuStep Machine and found that something amazing happened. She found she could get out of her chair without assistance after a couple of weeks of regular sessions on the machine. Their lives mirror the article: **"It's Never Too Late to Get Active"**.

ELI MANNING, quarterback for the **New York Giants** and **MVP of the 2008 Super Bowl**, has joined forces with the **President's Council On Physical Fitness and Sports** to promote the **President's Challenge** to all Americans to get active. It is great to have a super

young man who was a big part of the greatest play and arguably greatest game in Super Bowl history, helping out in this way!



•**PETE BROWN'S 27th annual Athletic Business Conference & Expo** will be held **Dec. 3-6, 2008**, at the **Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center** in San Antonio, Texas. Co-locating with the Athletic Business Conference & Expo will be three conferences - the **International Council on Active Aging's 6th Annual Active Aging 2008** (www.icaa.cc/convention.htm), the **Medical Fitness Association's 14th Annual Conference - "Medical Fitness and Healthcare: The Game Plan"** (www.medicalfitness.org) and the **National Alliance for Youth Sports' 7th annual International Youth Sports Congress** (www.nays.org). I can tell you from experience that San Antonio, Texas is a heck of a town as I served right outside of San Antonio at Randolph Air Force Base as a U.S. Air Force jet instructor pilot in 1969/70. Pete Brown is pictured above with Augie and Lynne Nieto as they departed the Marriott Hotel & Marina after IHRSA2008 in San Diego, California.

•**ANGEL BANOS, CEO of Gym Management Services, owners and operators of a bunch of Southern California Gold's Gyms** have moved their Headquarters to a brand new 6,000 square-foot, state-of-the-art facility that will provide Gym Management Services representatives with the most advanced technology available and an enlarged office building to allow the management company to operate at maximum efficiency.

"Our explosive growth in the past few years has really pushed us to focus on expanding internally and externally", said Banos, CEO of Gym Management Services. "We spent 12 years in the previous building and are thrilled with our decision to move our executive offices to a more centralized location". The new facility was built from the ground up in order to accommodate the needs of staff and management and provide them with the highest technology

and software available. The new facility also includes an award-winning **Gold's Gym University**, to provide an extensive training program for new and current employees. **Congrats Angel and WILLY BANOS!**

•Here comes **Walgreens!** The Walgreens drug store chain has announced that it is taking its fight against childhood obesity to the web, with the launch of www.getfitwithwalgreens.com. The new website is the internet component of the award-winning **"Get Fit with Walgreens"** program, a curriculum-based fitness initiative designed to help Chicago and suburban minority youth develop healthy lifestyles and perform better in school.

•A recent prime time news piece high-lighted a societal move... a new concept for Americans... saving money. The piece brought the message that **"low cost"** is **"in"**. No longer are Americans willing to pay more because an item is sold in name brand, upscale stores. In the piece, a couple of high end retailers, including **Neiman Marcus**, were cited with downward sales with a decrease of 3% while **WalMart** and **Target** stores were showing nearly 6% growth in sales. A cute portion of the report included three "twenty-something" girl's sitting and giggling about the pronunciation of the name Target. One young lady said, "In the past, I used to tell my friends 'I got it a Targe' using the French phonetically pronounced: 'Targey'". Now, I proudly tell my friends "I got it at Target!" (Then she used the English pronunciation of Target). This brings me to my point (Yeah, I know... it's about time, Norm!).

It seems more and more **Gold's Gym** owners are switching brands to **Planet Fitness**. For example, in the piece delivered to me electronically on April 3rd by my friends at **Fitness Business News** in an article by **JOHN CRAIG, FBNEditor, JEFFINNOCENTI**, citing the great success that his **Planet Fitness** operations were having in the New York City tri-borough area said, "As a Gold's, we were fighting to keep our heads above water. Really, the change has been unbelievable".

Craig continued, "Innocenti said that the three clubs tripled their monthly billings, and the numbers have been even stronger at his other clubs. A gym in Nanuet sold 9,000 memberships before it opened in 2003 and now takes

in more than \$200,000 a month in dues. A Harlem location that opened in February bills \$60,000 a month, he said. According to Craig, the Innocenti's owned three Gold's Gym clubs - in the Bronx, White Plains and Yonkers - for nearly a decade before converting them to Planet Fitness locations in 2004." So folks, value is appearing to become KING for American retailing and for some health and fitness club consumers. As the low-cost wave sweeps America, I expect to see more and more club owners switch to the low-cost model. But, at the same time, the high end niche club products like **Wellbridge, Equinox, Western Athletic Clubs and Spectrum Clubs** will roll on providing higher cost clubs for the more well healed. In the middle are going to be the big box chains and the Mom and Pop independents. My money, in the long run, will be with the many well-established, long-time IHRSA-style club operators who long ago embraced "month-to-month" dues, operate their clubs always in an ethical manner and support their communities in their clubs by hosting such events as the **"Clubs For The Cure"** events happening between now and May 31st (See **Clubs For The Cure** cover story by **JOHN McCARTHY**). Truth is, our industry is still a baby when compared to such industries as hotels and restaurants and many things will change in this industry, even in my lifetime and for sure in the lifetimes of you "30 and 40 something" youngsters in the business.

•This just in from **IHRSA's JOE MOORE**: "Women who carry excess fat around their waists were at greater risk of dying early from cancer or heart disease than were women with smaller waistlines, even if they were of normal weight, reported researchers from Harvard and the National Institutes of Health."

•If you've read even one edition of **Club Insider** you probably know that as a Co-Founder and the 1st President of IHRSA, this author is a very dedicated and loving supporter of what is now the world's top health/fitness trade Association, IHRSA. For 27+ years now, I've thought the world of Team IHRSA in Boston, what they do and how they do it. I still do. And, for all these years as both a Member Club Owner (See Norm's Notes Page 14)

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Joe Laudati General Manager Healthrax International

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Owners Appointed as "Les Mills Northeast" Headquarters

Les Mills International, 2006 Club Solutions Magazine "Health Club Success Story," 2006 "Entrepreneur of the Year"

The Dutchess County Economic Development Committee, 2005 Gold's Gym Fishkill named "Best New Gym" 2005 Gold's Gym Convention



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...Norm's Notes

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and Associate Member, and for the past 15 years, I have promoted IHRSA to you, my readers, with all my heart. BUT, today I must write these words to indicate to all of you that IHRSA has some issues that must, and will be, addressed and fixed. In contrast to the past, such as the time when we first published *Club Insider* and I provided *Club Insider* as the vehicle for IHRSA Member Club Owners to express their strong objections to the name change to "Exercera", I have elected to pursue these solutions with IHRSA "behind the scenes" first. Mailed to the IHRSA Board and Joe Moore with this edition was:

1. A letter from me to the leadership about the depth and form of the concerns

2. An article I wrote for the Board to further illuminate facts about those issues, their potential ramifications to the Association and our suggested solutions

3. Writings from a significant number of Associate Members chronicling the current, but fixable, issues with IHRSA they have.

My sincere hope is that by appealing to IHRSA leadership to listen to the grievances these IHRSA Associate Members have, they will examine these areas of concern, discuss them in detail and establish a Team on the Board of Directors to assure that the IHRSA staff fix these problems. I have a deep desire to avoid the extreme displeasure I personally anticipate about having to place on the public record the details of the IHRSA activities that have rightly concerned and vexed these long-standing IHRSA Associate Members and supporters. But, these issues simply must be dealt with very soon because these matters are reaching a point where continuation of them will further damage many parties. There are multiple reasons why these issues must be addressed, but the number one reason is that IHRSA's only reason for existing is to serve the Member Club Owners, the customers of the IHRSA Associate Members. Without the IHRSA Member Club Owners, the Associate Members would not have a big portion of their annual business. Those owners trust IHRSA to do the right things for them. The Associate Members trust IHRSA too, and they expect and deserve a level playing field with ALL other

IHRSA Associate Members. Many club owners do their buying research and base their buying decision-making process on IHRSA through the Trade Show, CBI Magazine, IHRSA new Buyers Guide, etc. But now, it is very apparent that on the IHRSA Associate Member side there are substantial and significant problems. Some activities by certain IHRSA staff have gone "beyond the line" of good judgment or even any small measure of fairness. These activities must be brought back "in line" to "protect" the IHRSA Member Club owners and "to protect" all of the 700+ IHRSA companies that make up the Associate Membership base. It is my sincere hope that when I next report to you about these matters, I may write the following words and only these words: "I addressed the issues IHRSA is facing by contacting the Board of Directors by U.S. and Canadian mail, explaining in clear, vivid detail the dangers and harm this now "across the line" activity by certain IHRSA staff has been causing to certain Associates in a variety of product categories. This veteran group of Associate Members is now being heard. I am very happy to report that these issues have very clearly been identified for the IHRSA leadership and responsibly, the IHRSA leaders have begun the process of eliminating these issues forever... so IHRSA may go on with the true spirit in which it was founded: *"To Grow, Protect and Promote the Industry"*. STAY TUNED!"

• *God bless our troops, airmen and seamen* as these brave men and women risk life and limb everyday for all of us in Iraq and the Middle-East. *God bless their families* for the sacrifice they make for all of us. *God bless the citizens of IRAQ* as they deal with daily death and destruction from suicide bombers. *God bless* you and your family. *God bless America!*

(Norm Cates, Jr. is a 35-year veteran of the health, racquet and sports club industry. Cates was the Founder and is now celebrating his 15th Anniversary as the Publisher of *Club Insider*. He was IHRSA's 1st President, and a Co-founder of the Association with Rick Caro and five others, in 1981. In March, 2001, IHRSA honored Cates with its DALE DIBBLE Distinguished Service Award, one of IHRSA's highest honors. Cates may be reached at: (770) 850 - 8506 or email: Norm@clubinsideronline.com)

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advice, etc.

"This is about as effortless as it gets! I've never even marketed outside my club!"

I decided to add a weight loss component to my club when I noticed people would lose weight for a little while, but then they would lose their motivation. They would come in and join, we'd set them up by showing them how to use the equipment, they'd last for a month or two and then they'd be gone.

Out of all the people I've trained, and I've trained a lot of people, very few actually got to their goal weights. I just felt like there was something more I should be doing. I thought of adding some nutrition program a member could do inside my club, but I didn't know a solution existed until I saw the Club Insider Magazine article that said, "It's not about the food. Success in weight loss is only 15% food."

I thought, "To be overweight you have to eat more, so that doesn't make a lot of sense." But when I looked at the facts, it started to make a lot of sense and it just popped in my head, "This is exactly what I'm looking for."

