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The Pulse of the Health and Fitness Club Industry

George Foreman III and EverybodyFights

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Norm Cates' CLUB INSIDER™

The Pulse of the Health and Fitness Club Industry

George Foreman III and EverybodyFights

Train Like a Fighter; Live Like a Champion

By: Justin Cates

Everyone has the fighting spirit in them. Because of the daily grind so many of us get used to, we may not realize it still exists inside of us, but it does. We've all studied it in school; it's called the *Fight or Flight Response*, and it is ingrained in nature. When we perceive a threat, our heart rate increases, adrenaline kicks in and we become hyper-aware of our surroundings. It is in that moment that one chooses the course that best ensures their survival.

We all hope we never have to experience this psychological/physiological response in our life, but it is refreshing to know our instinctual nature will kick in if and when it is needed. Now, more evolved,

we have learned to tap into this response to propel ourselves to greater heights physically and mentally. At **EverybodyFights**, the core of their program is to do exactly this. In doing so, they tackle one's own *beliefs, attitude and effort*. A triangle can only be a triangle if it has three points, so, too, what one can accomplish is driven by the three points of *belief, attitude and effort*.

This month's cover story subject, **George Foreman III**, brings forth this philosophy as the core of EverybodyFights. Training others to push themselves beyond what they thought possible to create improvement is what inspires George, and he has instilled that philosophy in his core of trainers. Those trainers, in turn, have spread this philosophy to their trainees/fighters.

Once again, like the triangle of belief, attitude and effort, the triangle of leader, trainers and trainees/fighters has created a winning combination for EverybodyFights.

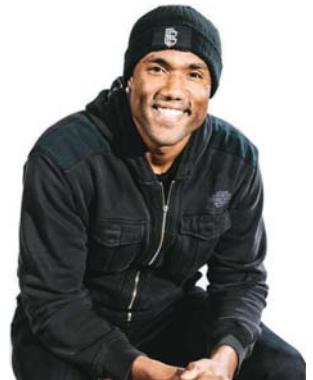
I welcome you to read on as CLUB INSIDER interviews George Foreman III.

An Interview With George Foreman III, Co-Founder of EverybodyFights

CLUB INSIDER (C.I.) - George, where were you born, and where did you grow up? Prior to your boxing career, where did you go to school and what did you study?

George Foreman III (GF) - I was born in a little town called Humble, Texas, right outside of Houston. Today, you would consider it

(See EverybodyFights Page 12)



George Foreman III

Planet Fitness Reaches 10 Million Member Mark

NEWINGTON, N.H. - Planet Fitness, Inc. (NYSE: PLNT), one of the largest and fastest-growing franchisors and operators of fitness centers in the U.S., announced that, as of the end of March 2017, the brand reached



the significant landmark of 10 million club members across its entire system.

"We are thrilled to announce this milestone," said Chris Rondeau, Chief Executive Officer of Planet Fitness. "A key to our success is our differentiated Judgement-Free environment combined with our affordable price point and high-quality experience. While the industry targets avid exercisers, Planet Fitness has consistently attracted first-time users who have never belonged to a gym before and casual users. In fact, of almost one million new Planet Fitness members surveyed in 2016, over 40% had never belonged to a gym before. Providing an exceptional member experience has been our focus from the very beginning and the fact that 10 million individuals have chosen Planet Fitness, truly reinforces the demand for our unique model. We are humbled to have an important role in so many lives

and are excited to continue to build upon our momentum."

Since the company was founded 25 years ago, Planet Fitness has revolutionized the fitness industry with extremely low prices, offering affordable memberships for just \$10 or \$19.99 a month. From the first club in Dover, N.H., Planet Fitness has experienced consistent and thoughtful growth and has grown to over 1,300 locations in 48 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Canada and the Dominican Republic, while significantly increasing meaningful offerings for its club and community members. Key milestones for the brand include the unveiling of the Judgement Free Zone philosophy in 1997, the first international location in Canada in 2014 and the opening of its 1,000th club in 2015. Further, Planet Fitness recently launched the Judgement Free Generation, a national philanthropic initiative designed



Chris Rondeau, CEO of Planet Fitness

to combat judgement and bullying faced by teens and create a culture of kindness and encouragement.