I knew the movement and the nutritional part needed to be together, but I had missed the motivation part, which is the Life Success component and the core of the Thin&Healthy's Total Solution program.

Right from the start my success rate with the Thin&Healthy's Total Solution concept was high, and I never spent a penny on

advertising or left the facility. During training we learned to ask current members what they were doing for weight loss, and we went back and sold **75% of our club members a Thin&Healthy's Total Solution membership!** We're also marketing Thin&Healthy's Total Solution to our list of active and expired members. So far **50%** have bought and we're not even done going through that list!

Without a single penny spent on advertising...

- **90% of the people that walk thru my club doors who want to lose weight buy the THTS program**
- **75% of my members offered THTS on the club floor bought**
- **50% of my inactive and expired members offered THTS bought**
- **My monthly EFT has nearly doubled**
- **Dues have nearly doubled since adding the THTS concept!**

This is about as effortless as it gets!

wellness plans as well. Right now we're working on a company with 800 employees! I know this can be so much bigger and we can do more than we're doing now. People need this.

The best part about the Thin&Healthy's Total Solution concept is you feel like you're doing something worthwhile, something that truly helps people's lives. A guy came in looking like he would be six feet under in a year or two. I could just tell by his eyes that he did not feel good. His wife had called and asked about Thin&Healthy so I started telling her about the program and she said, "I think that's what he needs." So his doctor told him to come and talk to me.

When we first got him started he could barely do five minutes on the elliptical. Now he's doing the elliptical for an hour. His wife came in and she said, "Thank you. You saved his life." When I know I'm doing something for the good of everyone, I want to continue offering the Total Solution.

The thing about Thin&Healthy's Total Solution that really sets them apart from the entire fitness industry, or any other franchise or license, is that you **learn how to run your business.** I know a lot of club owners out there are barely making it, so they want to make sure doing something like this is worth their while.

To all you club owners thinking about adding weight loss, if you want to make money AND you want to help people Thin&Healthy's Total Solution is the way to go. Putting in anything else wouldn't make sense.

Thin&Healthy truly want people to succeed. They give us a system to go by, so if you want to succeed, you will. It's just that simple. Follow the Thin&Healthy Total Solution system. It works 100%. It's as easy as that. X



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...The Cure

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communication campaign that has taken the industry by storm.

She got every publication in the industry - **CLUB INSIDER**, CBI, Fitness Management, Fitness Business Pro, Fitness Business News, IDEA Today, Athletic Business - to promote the program.

The result: as I write this on April 3, 2008, there are already over 800 clubs participating in "Clubs for the Cure". As with all of Augie's Quest programs, every penny goes for research. Not one penny for overhead...

On March 6, another breakthrough was announced. Researchers in Denver, CO, had discovered a new therapy for ALS that in laboratory experiments "dramatically slowed the progression of the disease."

This was the rationale behind Augie's dream from the very beginning. When Augie was struck down with ALS, he decided to spend every moment of his remaining time on earth doing everything he could to defeat the disease that had attacked him. As

he once said, "ALS is an SOB. We've got to overcome it".

Pat Laus has picked up the torch that Augie handed her, and I have no doubt that in this very first year of "Clubs for the Cure", she will have involved over 1,000 clubs in "the Quest", in Augie's Quest.

We've asked Pat Laus and her Clubs for the Cure Teammate, Kevin McHugh, to respond to questions that will assist your club in making the positive decision to become involved. Those questions and Pat and Kevin's responses appear below:

An Interview with Pat Laus

John McCarthy (JM): Pat, tell us about your work with The Avon Foundation 2-Day Walk in New York City to find a cure for Breast Cancer.

Pat Laus (PL): I was involved with a management development course called "Self Expression and Leadership". In this program, all of the participants were challenged to develop a program that would make a difference in the world. It was very interesting since we all feel we do so much in

our role as club owners in making a difference in the lives of our members every day. However, I was challenged to do more and expand my vision of the project to be much more than I had previously thought possible.

At the same time, as I was involved with this project, there were several people in my personal life as well as with my team at The Atlantic Club that were being impacted with Breast Cancer. Therefore, I chose to make a difference in finding the cure for Breast Cancer and selected the "Avon Foundation's 2-Day Walk in New York City". I saw an opportunity to link health and wellness by finding the Cure for breast cancer through a fitness program to prepare for the 39-mile, two-day walk.

John, we all know the statistics are alarming with 1 in 8 women being diagnosed with Breast Cancer. Every 3 minutes, a woman is diagnosed with breast cancer, a disease that kills 41,000 women every year or one every 13 minutes. I knew this was a project that I would be passionate about in making a difference in the lives of those impacted with



Clubs For The Cure Team with Augie Nieto at Beach Bash during IHRSA2008 San Diego

this disease.

JM: Once you had the idea, how did the whole concept for Clubs for the Cure get started?

PL: John, the most important thing is to be successful in enrolling others into the program, delegate by handing off the project with my major focus being relentless and unstoppable in communicating the message that will touch, move and inspire

others to get involved and create results that far exceeded anyone's expectations.

After I decided I would focus on helping to find the cure for Breast Cancer, we completed a promotional partnership with The Avon Foundation and were able to secure the sponsorship of Technogym, thanks to the support of Nerio Alessandri and Claudio Bellini and their team, as well as

(See *The Cure* Page 18)

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- ✓ DO WE CONNECT WITH OUR MEMBERS EVERY MONTH IN A COST EFFECTIVE WAY?
- ✓ DO WE CONTINUOUSLY RAISE OUR CLUB'S 'WELLNESS CREDENTIALS'
- ✓ DO WE PROVIDE OUR TEAM THE RIGHT TOOLS FOR CLOSING THE SALE?
- ✓ DO OUR TRAINERS HAVE THE RIGHT RESOURCES TO BUILD BETTER RELATIONSHIPS?



- ✓ DO OUR SALES STAFF PERSONALLY AND EFFECTIVELY BUILD RELATIONSHIPS, CONVERTING MORE PROSPECTS TO MEMBERS?
- ✓ ARE WE PROVIDING TARGETED OUTREACH, SAVING OUR BUDGET?
- ✓ DO WE HAVE A CUSTOMIZED, PROFESSIONALLY WRITTEN LETTER SERIES FOR EFFECTIVE FOLLOW-UP?
- ✓ DO WE CONTINUOUSLY BUILD BETTER RELATIONSHIPS WITH OUR PROSPECTS?



- ✓ DO WE HAVE AN EFFECTIVE WAY TO COMMUNICATE ANY MESSAGE IMMEDIATELY TO OUR MEMBERS AND MEMBER GROUPS?
- ✓ DO WE HAVE AN EMAIL TEMPLATE DESIGNED EXCLUSIVELY FOR US, ENSURING THE MOST PROFESSIONAL OUTREACH POSSIBLE?



- ✓ ARE THE PERSONAL TRAINERS ON THE FLOOR TRAINING AND GENERATING REVENUE?
- ✓ DO THEY HAVE UP TO DATE, INTERNET BASED TOOLS TO ENSURE SUCCESS?
- ✓ DO WE PROVIDE OUR TRAINERS WITH BRIDGE-BUILDING PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES DESIGNED TO BUILD BETTER RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE ENTIRE MEMBERSHIP BASE?
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...The Cure

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other vendors that would donate their time and services to help build awareness for the initiative. In addition, I conducted staff meetings throughout the entire corporation and asked for volunteers to be part of a Leadership Group - The Clubs for the Cure Team - and asked all employees to join the team along with their friends and families.

JM: Why the Clubs for the Cure Team...What was your intention with the name?

PL: My goal, as well as the vision shared by The Clubs for the Cure Leadership Team, was to develop a program that could be shared with other health and fitness clubs across the entire industry. Therefore, the name Clubs for the Cure would initially work with our two clubs in Manasquan and Red Bank, New Jersey but would be able to expand across the United States and the global health and wellness community. It was all part of the initial project to make a difference in the world by involving the entire fitness

industry.

JM: What were the results in your first two years?

PL: In 2006, our first year with our Clubs for the Cure Program, The Atlantic Club's Clubs for the Cure Team raised \$503,000 in our two clubs - the largest donation ever raised by one team in the history of The Avon Foundation's Fundraising efforts and also the largest team of walkers established by one group.

In 2007, we exceeded \$300,000, which was the largest donation globally for the year as well as also comprised the largest team for the Avon Foundation. In 2008, we will begin our efforts in June with The Clubs for the Cure/Avon Walk Team, and we will exceed the \$1,000,000 three-year objective that our two clubs made at the start of this initiative and will comprise for the third year in a row the largest team of walkers.

What we learned was equally important as the monies raised. Our success was based on the relationships we have with our staff, members and our community. This initiative created a sense of community and connectivity that is difficult to express in words. During these times, everyone from our staff to our members as well as our vendors were involved in conducting special events, doing mailings as well as phone calls

that created the success story that this effort is today. It was this effort that allows The Clubs for the Cure Team to not only be providing the resources for finding a cure for Breast Cancer but now being able to use the template that has allowed us to create The Clubs for the Cure/ Augie's Quest Team that has over 800 health and fitness facilities working as one to achieve Augie's Quest to find the cure for ALS.

JM: It sounds like a very rewarding two years?

PL: My team and I were so committed to being successful with launching the concept of Clubs for the Cure! We all knew what the success of our two clubs could mean in being able to impact the entire health and fitness industry. When the Clubs for the Cure Team and I were asked to lead the walk into the final ceremonies with our banner --after I walked 39 miles over the two days (with other members of our team as well as all the new friends I met along the way) -- in front of over 10,000 attendees and be recognized as being the largest

(See *The Cure* Page 20)



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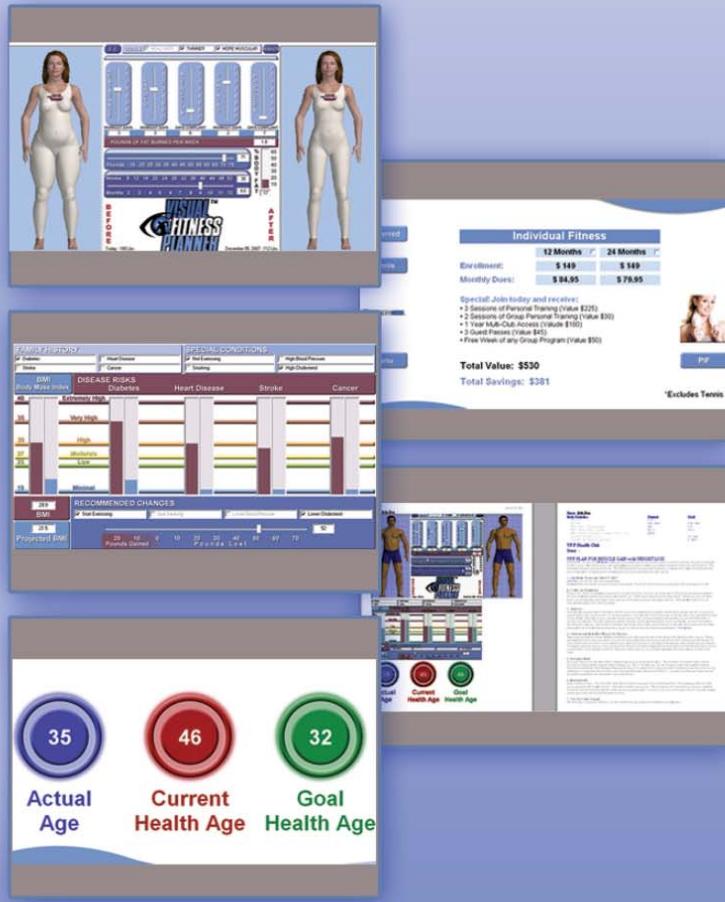


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donor as well as comprising the largest team... it was, after the birth of my children, the most rewarding event in my entire life... I realized also that this concept could and would be applicable to clubs throughout the entire industry. We used the following year to continue to build the tools that would be required to be able to present this concept to IHRSA in 2008.

JM: That's a great story... You often talk about relationships and the power inherent with the members of health and fitness clubs across the United States. What do you mean?

PL: It is all about relationships. We know that not only do club owners have strong relationships with many of their members but also all of our staff through their daily interactions at the club. We are also aware of the relationships our businesses have in our communities. When properly harnessed, we have an army of passionate supporters that will work with our facilities to be part of making a difference in the world.

For example, the initial success of The Clubs for the Cure/Augie's Quest Team was based on Augie's relationship to our industry. This was expanded to my relationship with Augie as well as to other owners and leaders throughout the industry... which is now being expanded by club owners and managers to their staff and members based on their relationships. The formula is simple, the stronger the relationships that have been developed, the more successful will be the results. We as an industry are blessed in that we are all involved in a, "Relationship Business".

John, once relationships are established, as with the case of Augie's declaration to be able to raise awareness and find a cure for ALS, we all now have a future that we can live into that has touched, moved and inspired all of us to become a team member.

When we are focused on relationships throughout our entire industry, we can work on enrolling the members of 30,000 health and fitness facilities across the United States and the potential is limitless. If you do the math, harnessing the power of our industry's membership base creates not only the resources that will impact the cure but

also provides a united effort that showcases the importance our one industry plays in expanding the health and wellness as well as extending the lives of our membership base.

JM: Tell us how the Clubs for the Cure Team became linked with Augie to become The Clubs for the Cure/Augie's Quest Team.

PL: I was very fortunate last year to be asked to become a member of The Founder's Committee for Augie. I realized the outpouring of generosity by many individuals and organizations to help support Augie's Quest to find a cure. It was clear to me that for Augie to be successful that we needed to significantly broaden the donor base and accelerate the donations that would be used in finding the cure for ALS. It was at this meeting that I offered the possibility of expanding the Clubs for the Cure Team to Clubs for the Cure/Augie's Quest Team. The vision would be to involve the owners, staff and members across the United States in supporting Augie's Quest.

JM: Once you went back to the club, what did you have to do?

PL: As with many owners across the industry, I am blessed with a great team of talented individuals who understood the importance of being part of Augie's Quest. We immediately linked with MDA and created a new expansive website, a magazine advertising and email campaign as well as an organizational structure that would support our efforts. We also realized that this was going to require a grassroots approach that would require patience since we had to build awareness for this effort. Therefore, we had to create a concept that would be easy to convey... thus the "Power of One Concept" was formed. In addition, we also learned after our first 60 days that our website needed to focus not on all the possible fundraising opportunities that are possible but simplify and provide perhaps two events; one for Indoor Cycling as well as one for "One Step Closer for a Cure".

We launched our initiative in January with the support of several trade publications as well as with IHRSA's support to join our Clubs for the Cure/Augie's Quest Team... all we are asking is to "conduct one event on one day for one hour to achieve one man's quest."

JM: What happened next?

PL: Truthfully, since there was no awareness initially of this concept, the burden was placed on our Clubs for the Cure/Augie's Quest Team to be relentless and unstoppable in their phone calls to health and fitness clubs across the United States. Kevin McHugh and I reviewed the list and called friends we've made over the years involved in the industry who became the original pioneers in our initial efforts. The phone calls by our team to their assigned territories as well our other efforts provided 80 health clubs enrolled in our first month. In February, our team began feeling the momentum growing with over 250 enrolled by the end of the month. In March, we exceeded over 750 clubs with the addition of several multiple unit health and fitness owners and anticipate exceeding 850 by the end of May. This was a very good start but just the beginning of what will become a nationally recognized effort for the entire fitness industry.

JM: What is planned for the future?

PL: John, the Clubs for the Cure/Augie's Quest Team is now expanding as planned into several other areas. This was only possible with the success and momentum that has been built through the initial efforts. The Clubs for the Cure/Augie's Quest Team has been invited to be part of The IDEA World Convention in Las Vegas as well as The Athletic Business Annual Conference in San Antonio in December. This continues to build awareness and the influence that this grassroots initiative has achieved in its initial year for ALS and continue to link all members of the health and fitness industry.

In addition, we are also working with several Associate Members who are interested in providing their services which will allow them to play a bigger role with The Clubs for the Cure/Augie's Quest Team.

Our Team is constantly following up with the clubs that have committed to conduct one event for Augie by June 30th as well as providing any support that they need in promoting as well as conducting the event. Our goal is to have many success stories on our website that showcases the creativity that clubs across the industry have incorporated in running their event for Augie.

Regarding the future, The Clubs for the Cure/Augie's Quest Team will be ready for our



Clubs For The Cure at IHRSA2008 San Diego

next phase that will begin after we complete the initial efforts in June. We will be in contact with all clubs in late Summer once again building momentum for the upcoming year.

JM: Explain your view of ALS from a human perspective.

PL: It is a disease that has no known cause, no treatment and no cure. It is almost a predictable future. In looking back on my career as an RN many years ago, I was initially assigned to many ALS patients, and over the years, have known numerous other individuals that were afflicted with this disease. It is truly a gut-wrenching disease, and it is time to create a new possibility for those afflicted with this disease now and in the future. Now is our opportunity to support the research efforts that can change the world and build hope. We can do it working together!

JM: What has it been like working with Augie and Lynne?

PL: It has been a truly amazing experience for me being involved with Augie and Lynne with The Quest. They have an unconditional love that has created a groundswell of admiration for Augie that develops a spirit of inspiration, motivation and urgency in finding the cure for ALS.

Successful legacy building is much more than financial commitments. It requires leadership, time and passion. Augie and Lynne are all of that! In our meetings, Augie is in over-drive when addressing the priorities and the issues that are confronting the Quest. He is creative, thought provoking and a coach, always looking for what is possible and what is missing. He has gotten us all out of the stands and on the court, playing hard, being shameless as well as unstoppable along with him in successfully

finding the cure.

Augie has a new context for his life not being bound or limited to who he was prior to being diagnosed with ALS, but more importantly, who he is being now creating a future and the solution for ALS. He took a stand for finding a cure which he supports with his language and actions rather than the position of being a victim of ALS. He is proving how one person can make a difference in the world! This is his secret in enrolling us into his team as well as his relentless networking to individuals and corporations that can assist in providing additional support to this effort.

At the end of the day, it is not about the wealth that one has accumulated, but what we have accomplished during our lifetime that makes life worth living and leaves an imprint in the world. Augie is in the process of leaving his imprint!

I am privileged to be his friend and facilitator. I am honored to be part of our industry. Our taking a stand against ALS speaks to the world; it is not all about profits but also in making a difference by "Expanding Wellness and Extending Life".

An Interview with Kevin McHugh

JM: Kevin, while continuing your two terrific Atlantic Clubs' day-to-day operations, you and Pat amazingly have somehow found the time to create a real fundraising machine, The Clubs for the Cure.

KM: Members of The Atlantic Club Staff are fully aware of our responsibility as a Corporation to be involved in programs and activities that positively impact our members as well as the communities that are served by our

(See The Cure Page 22)



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...The Cure

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businesses. Many members of our staff are involved with charitable organizations outside of our work at The Atlantic Club. In addition, at all of our quarterly staff meetings, Pat will always spend the time necessary to discuss areas that we need staff's support in helping The Atlantic Club support those in need in our community. Over the past 25 years, Pat has created a culture within the organization that not only will commit to monetary donations but often more importantly supporting with the time of the staff to help build successful programs that will positively impact the community. Therefore, finding the time to create The Clubs for the Cure was simply just part of what we do every day in operating The Atlantic Clubs.

At the start, the creating and development of the concept was often time-consuming, requiring many nights and weekends but it was supported by the understanding of the potential that this concept will have when it is successfully launched in the future to clubs outside of The Atlantic Clubs.

The success of the initial Clubs for the Cure concept in 2006 rests directly on The Atlantic Club Staff who volunteered hundreds of hours to build the template of The Clubs for the Cure Team. Our initial Clubs for the Cure Leadership Team was comprised of 12 managers who volunteered to meet weekly for one hour along with Pat and myself to discuss the action plans for the upcoming week along with progress and success stories from the prior week. In Year One, we documented every meeting and action step which we knew would be important as we expanded this program in the future. All of the efforts of the team were performed on their own time and did not impact their roles at The Atlantic Club. As a matter of fact, we also had a record year for the Corporation! Funny how it works!

JM: Where is Clubs for the Cure housed?

KM: That is an interesting question because the answer is that it is not housed anywhere! It is documented in files with the entire plan being located within Pat's and my files. Where Clubs for the Cure is actually housed is in the hearts and minds of our volunteer

staff members who work from their desks in performing their assigned Clubs for the Cure roles. We are in communication daily with updates by Team members and conduct bi-monthly meetings that cover all open agenda items.

It is not uncommon to find Clubs for the Cure Team members doing their work in the evenings or weekends. However, there are inherent rewards when one sees the impact it can have in making a difference in the world whether for Breast Cancer or helping Augie find a cure for ALS. They are a very special group of individuals. As a matter of fact, there will be an additional Clubs for the Cure Leadership Team formed for the 2008 to fight Breast Cancer in addition to our Augie Quest effort. This allows our volunteers from our staff to stay focused on their important initiatives.