Inside The Insider

- "Insider Speaks" - Mike Alpert... Our Industry's Most Dedicated Prophet Leads the Exercise IS Medicine Charge!
- What's Your Story? - **By:** Derek Barton
- Minimize the Likelihood of Medical Emergencies and Mitigate Your Responsive Liability - **By:** Paul R. Bedard, Esquire
- Workplace and Medical Fitness Case Studies - **By:** Dave Beadle
- Is Your Organization's Culture Independent or Integrated? - Part II - **By:** Karen Woodard-Chavez
- At IHRSA 2017, We Asked, "What Makes You Great?" - **By:** Matt Zagrodzky
- Congressional Fitness Challenge Allows Nation's Leaders to Encourage Healthy Lifestyles
- Blink Fitness Launches "Tune Out While You Work Out"
- Equinox Unveils First East Bay Club in Berkeley
- Instinctive Insights Joins Club Insider Advertising Team
- reACT Strength Trainer and Workout Anytime Join Club Insider Advertising Team
- And, of Course, *Norm's Notes*

Norm's Notes

•Hello Everybody! This is your CLUB INSIDER Publisher and Tribal Leader Since 1993 checking in with our 280th monthly edition of CLUB INSIDER! If that's not clear proof there IS a GOD... I don't know what is! For 280 months now, I've planted my big derrière at this computer and stayed in touch with all of you by bringing you the best possible educational information we can assemble every month, working with our **fantastic Team of Contributing Authors**, along with an absolutely **great Team of Advertisers** to serve you.

•Is America a GREAT COUNTRY, or what? Hmm... Hmm... Hmm!

•Congratulations to CHRIS RONDEAU, CEO of Planet Fitness, and his Team, as they announced that Planet Fitness now has over 10 Million Members! WOW! There are lots of reasons for this success to date, but maybe, the most important reason is simple: **GREAT VALUE!** See the Press Release on Page #3.

•I had one of the *greatest thrills* in my 71 years of life when PAMELA KUFAHL and MARTY McCALLEN of Club Industry informed me that, on October 5th, at the Club Industry Show at the Chicago Hilton, they're going to honor me with their **Lifetime Achievement Award!**

Wow! What an *amazing honor* for a guy who flunked English 101 at N.C. State when I was playing football there! Thanks very much *Pamela* and *Marty*! I'm thrilled for many reasons, starting with these two:

1. The honor is being given to me by *Club Industry*, a great organization that some would call *competitors* of CLUB INSIDER. Justin and I don't view them that way at all. We view them as allies in the same fight to help all Americans, by helping YOU, the health and fitness club owners and operators of America, and the world, continuously improve your club operations. Our **MISSION** is to help you perfect your operations by reading articles we publish, which have been written and contributed by experts in many disciplines... marketing, sales, fitness training, back office operations, legal challenges and facility design, just to name a few of the disciplines our **Contributing Authors** write about.

2. This upcoming honor thrills me because I will be joining some of the most prominent names in the history of our industry who have already received this **Lifetime Achievement Award**. True *icons* and *legends* in our industry such as the late JOE GOLD, the late JACK LaLANNE, RICK CARO, JOHN McCARTHY, AUGIE NIETO, ALAN SCHWARTZ, DANIEL LEVIN,

ANNBETH ESCHBACH, the late BROTHER CURT BEUSMAN, the late JOE WEIDER, RED LERILLE, JOE CIRULLI, DR. KENNETH COOPER and JUDI SHEPPARD MISSETT.

To close this note, let me add this. They call it a **Lifetime Achievement Award**. But, at age 71, I'm pleased to be able to report nothing but good health... heck, all of my life. I have been blessed, and I am thankful for the blessing of good health. I want to **Thank You** all for reading CLUB INSIDER. Justin and I have a *passion* for what we do for you. And, I pledge to use the *rest of my Lifetime* to continue to try to improve CLUB INSIDER for you all. And, when I kick the bucket, Justin is poised to grab the baton and keep on running with CLUB INSIDER. Folks, I hope you will come to **Chicago** for the **Club Industry Show, October 4th - 6th** so you are with Justin and me when I receive this high and kind honor. Stay Tuned!

This month, we have a real **Doozie** of a Cover Story, really well written by my Son and Partner, JUSTIN CATES, featuring George Foreman, III, one of the sons of THE George Foreman of boxing and TV Infomercial fame. This special Cover Story is in-depth, and you won't be able to put it down!

Also, this month, you will hear



Norm Cates

from **some new Contributing Authors**, including **MIKE ALPERT**, who weighs in on **Exercise IS Medicine**, and we are announcing a terrific agreement that Mike and I have made in which he and his **Claremont Club Management Team** will write about **Exercise IS Medicine** in a new monthly column for us. Also, bringing his brilliance to CLUB INSIDER again is the one and only **DEREK BARTON** of California-based **Barton Productions**, who wrote an excellent article entitled: **What's Your Story?** And, we feature another terrific article from **PAUL BEDARD, Esquire**, CLUB INSIDER's resident legal expert, who wrote **Minimize**

(See Norm's Notes Page 7)

About Club Insider

Established in 1993

24 Years and Counting!

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PUBLISHER and EDITOR - Norm Cates, Jr.
ASSISTANT PUBLISHER - Justin Cates

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CLUB INSIDER

P.O. Box 681241
 Marietta, GA 30068
(O): (770) 635 - 7578
(F): (678) 826 - 0933

www.clubinsideronline.com

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Thank You to Our Contributing Authors