JM: During your conversations with club owners, what were the greatest concerns you were hearing from them about getting involved?

KM: John, in our first year, there were two major concerns that our team and I faced from club owners. The first was that many club owners did not feel that they would have enough lead time to schedule an event. The second concern was that they felt they were already involved in other charities and were not in the position to donate additional funds in this budget year. Our team recognized the merit of each of these concerns. However, after being able to speak to the owners, we were able to successfully enroll them in our initial year... I can think of dozens of clubs that had initially said no, but our team was able to show them the opportunity to become part of the team and enjoyed great successes with their events.

JM: How would you answer the need for more lead time?

KM: We acknowledged that their perception was correct. However, what The Clubs for the Cure/Augie's Quest team was asking was different than most programs since we were not asking for a major month-long campaign that would require numerous meetings and ancillary point of sale that would need to be created. All we were asking was for them to 'conduct one event on one day for one hour to achieve one man's quest. All we wanted was one hour! In addition,

our Team's efforts involved the use of a powerful website that was equipped for each owner to download all the action steps in running a fundraising event with examples of successful club events that were actually conducted by a health and fitness facility as well as the ability to download all the fliers and posters that are customizable to their location. The Clubs for the Cure/Augie's Quest Zone Manager that was assigned their club would also volunteer that we would also make the fliers and posters for them to download. This additional support to the club owners provided the support which allowed them to commit to run an event and become part of The Clubs for the Cure/Augie's Quest Team. Lastly, an additional strength of The Clubs for the Cure/Augie's Quest Team was the ability of a club owner or manager to talk directly to a member of The Clubs for the Cure/Augie's Quest Team that had actually conducted an event... Club to Club!

John, with our plans for next year, we will be providing much more lead time for owners to incorporate their event into their upcoming yearly promotional plans. This will be a big win and allow more clubs to both join our team as well as others to conduct their 2nd Annual Augie's Quest event.

JM: What about other charities? In these economic conditions, this must have been difficult to overcome?

KM: Actually, the template for the concept of The Clubs for the Cure/Augie's Quest Team efforts has never focused on the financial resources of the club owners. It has always been centered on harnessing the power of their staff and members.

The Clubs for the Cure basic core principle is based on the multiplier effect not of one owner but rather on the generosity of the thousands of members each owner has at their club. The potential monies that can be generated by the touch, moving and inspiring of 3,000 members can far exceed the donations that one owner may be able to provide. A great additional benefit is the member and staff person that feels great that their club provided them this



"Expanding Wellness, Extending Life"

opportunity to make a difference in the world.

The Clubs for the Cure philosophy is for each club owner to provide his support in enrolling his staff and providing the time slot for One event to be conducted - that is their donation. The fundraising is generated by the event and forwarded to Augie's Quest through The Muscular Dystrophy Association. It is then complete, and all levels of donations are greatly appreciated! Recently, an operator of one of the early clubs to conduct his event called me and said he was disappointed with his results. I told him that his donation to Augie was phenomenal, and due to his early involvement with the Clubs for the Cure Team, Nancy Ehrola, our East Coast Clubs for the Cure Zone Manager was successful in enrolling at least 10 additional clubs from his area. His impact was much more than he realized...

The success of The Clubs for the Cure/Augie's Quest Team for the future will be our ability to enroll owners and their staff in conducting One Event on One Day. We will be providing the required lead time and support materials that are available on the www.clubsforthecure.com website for them to conduct their event prior to next year's Augie's Bash at IHRSA.

JM: So Kevin, in essence, Clubs for the Cure is a "turn-key" fundraising system when it comes to the Who, What, When, Where, Why and How for them to duplicate the program in their clubs. How easy is it really?

KM: John, yes, it is truly turn-key! The Clubs for the Cure/Augie's Quest Website was developed by a club for a club. Its design and information was provided by club managers and staff that were actually involved with the program. The promotional support materials were designed by The Atlantic Club's in-house Marketing Team with the overviews written by the Fitness, Group Exercise or other Departmental Managers throughout the club that were associated with conducting the specific event.

In addition, based on the location of your club, you can visit the website and see the name, phone number and email address as well as instant email messaging link to an individual who is committed to help.

For example, Club X

wants to become part of the team, The Club X Owner can call our Clubs for the Cure/Augie's Quest Team Logistics Director directly, and she will take responsibility for all the coordination with our team. The club owner can also go to the website and click the link to the individual assigned to their marketplace. The Clubs for the Cure/Augie's Quest Zone Manager will call the owner directly and customize the entire promotion by working with the website's tools. If other work is required, the Zone Manager will work with our Marketing Department to give the owner all the tools they need... The Zone Manager does not pass off the club owner to another department and is accountable for meeting all their needs. The benefit of a dedicated Zone Manager by territory is their ability to reference other accounts in the area where there are events being conducted.

In summary, I am convinced as a COO of The Atlantic Clubs in Manasquan and Red Bank, New Jersey that owners will share in my belief that it is turn-key. Most importantly, after our team's involvement in over 850 events, the opportunity to have even more success stories and new ideas will enhance the offerings for the next several months as well as the upcoming year.

JM: What are the "reward factors" for your Clubs for the Cure Team?

KM: There are countless rewards to being part of The Clubs for the Cure Team whether with its initial launch in 2006 with our commitment to finding a cure for Breast Cancer or with our efforts in providing Augie the research monies to finding a cure for ALS. Having been a part of all the programs along with Pat, I understand that not only am I making a difference in the world along with each member of the Team but we are providing the opportunity for thousands to share this same opportunity.

The rewards are priceless. They come in the form of stories about their loved ones, thank you notes from individuals that you do not know explaining how we have positively impacted their lives, the connectivity with fellow workers, the high-fives, hugs and often tears when a team member realizes their contribution.

There are not many
(See *The Cure* Page 23)

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...The Cure

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opportunities to become involved in causes that impact our world like those offered with our Clubs for the Cure Team... and it is strictly volunteer-based. Our goal is for these rewards to be enjoyed by clubs across the industry.

Lastly, it is not about the money or the time. Rather, it is a great team of individuals, like you would have seen at The Avon Walk or most recently at The IHRSA Conference who showcased their support and dedication for Augie and his Quest in doing whatever was needed in making it a success... I guess it can be considered a success with over 200 additional clubs enrolling at the Conference to conduct 'one event on one day' by June 30th for Augie to achieve his dream to find a cure for ALS. That is the reward! Making a Difference in the World!

JM: I just want to be clear, how much promotional time is required for an independent club owner who does not have the human resources a chain may have?

KM: The answer is real simple: None. The Clubs for the Cure/Augie's Quest Team acts in that role and will do all the work necessary for the independent club owner to have an event.

Regarding the multi-club owner, our Clubs for the Cure/Augie's Quest team will work closely, marketing team to marketing team, to achieve the outcomes projected for the event to be successful.

We are committed to keep it simple; One Event on One Day for One Hour... if we are successful in this objective, we will continue to grow the Clubs for the Cure/Augie's Quest Team throughout all sectors of the industry.

JM: Kevin, do you have any other comments?

KM: I know I speak for the entire team when I express how rewarding it is to work with Augie, Lynne and the group at MDA. In addition, the conversations our Clubs for the Cure/Augie's Quest Team has had with the other clubs owners and managers brings a real appreciation of the

specialness of our industry and the great potential of this grassroots effort. Our Team can clearly see the momentum building not only in the number of clubs enrolled this first year but also with commitments for the upcoming year telling us...We will be back again for Augie... It has been a life-changing experience for me and the members of our team. The entire health and fitness industry can be sure that The Clubs for the Cure/Augie's Quest Team will be back for them stronger and better equipped than ever...We are committed to supporting Augie in his quest to finding a cure for ALS.

Publisher's Note: Pat Laus and Kevin McHugh have developed a model, a prototype that can help millions through fund raising on Mother Earth. The effort by Laus and McHugh during the past 2½ years has been gargantuan. Their journey, as great givers to all Americans, continues. The most important thing is they are teaching us all now. Our industry's now deep involvement in Augie's Quest through the three annual

Bashes, and now, The Clubs for the Cure Program, should cause it to hear a message from the crease of my mind that says "THANKS" to all and that this Cure IS going to happen someday! The question is just when. Regardless, Augie has mobilized an Army... the health, racquet and sportsclub industry worldwide. This is our chance as an industry to earn the trust of Americans. Earning their trust is something we have yet to do, as evidenced by the fact that only approximately 15% of America's 300 million population support our facilities. This is a number that must increase. Earning the world's trust, especially the trust of U.S. and Canadian citizens where our industry history has alienated many Americans and Canadians in the past, begins with informing them about the new 21st century health/fitness club industry that exists today. This is not our 'Grandfather's health club industry anymore'. Trust is earned...not bought. The Clubs for the Cure Program is going to earn a lot of trust from consumers all across the land. We must all persist in this effort.

And, if you are producing an event, please be sure to give your local newspapers, TV and radio stations at least one week advance written notice and a two day out follow-up reminder. Advance notice will help assure maximum exposure for the event, your club and the fact that your club is doing something very important to help all people and to change this world.

So, I urge you to log onto the website: www.clubsforthecure.com and take a few minutes to sign your club up. Then, just follow the easy instructions provided by The Clubs for the Cure Team. It's just that simple.

(John McCarthy is the highly esteemed former Executive Director of IHRSA. Patricia Laus is a 25+ year veteran, the Founder and owner of two very successful Atlantic Clubs in Manasquan and Red Bank, New Jersey. Kevin McHugh, the CEO of the Atlantic Clubs, is Pat Laus' key and leading team member.)

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Profit Per Member Increase with Life Coaching

By: Donna Krech

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Some time ago, I decided to investigate the coaching business. Studying diligently, I became a Certified Life Coach and proceeded to build significant relationships with a number of incredible Master Certified Coaches. Sharing with them how I envisioned the future fitness industry, offering Life Coaching had the opportunity to affect more lives than just about any other development on the horizon. The agreement was unanimous.

I shared my vision of what Life Coaching could do for our members and our business. Several on my team decided to become certified with me. One made it her goal to add coaching to our Thin & Healthy's Total Solution in Lima, Ohio to see first hand what the results would be. She applied her new abilities and began building a new income right off the floor! The results have been significant!

Today, I share with you what I've learned so you then can make your own educated opinion on what Life Coaching can produce in your facility.

Her name is Adah Ellerbrock. When I asked Adah to share with you what her results had been, the following paragraph is what she wrote.

"Upon becoming a coach it was easy to interest others in being coached, and I began to help them start accomplishing things that they did not think were possible. They lost weight, won body-building contests, bought homes, increased their incomes, renewed their passion and more! Along with the fantastic results for the clients, I was also able to bring in over \$10,000, attracting 38 clients, only spending about 10 hours a week in that position. I was still in my full-time position, so I didn't invest a lot of time. We

were charging very low coaching prices since it was new to us (we now charge more). This was all done inside a current location with not one penny invested in advertising and never stepping foot outside the facility."

One of the fastest growing industries, Life Coaching, is now a \$15 billion dollar industry. There is a huge demand because coaching fulfills a fundamental need in self-growth and personal development. Many companies across the U. S. and the world now embrace coaching as a leadership tool at a rate that is increasing year by year. There is no limit, and it is very easy to operate. You choose whether you want to operate an hour a week or put in 40 hours a week; it all depends on how many clients you want. The average income is about \$100 an hour. Now, you do not necessarily start at \$100 an hour, so how do you build this new value into your business? How does it work, and what is involved?

Putting a coaching product/program in an existing fitness business is close to being the perfect situation.

Putting a coaching product/program in an existing fitness business is close to being the perfect situation. You already have your client base, and they are highly into self improvement as they're a member of a fitness facility. You can help them realize there is a missing link and can help them achieve all their goals. You, as a coach can provide this missing link, bridging for them the gap between taking action of what they know and what they learn. It also adds a significant piece of business to your portfolio.

Otto Siegel, Master Certified Coach relays, "It is not typical to jump into the coaching industry and begin to produce over \$10,000 in as little as three months because most people have a long lag time with marketing and getting the name out and building their personal brand. However, by putting this product in an existing business, you instantly have an edge in the coaching industry. Your people already know who you are, they come in on a regular basis, and it is easy to up-sell them on a fascinating and exciting new service. This coaching and certification model provides you a

unique opportunity for accelerated growth into a coaching practice. You can take it as far as you want. This is a way to add over \$600 a person. Let me say that again: over \$600 of income per member, without really adding anything at all new except having someone certified in coaching."

Bottom Line: Numerous certifications exist. They can be found all over the internet as well as through associations. Never Ending Motivation Coaching Certification is simple to acquire and unique, in that it teaches everything one needs to know to succeed. Systems that promote business success and return on investment! During the certification process, a student will learn specific marketing tools to be used with members, sales systems, service training, and even administrative and leadership systems to make your coaching business boom.

To get certified is very easy. The whole certification process is very interactive, they include every tool, and you will get feedback and input from your mentor coach. You will learn everything a professional coach learns within the structure of Never Ending Motivation. It has never been so easy to become a coach through this condensed certification program: structure, a solid foundation, tools, business systems and professional input by a master certified coach. You are not alone in this, and it will be a lot of fun, an intense and great learning experience for everyone.

So why haven't more clubs added coaching yet? They simply don't know they need to, or they don't know how to add a coaching service, what would be involved, if it would be easy or difficult to offer to their customers, what kind of revenue would be involved. Simply put, they did not know about coaching. The certification process will help clear up all of these questions. At the end of 13 weeks, you are going to be experienced as a coach. You will have an enormous amount of material on the business, selling the coaching segment of your business, administrative,

servicing, the leadership and how to grow it and how to add more coaches to your business. Now, of course, I cannot guarantee any earnings, it will be based on what you apply, but what we saw happen was \$10,000 come back, and we saw it start to come back on the very first day.

Find out if you have what it takes to be a Never Ending Motivation Certified Coach. With systems in place, the simple act of plugging this new component in should bring about a \$20,000 increase immediately. You compare the return on investment and see for yourself.

Sold on it and ready to

During the certification process, a student will learn marketing tools to be used with members, sales systems, service training, and even administrative and leadership systems to make your coaching business boom.

move now? Still skeptical? Either way, if you would like some more amazing stats on this new fast growing income stream for your business then go to www.neverendingmotivation.com and click on the "Become A Life Coach" link. There is a free audio

become a Certified Life Coach, call us directly at 866-260-8446, ask for Adah and get the details live. Your community, your members, your staff... and you will all benefit from this new enhancement to your facility. The time to move is now.

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Professional Development for Club Owners and Managers

By: Will Phillips

WHY?

Jack Welch recently commented in Business Week that growth solves almost all business problems. So, how do you grow? First, you must have leaders and managers who want to grow. Second, you have to enable professional development experiences. Wanting to grow means that you are ready to explore at least two types of risk - personal and business. The personal risk is that you will most likely find out you are not as smart, insightful and caring as you think. Those willing to learn are willing to expose their thinking and behavior to honest, hard hitting and constructive (usually) feedback. This is uncomfortable at times. It is like working out. If you don't push the boundaries, you don't build aerobic or muscle strength. The same applies as a leader manager.

Next, if you are serious about growth, you will have to do things differently than you are now, unless of course, what you are doing as a business now is

consistently giving you 10% plus growth a year. The 10% figure is the one many investors use for a minimal return on their capital. It is what an indexed stock fund averages per year over the long run. Great investors often earn twice that with little risk. So, if you want 10% growth year after year, you most likely will have to change how your club operates. This will require you to innovate and make wise judgments. It is hard to use a cookbook or a management book or seminar to push growth. Copying others will get you to average performance, and we are talking about superior performance in this article. Second, you will be required to accept some risk for the reward of growth. You may risk money, reputation, energy, time or credibility. The universe (or God, if you wish) rarely gives out long-term success without long-term risk and learning. Remember, no pain no gain? It applies here.

If you are making a nice living from your club, you may wish to avoid the discomfort of learning and risk. All I can advise you about is that the slow-movers get eaten first. Of course, if you

don't see any tigers, you may choose to relax in the sun. But, when they do creep up on you, they often pounce too quickly for you to respond. Waiting for the "enemies", ie: regulations, competition, changing market needs, growing energy costs, etc. to attack, allows no time, strength or initiative to respond well.

Just about every club owner has seen competition dramatically escalate. As always, and in every industry when this happens, the high-end succeeds, the well-niched succeed, the bottom succeeds for a while and those in the middle who are a bit high-end, a bit niched and a bit low-end are all eaten. If competition does not drive you to be proactive, little else will.

WHAT IS A PROFITABLE BUSINESS?

Growth in revenue is the be-all and end-all in the club industry. As a whole, very few clubs focus on profits. Of course, all owners want profits, but few clubs are designed to drive profits. (If you'd like to assess whether your club is Managing

for Profit: Are You Profit Driven or Profit Drifting, see the 40-item assessment by that title under Club Insider at REXonline.org. This assessment is based on our experience in some three dozen other industries besides the club world. It shows what could be done in your club if you committed to profits.)

A profitable business should be able to generate enough profit to:

1. Pay all of its regular obligations, such as vendors, leases, loans, investors and staff.
2. Pay the owner.
3. Pay the owner enough to live well (your definition!).

4. Invest in the owner's

retirement at the maximum allowable tax deferred rates every year. The younger you are, the less likely the social security will help as the reserves are declining; there are fewer workers to pay for it and medical costs are likely to eat up more and more of your monthly payment. Remember also that there have been stretches of a decade or more when the stock market was essentially flat.

5. Invest 3-5% of your revenue into marketing.

6. Invest 5% of your revenue every year into your capital improvement fund; new equipment annually, renovations for style and look every 3-4 years, new pool, new roof every 20 to 30 years, and ultimately for many of you, moving your club to a better location every 10 years.

7. Invest in paying your staff fairly well, especially your critical managers and supervisors. Low labor is a sign of a potentially profitable club, but low pay is a virus. Low pay scales keep costs down; keep service down and insures high turnover which insures low service and high recruiting and training costs. (See *"The Value Profit Chain"* by Heskett, Schlesinger et.al (The latter spoke to IHRSA, then IRS, about 18 years ago, and when I chatted with him, he did not think his message got through. Maybe you are ready now?). Ultimately, one of your top three priorities as a leader is to build a strong management team. This means recruiting the right two or six managers, developing them in their talents and as a team.

Doing this means you will have better ideas and better managers to deliver revenue, profit and time off for the owner. (See *Will Phillips Page 28*)



Will Phillips

You must retain these A players with good pay, medical benefits and retirement funding as a starter. Meaning and challenge are the true magnets of retention, and this is where professional development comes in.

8. Invest in new products, programs, services and experiences to keep your club fresh and inviting.

9. Invest in professional and personal development for yourself as the club owner and your management team.

You could probably add a few more items to this list, so do that, and then add in the numbers. Now, make a profit thermometer to show the various levels of profit, and where you are now, and where you want to be.

THE WHAT AND HOW

There are many ways to develop yourself and your managers. There is no particular order I can advise you in pursuing the following options without knowing the current state of development of you and your managers and the critical opportunities and threats your business is facing. If you are serious about development, most of these could be in place in about three years:

1. Join your national and local industry association, and read their publications, buy the surveys and research they provide and use it; go to conventions every year for the first 5-8 years then go every other year. On the off-years, go to a convention that is out of your industry, such as family recreation, Medical Fitness

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...Will Phillips

continued from page 26

Association, etc. and/or Great Game of Business or Senior Center Association, etc.

2. Run for office and volunteer in the above associations. You will meet great people and learn.

3. Find a group of peers and build trusting, honest connections that allow deep sharing of information, problems and goals. Read Think and Grow Rich, the classic model for all self-help business books, and learn about mastermind groups (see Mastermind Groups under Club Insider at rexonline.org for guidelines on how to form and start such a group). Ideally, your peer group is formed from those whose industry, goals and type of club is like yours. This allows the maximum exchange of ideas and no BS accountability to one another. This author chairs half a dozen industry think tanks involving 100 of the best clubs.

4. Read non-industry publications on management. This provides broader, and often, more powerful methods and concepts than you will find within an industry. INC and FAST COMPANY are good starting places, the next level is the journals of all the major business schools. Scan each publication for one good article.

5. Find other industries that you think have similarities to yours and read about them, visit them and learn new ideas that you can transfer to your

business. For instance, many local clubs are like mega churches (regular attendance, regular dues, improving your life). Or, the amusement/entertainment world. Or, a video game parlor. If you don't get out of the box, you won't think out of the box.

6. Go on at least one field trip a year. Select another club like yours, or even an interesting business, like Springfield Manufacturing or Johnsonville Sausage, and arrange for a day-long visit. Pile your managers into a van and drive there. Some of my club clients report that the discussions on the ride are as good as the visit.