- Rick Caro - President, Management Vision, Inc. - (212) 987 - 4300
- John McCarthy - 25-Year Executive Director Emeritus of IHRSA
- Joe Moore - IHRSA President & CEO - (800) 228 - 4772
- Angie Pattengale - National Federation of Personal Trainers - (800) 729 - 6378
- Bill McBride - Founder, BMC3 - BillMcBride@bmc3.com
- Bruce Carter - President, Optimal Design Systems International - (954) 888 - 5960
- Casey Conrad - Communications Consultants - (800) 725 - 6147
- Daron Allen - President & CEO, Visual Fitness Planner - dallen@vfp.us
- Dave Beadle - Founder & CIO, Fit Happens Intentionally! - dhbeadle@gmail.com
- Derek Barton - Owner, Barton Productions - derek@bartonproductions.com
- Donna Krech - Founder and President, Thin & Healthy's Total Solutions - (419) 991 - 1223
- Dr. Art Curtis - President, Curtis Club Advisors - art@curtisclubadvisors.com
- Dr. Gerry Faust - President, Faust Management Corporation - (858) 674 - 2400
- Jim Thomas - President, Fitness Management USA - (800) 929 - 2898
- Jon Butts - President, Muscle Up Marketing - jon@muscleupmarketing.com
- Karen Woodard-Chavez - President, Premium Performance Training - karen@karenwoodard.com
- Melissa Knowles - VP of Gym HQ, A ClubReady Company - mknowles@gymhq.club
- Mike Alpert & Claremont Club Team - www.claremontclub.com
- Nancy Trent - Founder, Nancy Trent & Company - nancy@trentandcompany.com
- Paul Bosley - Owner, Business Finance Depot - (800) 788 - 3884
- Paul R. Bedard, Esquire - Crunch Fitness Connecticut - paul@crunchct.com
- Stephen Tharrett - Co-Founder and Principal, ClubIntel - (866) 691 - 9223
- Thomas Plummer - National Fitness Business Alliance - (800) 726 - 3506



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“Insider Speaks”

Mike Alpert... Our Industry's Most Dedicated Prophet Leads the Exercise IS Medicine Charge!

Publisher's Note: The following letter is from Mike Alpert, President and CEO of The Claremont Club in Claremont, California. Mike has taken the concept “Exercise IS Medicine” to a World Class level. Recently, to follow-up on the IHRSA Convention, I called Mike to check in by phone. During that conversation, we agreed that CLUB INSIDER will publish a new monthly column, which will be written each month by Mike and his Claremont Club Managers. The title of the new monthly column will be: “Exercise IS Medicine.” This month, we present a letter from Mike Alpert.

• • •

Norm,

March 25, 2017

Thank you so much for the phone call yesterday. Every time I talk with you, I come away so charged up and reminded of all the amazing opportunities that our industry has in changing the health of the world. I am also reminded of the contributions that you have made to our industry by being one of the seven people who started IHRSA; serving as the first President of the IHRSA Board of Directors; and for the past 24 years, with your informative and educational publication, CLUB INSIDER.

Two years ago, we were honored as you wrote a two-part, 9,500-word cover story about club innovation and differentiation. The focus was on the programs at our club that help people who are struggling with chronic injuries and chronic illness and the whole concept of *Exercise is Medicine*. During our many interviews, it became crystal clear to me that our story really resonated with you, and it touched your heart and soul in a way that I don't think happens very often. That leads me to our recent conversation and to do my best to put it to paper.

I believe that you had just watched our documentary on *Exercise is Medicine* and had posted a link to it on www.clubinsideronline.com. If your readers would like to view our video here are two Links:

- <https://vimeo.com/208210059> (a short version - 28 minutes)
- <https://vimeo.com/206999163> (a longer version - 1 hour)

In the documentary, people are able to hear from such highly-respected people in our industry such as Joe Moore, John McCarthy, Will Phillips, Eddie Tock

and Augie Nieto, as well as Dr. Robert Sallis, Dr. Joseph Rosenthal and Rich Yochum from the medical/health care community. Each of them endorsed the fact that, not only is *Exercise Medicine*, but that it is the *strongest medicine we have today*. They all feel that now is the time for us to bridge the gap between fitness and health care and to start working together instead of independently. For the first time I can remember, hospitals and health care providers are moving towards *Population Health*, which is focused on prevention and wellness: from sick care to health care. The emphasis is on *keeping people out of the hospital and away from costly medications and procedures*. And, our industry has the ability to move it forward.

We talked about my frustration and failure of getting other clubs to embrace the programs we are having such success with at The Claremont Club and implementing them in their clubs. Too often, the conversation with other owners and operators evolve around ‘How do I make money with these?’ I have always believed that, if you do things for the *right reason, good things happen*. Then, I tell them about the impact that these programs have had on both member and staff attrition at our Claremont Club: In 2015, our member attrition dropped from 23.5% to 15.5% and staff attrition was 8.4%. We were doing all the things that most good clubs do every year: painting walls; bringing in new equipment on a regular basis; having squeaky clean locker rooms and preaching and teaching customer service every day. So, what was the difference? To find out

what the difference was, we began asking our members and staff, and we discovered from conversations with them that the *key ingredient was creating and maintaining meaningful, purposeful work for staff and a sense of shared values with our members*. All were directly linked to our community outreach and the programs we were running.

People wanted *good news*. Seeing people with spinal cord injuries who are paralyzed working out right next to able-bodied people, and having such success, made everyone feel *good*. The fact that the club is *inclusive* and welcoming to *all* people regardless of their physical capabilities made a difference. That 8% drop in attrition based on our average dues and non-dues had an impact of \$1,006,372, of which 49% was dues revenue. The programs were not implemented for that reason, but by accident, it just happened.

Does that answer the question of, ‘How do you make money with programs like these?’ What is most impactful is that these programs, which offer a continuum of care, are making a difference in people’s lives on a daily, weekly and monthly basis ongoing and are not one-time fundraisers. And, they have changed the lives of members, staff and the communities we serve. I think we should take a look at the wording our industry uses: **HEALTH CLUBS**. Isn’t it time that we put *Health* back in clubs? It shouldn’t be about how someone looks in a bathing suit, but it should be about promoting *Health* and making sure that our clubs are *inclusive*.

The United States spends 50%



Mike Alpert

more than the next wealthiest country on healthcare, and according to the World Health Organization (WHO), we are rated **37th**. If you look at the 11 wealthiest countries, we are dead last on healthcare access, quality of care and outcomes. By so many measures, healthcare is a mess, and it needs to be fixed. The fitness industry is positioned to play a major role in this and to be a benefactor from it. We need to lobby at the state and national levels together to fight for change. Are we, as an industry, up to the challenge?

It would be wonderful if you would consider adding a column to your monthly publication entitled: *Exercise is Medicine*. My managers and associates would be honored to write these articles.

Thanks again Norm for the inspiring conversation and for all you continue to do for our industry.

Yours in Good Health,

Mike Alpert
President/CEO
The Claremont Club



Project Walk at The Claremont Club



...Norm's Notes

continued from page 4

the Likelihood of Medical Emergencies and Mitigate Your Responsive Liability.

Plus, veteran club consultant of **Premium Performance Training** and **CLUB INSIDER Contributing Author, KAREN WOODARD-CHAVEZ**, delivers **Part II** of her article **Is Your Organization's Culture Independent or Integrated?**, which I will comment on later in these Notes.

Last, but for sure, **not least**, our friend and **CLUB INSIDER Advertiser, MATT ZAGRODZKY**, shares his special story from **IHRSA's 37th Annual Convention and Trade Show** where he and **RANDY IVEY** asked many **IHRSA** club operators this question: **What Makes You Great?** For every person who shared their thoughts on that question, Matt's company, **iGoFigure**, **donated \$20 to Augie's Quest** adding to the record-setting amount of funds raised at this year's **Bash for Augie's Quest**. To close this Note, let me welcome our **three new advertisers** and another **new Contributing Author**. We introduce the following three new advertisers this month, and I will tell you more about them in a **later Norm's Note**:

1. The **REACT Trainer**;
2. **Instinctive Insights**;
3. **Workout Anytime Club Franchising** (ads begin in July).

And, new Contributing Author, **DAVE BEADLE**, weighs in with an article entitled: **Workplace and Medical Fitness Case Studies**. So, folks, grab a *sarsaparilla* and *enjoy the April Edition of CLUB INSIDER!* You will be **GLAD** you did!

• **Sincere Condolences to HARVEY SPEVAK, and all the folks at Equinox Fitness**, as two of their staff members were shot by a disgruntled former employee at their facility located at **The Shops at Merrick Park**, a shopping center in **Coral Gables, Florida**, a suburb of Miami. According to the **Associated Press** and the **Miami Herald**, reports on **April 10th**, say **ABEKU WILSON**, of Miami, was fired from his job as a trainer at the Equinox facility on April 8th. Wilson reportedly went to the facility armed with a gun later in the day and shot **JANINE ACKERMAN, 35, General Manager**, in the head, and **MARIOS HORTIS, 42, Fitness Manager**. Wilson then took his own life. Ackerman and Hortis were taken to **Jackson Memorial Hospital** in Miami via helicopter, and they both died shortly thereafter. According to reports, Wilson, was fired because of

"workplace violence."