7. Start a book of the month club where you and your managers read a book and discuss it. For detailed guidelines, see One Book, One Company under Club Insider at REXonline.org.

8. Begin open book management with your managers. It will take a year or two to make real progress, but it may be the single most powerful way to train your managers in how to manage. Read The Great Game of Business by Jack Stack, then Open Book Management by John Case, then go to a Great Games of Business conference. If you get serious about this, email me for a special article to help you learn how to run a monthly review and action planning meeting. But do the above reading first.

9. Make sure you and your managers are doing the right work. This means matching your talented passions to your job description. Use Strengths Finder

2.0 in any book store to get started here. If you can't figure out how to apply this, email me.

10. Now, use the assessment from the Five Dysfunctions of a Team by Patrick Lencioni to assess how you can produce better management results with your management team. This is a very on-target book. I have used the assessment as the basis of numerous workshops for club management teams with excellent results.

11. Feedback for you and your managers. Every manager can learn from honest feedback for their boss, their peers and their direct reports. This moves away from the psychological type self-assessments of personality styles to hard hitting and practical feedback from those you work with. In the next few months REX hopes to offer a low-cost system for doing this online. The very

best benefits from such feedback occur when the managers review the input in a workshop to sort it out, understand what it means and create action plans for their development.

12. Adventure as a team. Nothing builds a management team better than a few days of adventure together. Breaking out of the office, club mold and doing something new and challenging is a powerful glue that forms the foundation of an effective management team. For the last few years, REX has sponsored club team trips down the Colorado River, but you can do the same closer to home.

13. If you are doing most of the above and want more, email me about Second Generation Professional Development. I am formulating a series of activities-readings, unusual workshops, field trips to cutting-edge businesses

outside our industry for owners who are intrigued about deep personal transformation as a business leader, and more.

ACTION and COMMITMENT

These choices should get you started in your personal and professional development program. Select a handful. Do them as a management team even if it's only two of you. Review which activities are valuable and find more. When you run out of ideas, call me. There are hundreds of more ways to grow yourself and your managers.

(WILL PHILLIPS can be reached at Will@rexonline.org or via www.REXonline.org. He has thirty years of experience advising and developing CEOs and managers in over three dozen industries.)

Medical Fitness Association Featuring Medical Fitness Week

Medical Fitness Association (MFA), in conjunction with the MFA Education Committee, is sponsoring Medical Fitness Week April 21-27, 2008. The goal of this MFA initiative is to promote an increase in physical activity levels in all ages and to highlight the medical fitness difference.

During this international event, medical fitness centers and communities are asked to offer programming that focuses on teaching families the skills they need to develop healthy lifestyle habits. In addition, all participating organizations are asked to raise money - through participation in the National Walking Challenge - for local programs and scholarship funds in the fight against obesity and other health related issues. Currently, medical fitness facilities provide health and wellness programs to over three million people.

Medical fitness centers are in key positions to impact the healthcare of their communities and to partner with the medical community in creating models for success.

In recognition of Medical Fitness Week, MFA has provided a Planning Guide to help you maximize the exposure your facility receives, which will ultimately lead to healthier communities. The main program is the National Walking Challenge, however, we offer other ways through this guidebook to promote Medical Fitness Week programming and activities at your location.

All facilities must register with MFA to be a Walking Challenge Participant by Friday, April 18th to be eligible to win recognition. Register online at www.medicalfitness.org.

Register Your Facility Today!

MFA Members: Complete the registration form. A complete Planning Guide, logos, poster, pedometer link, and other materials are available on the Members Only page of the website.

Nonmembers: MFA encourages nonmembers to participate! Complete the registration form or contact MFA for more information: info@medicalfitness.org

70,000 Steps in 7 Days National Walking Challenge

All participating organizations are asked to raise money through participation in the Walking Challenge, "70,000 Steps in 7 Days". The Walking Challenge encourages local communities to get up and move by striving for

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● Who is the National Fitness Business Alliance?

National Fitness Business Alliance was created with help from independent club owners who were looking for information and ideas that will help them reach financial success. The National Fitness Business Alliance believes you can make money ethically without the negative sales images. We can attract new members without offensive ads. We can make money by charging a fair price for the product we sell. Most importantly, we can learn to compete as independent club owners and operators against any club or chain in the country.

● How our workshops can help you!

The National Fitness Business Alliance and IHRSA have formed a partnership along with our elite team of industry leaders, to provide owners a variety of information, tools and products that will provide you financial success for today and the future. We can help you with almost any problem you encounter in your fitness business. Our workshops features an exhibitor showcase that will provide you the tools to overcome your staffing issues and network with other owners and managers who experience the same difficulties as you.

UPCOMING TOUR DATES

January 23-24 – Charleston, SC

February 13-14 – Pittsburgh, PA

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April 23-24 – Seattle, WA

May 14-15 – Minneapolis, MN

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July 30-31 – Baltimore, MD

August 27-28 – Birmingham, AL

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November 12-13 – Austin, TX

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*National Fitness Business Alliance reserves the right to change dates and locations as availability dictates. Workshop presenters are subject to change based on workshop subjects and dates.

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Steroid Use Among American Youth Alarms Health Professionals:

Adults Should Warn of Serious Adverse Health Affects

CARMICHAEL, CA - March 25, 2007 - When the National Institute on Drug Abuse surveyed 48,025 students in a nationally representative sample of 403 public and private schools about lifetime, past year, past month and daily use of drugs including steroids, the 2007 report stunned American adults: 2.2 percent of high school seniors reported using steroids at least once. The Foundation for Chiropractic Progress joins healthcare professionals nationwide in alerting parents to the warning signs associated with steroid use.

"Steroid use among America's youth who are emulating professional athletes is a serious problem that can lead to serious - often disastrous - health outcomes including baldness, acne, nausea, liver damage even heart disease and stroke," says Gerard W. Clum, D.C., president of Life Chiropractic College West, Hayward, California and spokesperson for the Foundation. "Not only will youngsters be disappointed that these steroids fall short of producing superior athletic prowess, they will encounter some potentially deadly results."

According to another study conducted by the American College of Sports Medicine, steroids have been associated with adverse effects on the liver, cardiovascular system, reproductive system, and psychological status in both males and females.

"For teenagers, in particular, steroids are an absolute no-win situation," continues Dr. Clum. "Baldness, oily skin, extreme acne are just the minor problems - with some youngsters developing hormonal disturbances leading to the development of breasts in males and the growth of beards in females. They are also shown to contribute to stunted growth."

Teenagers experience mood swings, skin changes and the effects of changing hormones, circumstances which are further exaggerated by steroids use.

"It is imperative for parents to be on the alert for signs of steroid use, especially among teenage athletes," he adds. "When teens become overly concerned about physical performance, undergo significant changes in their physical appearance, exhibit serious mood swings or rage-like

behavior, these could be signals of steroid use."

Doctors at the Foun-

dation suggest that parents talk to their teens about the use of steroids and learn about safer alternatives

to performance enhancement. Chiropractic professionals and their drug-avoidance perspectives

can be important allies in helping youngsters to make better decisions.

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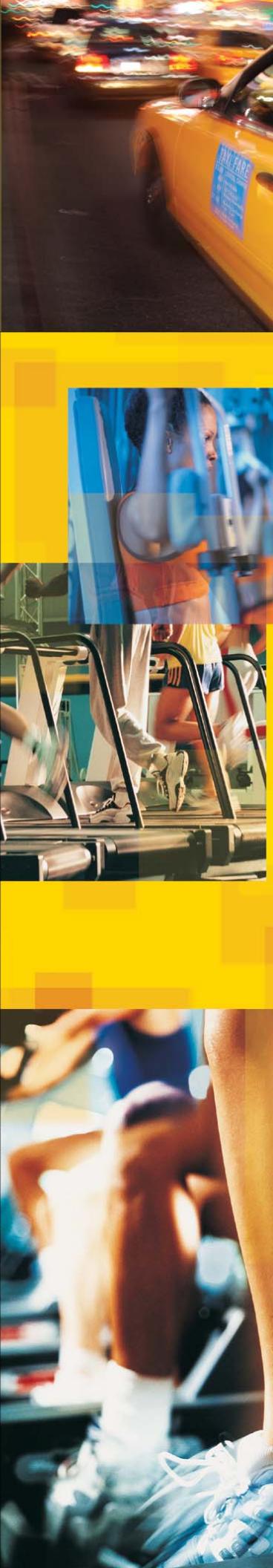
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Denver Architectural Firm Recognized As Best in Recreational Design

DENVER (March 25, 2008)

- Denver-based Ohlson Lavoie Collaborative, an architectural leader in recreation, fitness and aquatics, has won a pair of 2008 Innovative Architecture & Design Awards from Recreation Management Magazine. The awards recognize recreation facilities, new or remodeled, that are raising standards of excellence in the recreation community.

The Aspen Lodge Recreation Center at Anthem Ranch in Broomfield, Colorado, and the Health and Fitness Center at Washtenaw Community College in Ann Arbor, Michigan,

were the subjects of the award. OLC has now won the Innovative Architecture and Design Award five times in the last three years.

The Aspen Lodge Recreation Center complements its setting, embracing the site and spectacular views of the Colorado plains to the east and Rocky Mountains to the west. One of the design drivers in planning this Colorado Lodge building site was to emphasize the integration between indoor and outdoor spaces. The designers paid considerable attention to the transition between those spaces by using a raised roof, heavy

timber, exposed beams and trellised walkways. OLC worked as the recreation design architect together with DTI Design on this unique Colorado community center.

The Health and Fitness Center at Washtenaw Community College was designed to deliver the latest breakthroughs in sustainable design. OLC architects wanted to establish a functional facility that promotes healthy living for both the students on campus and the local residents who will be members. Some unique characteristics of the facility include lights that go

on automatically when daylight falls below a certain level; floors and carpets made of non-toxic renewable materials; and a reflective white roof that reduces heating and cooling requirements. The WCC building is positioned to become the first gold-certified LEED™ building for health-and-fitness west of the Mid-Atlantic U.S.

LEED™ is a certification program that stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design. The U.S. Green Building Council could make its final determination on the certification sometime this spring.

"Emphasis on client-centered design is a goal for every facility we help create," said Hervey Lavoie, president of OLC. "We are very pleased that these two projects have been honored."

The other OLC projects that received the same award in recent years were the West River Community Center in Dickinson, N.D., Laramie Community Recreation Center in Laramie, Wyoming, and The Trails Recreation Center in Centennial, Colorado.