• **Sincere Condolences to ED and ZOE VEASEY** and all the folks at **Cedardale Health and Fitness** in **Haverhill, Massachusetts**, as the world class mega-club had a severe fire damaging the basketball court, food and beverage areas, locker rooms, an indoor pool and a nursery, reportedly approximately 25% of the building... essentially shutting the business down! **WOW! Best wishes to ED, ZOE and their Cedardale Team**, as they continue their process of making decisions about how to deal with the losses estimated to be between \$2 and 5 million.

• **JON BUTTS**, one of our **CLUB INSIDER Contributing Authors** and **Advertisers** of his company **Muscle Up Marketing**, has been named by **Auburn University's Raymond J. Harbert College of Business** as their **Entrepreneur of the Year!** **CONGRATULATIONS Jon!** The prestigious award is open to Auburn Alumni who graduated more than ten years ago. Winners are selected based on their recent professional accomplishments, their impact as business leaders, ethics and integrity. *"Being recognized as Auburn University's Entrepreneur of the Year is one of the proudest achievements of my career,"* said Butts. *"I am deeply humbled to receive this award when I think about the thousands of Auburn Alumni who have done so many amazing things."*

• The aforementioned **MIKE ALPERT**, **General Manager** at the **Claremont Club**, in **Claremont, California**, will go down in the history of our great industry as one of the true pioneers in the realm of getting people to understand the value of regular exercise to their health and wellbeing. I think it's important that we all pay close attention to what this very dedicated man, one whom I would describe as a **"Dedicated Prophet"** for the challenge of **Exercise IS Medicine** becoming mainstream in America, and around the world, *has to say and is doing*. I made a post-IHRSA Convention follow-up call to Mike asking him how the show went and to congratulate him on the production of his really well-done video, which is referenced in his writing that begins on **Page #6**. In that conversation, Mike agreed that he and his terrific staff would begin to produce a monthly article for **CLUB INSIDER** entitled: **Exercise IS Medicine**, starting with our **May Edition**.

• **DR. JASON CONVISER** was kind to be giving out copies of the new manuscript, also known as a 2-inch thick book he and **ROBYN STUHR** have produced entitled **The Health/Wellness Professionals Guide**

To **MEDICAL FITNESS EXERCISE** to those of us who had just attended the **BASH for AUGIE'S QUEST** in **Los Angeles at IHRSA2017**. They paid **Tribute** to Augie at the beginning of the book, and they have *pledged to give all the proceeds from the book's sales to Augie's Quest*. The **Foreword** was co-authored by **MIKE ALPERT** and **DR. ROBERT SALLIS**. You may purchase the book for **\$99** by going to www.healthylearning.com, and your payment will go to Augie's Quest.

- Starting in 1993, and **over the first 24 years of publication**, I've had the

chance to read a lot of terrific things in **CLUB INSIDER**. This month, I read this: **"When you have better humans in your organization, you have a better organization."** And, it moved me to write the following **Norm's Note**:

In this edition, **KAREN WOODARD-CHAVEZ** made that comment in **Part II** of her article entitled: **Is Your Organization's Culture Independent or Integrated?** Just think about that statement for a little bit. It might sound *obvious*. But, when I gave it further thought, the comment struck me

(See Norm's Notes Page 8)

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...Norm's Notes

continued from page 7

SO much... that I thought I would repeat it in this Note to draw your attention to it and to her article which appears on Page #24. To me, the thought calls for club owners and managers to seek quality people who are hired, trained and supervised with "standards" set for all three phases of the employer/employee relationship:

1. In hiring;
2. In training;
3. In Supervision.

This attention to *standards*, and their establishment and maintenance, *will cause an organization to be better than its competitors. Simple enough, right?*

• **Sincere Thanks and Appreciation to GUY CAMMILLERI and his Brothers, Marcus and Leo, of World Gym, for advertising on our Outside Back Page for the past two years. 2016 was a tough year for these fine guys because they lost their beloved Mom, but they are going strong and doing well now.**

• We are *pleased to welcome three new CLUB INSIDER Advertisers this month!*

Our new **Outside Back Page Advertisers** are actually two companies, who will alternate months with their respective ads. First is the **reACT Strength Trainer**, a dynamic exercise machine, which occupies the **Outside Back Page of this edition**. You can also learn more about the **reACT Strength Trainer** by reading the interview with **GREG MAURER** on Page #28. Also launching their advertising this month is our second new advertiser, **Instinctive Insights**. Comments from **JERAMY FISHEL**, Founder and Owner of **Instinctive Insights**, and their **New Ad** appears on Page #29. And, our third new advertiser, **Workout Anytime**, begins their ads in **July**. **Workout Anytime** was **Co-Founded by STEVE STRICKLAND, CEO and JOHN QUATTROCCHI, President**, and they have a **great Team**, including **MARK deGORTER, COO; RANDY TROTTER, Sr. VP. of Development; WANDA JOHNSON, VP. of Franchise Operations; JOHN CARSILLO, V.P. of Construction; DENNIS HOLCOM, V.P. of Franchise Support; GREG MAURER, V.P. of Fitness; SARA TROUTMAN, Digital Media Manager; MARNIE SAYLOR, Marketing Franchise Support Manager; and STACIE BEVENS, Marketing Coordinator**. **To the entire Workout Anytime Team, WELCOME to the CLUB INSIDER Advertising Team!** You can learn more about **Workout Anytime** on their website at www.workoutanytime.com.

• The following **News Items** are *reprinted portions of Press Releases from GoodLife Fitness, Genesis Health Clubs, Equinox and TRX*:

LONDON, ONTARIO-GoodLife Fitness illuminated its Home Office building in **blue lights** on **Sunday, April 2**, as part of the '**Light it Up Blue**' campaign to mark **World Autism Awareness Day**.

After his daughter **KILEE** was diagnosed on the autism spectrum disorder at age two and a half, **GoodLife Fitness Founder and CEO DAVID 'PATCH' PATCHELL-EVANS** made it his mission to support awareness and research to help Canadians living with autism spectrum disorder, which now affects one in **every 68 Canadian children**. Patch urges Canadian businesses and individuals to find their own ways to 'light it up blue' for autism awareness.

"*My daughter, who is now 21, continues to teach me important lessons about gratitude, perseverance and joy.*" says Patch, who was awarded the **2007 Canadian Medical Association Medal of Honor** for his support of autism initiatives. "*On April 2, the world celebrates how far we have come in autism education, research, early diagnosis, and awareness. A lot of hard work is yet to be done, but I am comforted knowing these kids and adults are in the hearts and minds of so many caring people around the globe.*"

To date, Patchell-Evans has **donated \$11.5 million to autism-related initiatives**. Some of these initiatives include co-founding the **Kilee Patchell-Evans Autism Research Group**, and in November of 2016, the **Pacific Autism Family Network** opened the **GoodLife Fitness Family Autism Hub**.

WICHITA, KS - RODNEY STEVEN II continues his **Genesis Health Clubs'** expansion announcing they have purchased **Health-Ridge Fitness Center in Olathe, Kansas, its 13th Kansas City-area location**.

The facility, now known as **Genesis Health Clubs - Olathe Ridgeview**, is a massive health club, including strength and cardio equipment, personal training, indoor and outdoor pools, basketball, racquetball, day spa, indoor running track, outdoor fitness trail, CrossFit, over 100 group fitness classes per week and kids programs, including karate.

Rodney Steven II, Owner/President of **Genesis Health Clubs**, echoed that sentiment, "*HealthRidge is an extraordinary facility. It is absolutely massive and easily one of the largest, most successful clubs in the entire Midwest. Two swimming pools, an outdoor trail, racquetball, I could go on. It has everything!*"

Steven continued, "*We are so excited to continue to grow in Kansas City, our largest market. With 13 locations in the greater metro area, we truly have something for everyone in Kansas City. We are a locally owned and operated business and we aren't going anywhere. We plan on focusing heavily on this and all our Kansas City clubs to bring in the Genesis brand and give our members an unforgettable fitness experience.*"

NEW YORK, N.Y. - Cycle for Survival, the movement to beat rare cancers, **raised \$34 million in 2017** through its indoor team cycling events, the most raised in a single year in the history of the movement. **Cycle for Survival's overall fundraising total since it started in 2007 is \$140 million**, of which **\$110 million was raised in the past four years**. 100% of every dollar is allocated within six months to groundbreaking rare cancer research and clinical trials led by **Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center**, which owns and operates Cycle for Survival.

Cycle for Survival's events were held in 16 cities across the country, each with rides led by world-class instructors from **Equinox**, the founding partner of the movement. In 2017, events took place in February and March in Boston, MA; Bethesda, MD; Chicago, IL; Dallas, TX; Greenwich, CT; Huntington Beach, CA; Long Island, N.Y.; Los Angeles, CA; Miami, FL; New York, N.Y.; Palo Alto, CA; Paramus, N.J.; San Francisco, CA; Seattle, WA; Summit, N.J.; and Washington, D.C.