Julian Illingworth Takes Fourth Consecutive National Title in the Centennial Playing of the U.S. Squash Championship

Atlanta, Georgia, March 16, 2008 - Julian Illingworth of Portland, Oregon, won the centennial playing of the \$30,000 S.L. Green U.S. Squash Championship in Atlanta this past weekend at Midtown Athletic Club at Windy Hill. Illingworth defeated New York's Chris Gordon 11-3, 11-3, 11-3 to earn his fourth consecutive U.S. title.

The U.S. Men's Championship has been won four times consecutively only one other time in its 100-year history, when Victor Niederhoffer captured the title from 1972 to 1975. At 24 years of age, Illingworth has the highest world ranking (#38) ever for a U.S. born player. He is the youngest player ever to win four U.S. national titles, and the only player to win two titles while in college. He played through the

S.L. Green championship draw without losing a game, defeating Merritt Lancaster, Jared Sandler, Beau River, and Gilly Lane.

Natalie Grainger of Washington D.C. won her second consecutive U.S. Women's Championship, defeating Latasha Khan of Seattle, Washington in three games, 9-4, 9-2, 9-3. Grainger is the 2007 Pan American Games gold medalist. She reached the world #1 ranking in June 2003 and is currently ranked #4. She was runner-up at the World Open in 2007.

In the National Open, world #12 John White defeated world #43 and four-time inter-collegiate champion Yasser El Halaby in three games, 11-3, 11-7, 11-8.

The Miller Zell Championships included the 2008 U.S.

Open Age Group Divisions, the U.S. Men's S.L. Green Championship, the U.S. Women's National Championship, and the National Open division. Held in Atlanta for the first time, the Miller Zell Nationals featured stadium viewing of both championship play and age division finals on a five-wall glass court.

"We have been very pleased to host the centennial playing of our national championships together with this great age-group open competition," said Bill Kujawa, Executive Vice President of Miller Zell. "With a unique five-wall glass court on hand and participants from across the U.S. and Canada, this was a true spectacle for players and non-players alike."

Other tournament results included:

Tournament Results

Mens 35+: Mick Joint of Detroit, Michigan defeated Jonathan Perry of Mountain View, California, 3-2
 Mens 40+: Andre Maur of Atlanta, Georgia defeated Bill Villari of Atlanta, Georgia, 3-0
 Mens 45+: Diniar Alikhan of Atlanta, Georgia over Dominic Hughes of Berwyn, Pa., withdrew injury
 Mens 50+: Ian Bell of Calgary, Alberta defeated Michael Bertin of Mississauga, Ontario, 3-2
 Mens 55+: Tom Rumper of Kennesaw, Georgia defeated Fred Clements of Rosemont, Pa., 3-0
 Mens 60+: Peter Morse of Houston, Texas defeated Bert Kornyei of Wareham, Mass., 3-1
 Mens 65+: John Nelson of New York defeated Michael Gough of Atlanta, 3-0
 Mens 70+: Robert MacDonald of New York defeated Ed Burlingame of North Salem, New York, 3-0
 Mens 75+: (1) Doug Allen of Richmond Hill, Ontario, (2) Donald Rung of State College, PA
 Mens 80+: (1) Duncan Shaddick, Westmount, Canada, (2) John Bennett, Salt Lake City, UT.
 Womens 35+: (1) Victoria Chishimba of Bridgeport, Ct., (2) Lisa Teer of Atlanta, GA
 Womens 40+: (1) Juliana Lillien of New York, (2) Amy Milanek of Malvern, PA
 Womens 45+: (1) Jill Gaskel of Westport, Ct., (2) Jill Steck of Califon, NJ
 Womens 50/55: Marjorie Wall of Portland, Oregon defeated Jane Segall of Westport, CT, 3-0

The lead sponsor was Miller Zell - Miller Zell is a consultant and partner to retail companies, providing professional marketing and brand development services, including design, production, and implementation of retail concepts.

Other sponsors were: Invesco, The Coca-Cola Company and Raymond James Financial.

US Squash is the official national governing body for squash and is a member of the US Olympic

Committee. US Squash governs the affairs of a broad-based national individual membership and a club network where squash is played in over 1,000 facilities across the country.



(L-R) U.S. Squash CEO Kevin Klipstein, runner-up Chris Gordon, Champion Julian Illingworth and U.S. Squash Chair Jeannie Blasberg

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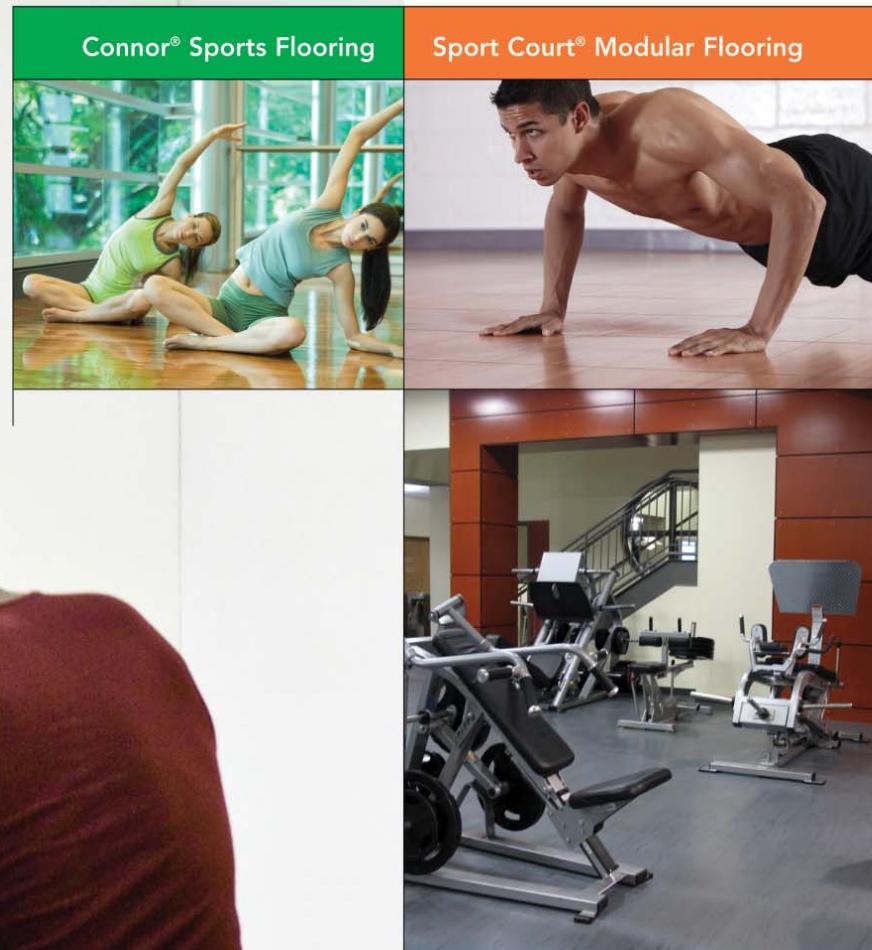
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Checkout Fairfax Racquet Club's New Teaching Center!

By: Norm Cates

The phone rang and Kirk Galiani, former Gold's Gym International Inc. owner, and now co-owner, with his brother John, of several Gold's Gyms in

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Virginia and West Virginia was on the line. Kirk said, "Hi Norm. I'm at the Fairfax Racquet Club (FRC) where I have a membership and regularly play tennis. I'm calling to let you know about the terrific new tennis teaching center

that the FRC folks have built." I listened and arranged to call Rick Schroeder at the club so I could learn the details to provide them for you. Here is my report.

Your club may or may not have space to do what the FRC folks did, but if you have three or more low-use racquetball courts that are side by side, or approximately 2,400 square feet or more space with 12' or greater ceiling heights, you may want to read this report to see if you might create a new tennis profit center for your club. And no, you don't have to offer tennis at your club now, and you don't have to have indoor or outdoor tennis courts. But, by following the lead of the FRC folks, you may well be able to include tennis teaching and practice services in an expanded menu for your club. Also, this same space, if built with the recommended tennis court flooring products, can easily double as an excellent group exercise space on a time-share basis.

Importantly, according



(L to R) Phil Tromans, Rich Schroeder, Tom Leonard, Chuck Desenberg & Vinh Do at New FTC Teaching Center

to Rick Schroeder, Member Services Director, Chuck Desenberg, Tennis Director, and Assistant General Manager and Phil Tromans, General Manager, with whom I spoke, the key is to do it right. Do not cut any corners and create a true tennis environment that invites players and non-players alike to want to become involved. In other words, don't close down three side-by-side racquetball courts, tear out two walls and throw up a tennis net across the end of that new room. Do it right! Rick Schroeder commented, "We're a bunch of tennis people. We came up with this idea, and it was our vision. (See FTC Center Page 36)

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...FTC Center

continued from page 34

The builders put the engineering and the construction together, but as far as the *look*, it *looks like a tennis court*. The feel of it for a tennis player of any age, is awesome, and the feel for group exercise participants is terrific because of the well done court surface."

The FRC team contracted the good folks at Indoor Courts of America, a Kansas-based company that specializes in tennis court development. As you can see from the photo on page 34, they've created a true tennis environment, complete with a comfortable, impact resistant tennis court surface. Although I've not stepped foot on it, based upon the specifications described by Desenberg, I know there is a "cushioned" feel for everyone that walks onto the court or into the room when it is being used for group exercise. As I think all of us know, a prime item to consider when developing a group exercise room is the flooring. So, this gives the teaching center dual uses.

Check out the photo and you will see the space is very well lit and has wall and ceiling treatments that allow for both brightness and the "tennis-court" look. It should look like a tennis court because it is close to a replica of one half of a tennis court.

The new teaching center

opened in early February, 2007, and installed at a total cost of \$110,000, it has energized the club and its members. It has given the current 2,300 members in the 36-year old club something that will take their tennis games to a higher level, and it has given the people in the club interested in learning tennis for the first time a chance to learn the game even better using the ball machine and videotaping/replay equipment.

This conversion provides the perfect way for club members to enjoy the fabulous game of tennis the way it should be enjoyed.

I asked, "How has this new teaching center impacted your membership?" and Chuck Desenberg commented, "It's added a lot of excitement as something new and different. It is in the front part of the club, so when people come in, people see it. I think it's definitely added more interest that is a positive. We use it for lessons with videotaped lessons and 42" flat screen TV replays. So, it's added a lot more excitement about lessons and tennis in general. The overall club reaction has been very good!"