SAN FRANCISCO, CA - A unani-
(See Norm's Notes Page 10)



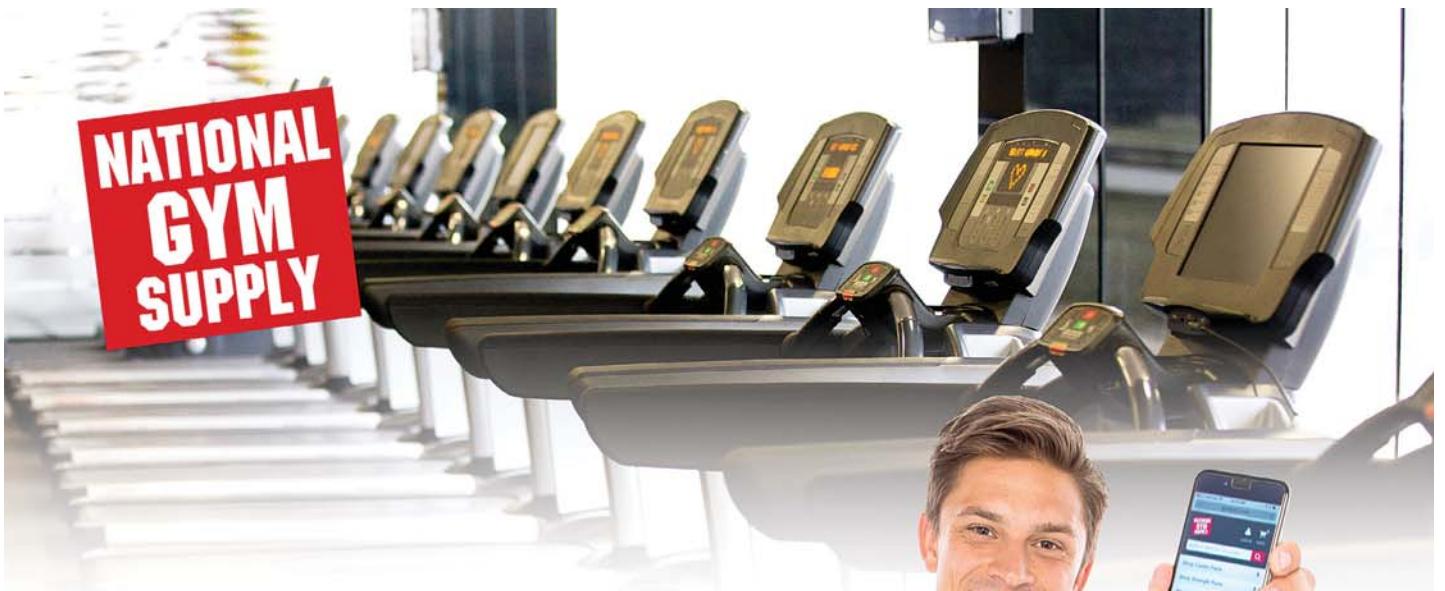
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...Norm's Notes

continued from page 8

mous Federal jury in the Northern District of California has awarded Fitness Anywhere LLC (TRX) more than \$6.8 million in damages against WOSS Enterprises LLC, an online company manipulating e-commerce platforms, including Amazon, to sell several knock-off versions of TRX's patented Suspension Trainer. The jury found WOSS to have willfully infringed one of TRX's dozen U.S. Patents (U.S. Patent No. 7,044,896) through the sale of six of its products, and to have engaged

in willful trademark infringement of TRX's incontestable trademark, **SUSPENSION TRAINING®**.

"The purpose of this action was to affirm the strength of TRX's patented Suspension Trainer products and the inherent goodwill and incontestable brand recognition that TRX has garnered in the United States and abroad for more than 10 years as a result of pioneering and maintaining the gold-standard as the global leader in functional training," said PAUL ZADOFF, President, TRX. "This jury award should serve as a notice to all those determined to engage in intellectual property infringement or other similar

unlawful activity that they are not beyond the reach of justice by federal court juries."

The \$6.8 million represents the **minimum award** to TRX based on the jury's decision. Because the jury also found that WOSS Enterprises willfully infringed the rights of TRX, the damages **may be increased up to three times the minimum award**, as well as including attorney fees and costs, based on the final decision of the judge.

• **CycleBar Studio** is opening on April 17th in East Cobb, my home turf, and they're launching their operation with a fundraising ride for **Ovarian Cancer Atlanta**, scheduled for April 22nd. CycleBar owners, LEE OESTERLING and KIRSTEN RICKERS, are planning to build three CycleBar locations in the Atlanta area. CycleBar offers a pay-per-class model, with no membership needed. The CycleBar Studio offers a theater-like environment with **48 cycles, LED lighting, wide-screen graphics and state-of-the-art audio with a DJ booth**. Best of luck to Lee and Kirsten with their new enterprise!

• **JUSTIN and I want to say Thank You** for reading CLUB INSIDER!

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• God bless our troops, airmen and sailors worldwide and keep them safe. Thank you, Congratulations and Welcome Home to all of our troops who've served in Iraq, Afghanistan and around the world. God bless America's Policemen and Women and keep them safe. God bless you, your family and your club(s). God Bless America!