Phil Tromans said, "The great thing, Norm, is we've had people coming in for lessons that we were not able to accommodate with 12 tennis courts. So, rather than put people on a list, we can now provide a lesson immediately. With this teaching center, we've been able to add 45 to 50 tennis

lessons per week. So, that's a great thing." Schroeder added, "And, we're just getting started. A year from now, we're projecting the tennis lesson volume to be up significantly."

I asked, "How do you go about booking your services, and what do you charge?" Schroeder said, "We sell contract time and random time." Desenberg added, "We mainly put it together for the lessons because we weren't exactly sure how the random time would go. So, the teaching pros have priority, and that was where our backlog was. But, when there is time left over, we offer it as contract time or random time. There hasn't been a whole lot of contract time, but there has been a lot of random time, and we're selling it by the 1/2 hour for \$20 or 1 hour at \$38. That, of course, includes the balls and the ball machine. This is for members only. We go in there with them the first time and show them how to use the ball machine. The good news is people are picking up on it quickly. Once we've taught them one time, they can go in by themselves. Even picking up the balls has not been a problem. But, our tennis pros are the key and I want to be sure to mention that FRC's Head Tennis Pro, Tom Leonard and Junior Program Director, Vinh Do put this together, primarily for the lessons, because we weren't exactly sure how the random time would go."

Clearly, this investment

of \$110,000 will, over time, really help people improve their tennis skills and that should result in greater member satisfaction that will result in greater member retention. 2,300 tennis-playing members at the Fairfax Racquet Club now have a new facility for tennis learning and improvement skills. A bonus is the convertibility for group exercise classes. This is a win-win proposition for the owners and members of The Fairfax Racquet Club.

Phil Tromans told me that in addition to the build-out by *Indoor Courts of America* (www.icasbs.com), who did the installation of all things except for the new teaching center surface; *Tennis Courts, Inc.* (www.tenniscourtsinc.com), a Richmond, Virginia-based company provided the Premier™ court surface. Both companies did an outstanding job as not only does the new teaching center provide multiple applications, it has an

upscale, very clean and appealing look. Phil also said if any of my readers want to call him that was fine. Call Phil Tromans at: (703) 273.9267 Ext. 107.

My thanks to Rick, Chuck and Phil for their time, and thanks again to Kirk Galiani for the tip on this new teaching center at the Fairfax Racquet Club in Fairfax, Virginia.

(Norm Cates, Jr. is a 35-year veteran of the health, racquet and sports club industry. Cates was the Founder and is now celebrating his 15th Anniversary as the Publisher of Club Insider. He was IHRSA's 1st President, and a Co-founder of the Association with Rick Caro and five others, in 1981. In March, 2001, IHRSA honored Cates with its DALE DIBBLE Distinguished Service Award, one of IHRSA's highest honors. Cates may be reached at: (770) 850 - 8506 or email: Norm@clubinsideronline.com)

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Industry Growth

XSport Fitness, Inc., Big Rock, Illinois, announced today, further expansion in the Alexandria, Virginia area, (King Street), with the signing of its **26th** facility.

Following the success of the recent opening of the XSport Fitness Merrifield location, Xsport Fitness continues to grow their brand in the Virginia/D.C. area.

XSport fitness facilities are open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and are located throughout the Chicagoland area, New York and Virginia, (D.C. area).

This \$14 Million, 55,000 square-foot facility features 150 pieces of state-of-the-art cardio equipment with personal flat screen televisions, 300 strength training machines, extensive free weight areas, two group exercise studios, a four-lane lap pool, a luxurious whirlpool, sauna and steam rooms, basketball courts, and a three story rock climbing wall.

XSport Fitness facilities also include many extraordinary amenities such as a full service spa including hair salon, personal training and fitness assessments, 20 tanning rooms with cutting-edge equipment including an ultraviolet-free tanning system, child play center, including a play maze, internet café, pro-shop and free parking.

"Virginia is such a great market to expand our product and we are pleased to have the opportunity to showcase our brand of health and fitness in the Alexandria community", Dan Morrissey, Vice President, XSport Fitness.

Recession?

RICHMOND, VA, April 9, 2008 - American Family Fitness will open its new 90,000+ square-foot Short Pump facility in June with additional space dedicated to children's and family programming. The new club, located at 11760 West Broad Street on the back side of Short Pump Town Center across from Macy's, will include nearly 50,000 more square feet than the current Short Pump club, which opened in August 2007.

The new location will include expanded aquatics, group and youth fitness programs, an indoor running/walking track, a dedicated area for sports-specific training, and steam room and saunas in both locker rooms. It will also feature three swimming pools - a 5-lane lap pool, an aquatics class pool and a pool with slides designated for family play.

For youth members between the ages of 7 and 18, group personal training will be offered through Velocity Sports Performance. This sports-specific training includes drills designed to enhance agility, flexibility, strength and speed and focuses on building self-esteem and self-confidence for everyone from major athletes to overweight children.

"The childhood obesity epidemic is a very serious nationwide issue," said Jill Lakey, general manager of American Family Fitness' Short Pump location. "Being able to work out with mom and dad and having areas dedicated to youth programs will make exercising more of a family affair." The new location also will offer free wireless internet and all-natural foods in its café.

BELLEVUE, WA (February 26, 2008) - Schnitzer West announced today that one of the country's most iconic fitness companies will open its first West Coast gym in **The Shops at The Bravern** in downtown Bellevue as early as November, 2008 - just in time to meet the needs of approximately 2,300 Microsoft employees who will be housed in the two office towers of the project beginning this fall.

DavidBartonGym will offer Barton's world renowned personal training in a dramatic and innovatively designed space. The plans for the 37,000 square-foot gym include an enormous strength training floor, Yoga studio and generous space for cutting-edge cardio and group training classes. Known for one-of-a-kind clubs designed to meet the unique needs of each individual market and neighborhood, DavidBartonGym can currently be found in five locations in Miami, Chicago and New York City. DavidBartonGym has been profiled in such publications as Vanity Fair, Vogue, The New York Times and Interior Design Magazine's "Best of Year 2006" for reinventing the gym experience and for building an architecturally unique home for what has become the country's preeminent training operation. Recognized nationally for attracting a celebrity clientele from top athletes to film stars, this gym will change the way Bellevue works out.

"Bellevue is home to some of the most cutting-edge companies in the world and should have a gym that's equally trend-setting. My new gym will be so inspiring that even techies will start looking like their fantasy gaming characters," says Barton.

Pleasanton, CA (March 3, 2008) - Charter Properties, a Pleasanton-based developer, and Leisure Sports Inc., owner and operator of the highly successful ClubSport fitness resorts, have announced plans to build a new 50,000 square-foot lifestyle fitness resort in Dublin, California.

The upscale club will be located in The Promenade, situated within the 1,500-acre master planned community of Dublin Ranch. The Promenade, located off Dublin Blvd and Tassajara Road, is directly surrounded by medium-high and high-density residential neighborhoods. The 110,000 square-foot, Charter Properties and Leisure Sports, mixed use project will include the fitness club, plus retail and office space on the pedestrian-friendly main street of The Promenade.

The luxurious fitness club will feature upscale amenities and services including eight dedicated studios for group exercise, yoga, Pilates and cycling. Personal training, wellness and nutrition counseling will be an integral part of the fitness services offered. A resort style pool; plush locker rooms; a day spa with nine treatment rooms and a café with healthy menu options will complement the total wellness experience.

All components of the project are currently in the design stage. Development plans will be submitted shortly to the City of Dublin. Commencement of construction is slated for late 2008 and opening expected in 2009.

See Page 6

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Programming Tip of the Month:

A New Beginning - Profitable Programming Ideas for YOU

By: Sandy Coffman

May is approaching and every club owner (should) know(s) that May is NATIONAL SENIOR PROGRAMMING MONTH. If you are truly in this industry to "MAKE A DIFFERENCE," this is the month you should be on top of your game. The largest

and most influential niche of this population is the Baby Boomers, born between 1946 and 1964. As of 2007, however, the oldest of this group turned 61; U.S. Census statistics state that those 65 and older will be 63 million strong by 2025, and they will be more affluent and healthier than any elderly generation before

them. On the other hand, many - even most - of these people have never been involved in a regular fitness program. They are not familiar with or comfortable with our clubs. Senior programming deserves its own identity and its own chapter in this book just as it deserves its own programming menu or department in your club.

One example of a fabulous SPECIAL EVENT to kick off the menu of classes and programs that will be available to your members and guests is:

SENIOR DAY WITH A NEW BEGINNING

It is a ONE-DAY SPECIAL EVENT designed for clubs that want to increase their membership, grow their senior programs, and provide visibility to the community as well. The program will reenergize the existing senior program in your club, reenergize its existing participants, encourage existing members to bring a guest for the day, reactivate dropouts, get inactive members involved, get new members involved in scheduled programming and encourage potential members to become new members. The day's event will include many activities and experiences, but the core event of the program will be

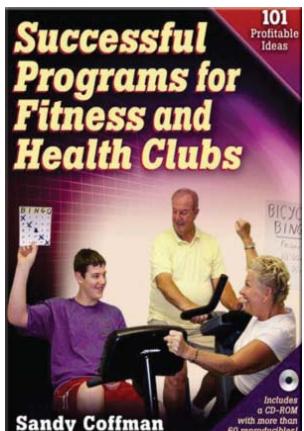
the fun and fitness chair exercise class. The day's agenda: 9 am to 3 pm.

Tips for Success and Points to Consider: To set your goals for the program, consider what you need to achieve from the event. Evaluate the results as you compare them with your goals as in the following examples:

- The number of existing 50+ members attending.
- The number of guests of existing members attending.
- The number of inactive members attending.
- The number of new members (three months) attending.
- The total number of guests attending.
- The total number of non-members (potential members) who attended from the promotions themselves (not guests).

Variations: This event is often run as a health fair. Obviously, a health fair would include booths providing health screenings, eyes, ears, blood pressure, diabetes and cholesterol. I strongly encourage the inclusion of these screenings, but health fairs are common, and the addition of THE FUN AND FITNESS CLASSES make this program unique.

Author's Note: One of the essen-



tial ingredients of this program is the appropriate personalities of your staff. To give the proper service to this population, you must actually care about the happiness and well-being of other people. Your people in charge must get real satisfaction from helping someone out, relieving apprehension and generating smiles. It will be key to achieving this program's success.

(To order Sandy's great new programming book: "[Successful Programs for Fitness and Health Clubs](#)" 101 Profitable Ideas go to: www.humanikinetics.com Contact Sandy: SLCoffman@aol.com or www.sandycoffman.com)

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Very Sincerely,
Norm Cates, Jr.

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*Mike Arteaga
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