(Norm Cates, Jr. is a 40+ year veteran of the health, racquet and sportsclub industry. Cates is the Founder and Publisher of CLUB INSIDER, now in its 24th year of publication. Cates was IHRSA's First President, and a Co-Founder with Rick Caro and five others, in 1981. In 2001, IHRSA honored Cates with its DALE DIBBLE Distinguished Service Award, one of its highest honors. Cates may be reached by phone at 770-635-7578 or email at Norm@clubinsideronline.com)

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...EverybodyFights

continued from page 3

Houston. I grew up there until I was eleven years old. Then, I asked my father if I could go to boarding school. Somehow, I got my hands on a pamphlet. This went on for a year, and he finally agreed. I thought I could do so much more at boarding school because he was always in training camps and everyone was very busy. I wanted to play an instrument, be in sports, extracurricular activities, etc., but there weren't enough cars to go around with ten kids. So, he agreed, and we found a school called Fay School, right outside of Boston in Southborough, Massachusetts. I went there, took a tour and decided I was ready to stay. I was there through ninth grade because that school only went up to that grade, so I graduated. Then, I spent a year at a school called Governor Dummer Academy in Byfield, Massachusetts and then, once again, I asked my father if I could go to a different school because they had an airport. There's a school called Culver Military Academy in the Midwest, and they had an aviation program, so I asked to transfer. I finished up my high school career there in Indiana.

I then went to Pepperdine University in Malibu, California. Halfway through my time there, almost three years, I transferred to Rice University so that I could work for my father. When I was at Pepperdine University, I studied business, and when I went to Rice, they didn't have a business major, so I had to start over in terms of being able to graduate. They had a sports management program that I took part in, and I graduated with a degree in Kinesiology.

C.I. - Mixing both worlds there; it looks like that worked out pretty well.

GF - Yes, in hindsight, it worked out perfectly. At the time, I was kind of upset because I had to pretty much start from scratch, but now, it's all making sense.

The Family Business

C.I. - Can you tell us about your early business career? What was your role with respect to your father's businesses?

GF - Growing up, I was always working. There was literally no time to go out and just play, but I enjoyed it. The most fun thing I could do after school was be in the gym with my Dad, helping him stretch, counting rounds, etc. That was the ultimate honor as a kid when you're 8, 9, 10 years old. So, I was always in training camp working with him. Then, his life became 60 - 70% business, and the other 30% was boxing. So, when he was shooting commercials for the *George Foreman Lean Mean Fat Reducing Grilling Machine*, Meineke and doing TV shows throughout my teens, I was always on set or in the trailer, and sometimes, I got to participate in the commercials, which was fun. So, I was always with him.

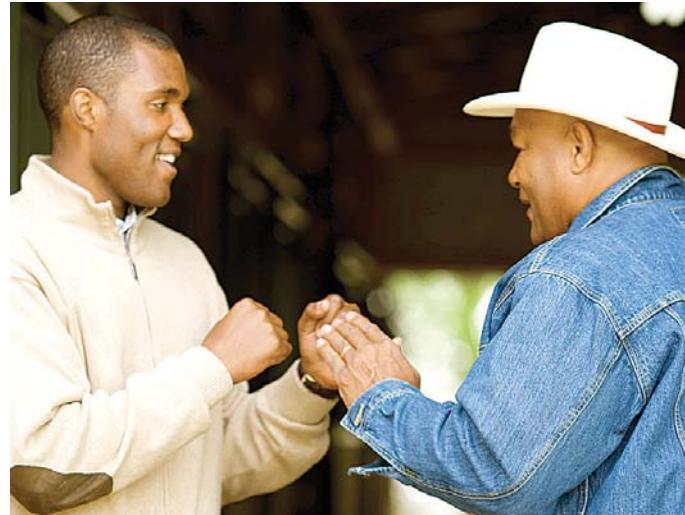
Then, I went to college, and he told me, 'I don't want you to get any Bs. I want you to get straight As; therefore, you aren't going to have to work, but you better deliver

As.' So, in the middle of my most successful semester (in terms of grades), he found out I was also working three jobs: campus security, student center and babysitting. Long story short, we actually got into an argument, so he said, 'If you really want to have a job, then let's just make it official: come work for me.' That entire summer, I was the exclusive person to travel with him. By the end of that year, just before I was 21, he made me his manager with my first assignment being to negotiate a contract extension between him and Meineke. I made a lot of mistakes, but I've kind of been in the business my whole life. So, by the time I was 22, I was actually doing okay. In terms of what I did for him, every contract that was signed, every appearance that was booked, I saw everything from beginning to the end as it related to him, making sure all he had to do was show up, smile and go back home so he could actually do two or three things a week. I did everything in the middle, working with the lawyers to make sure the deal terms were right, negotiating the deal terms, from book contracts to TV contracts, appearance deals, apparel, kids' books and a bunch of other things. I did that for the better half of my 20s, for about seven years.

Later, all that experience from behind the scenes, I found a way to apply to myself. It was a great experience. Everything I did with my Dad, he taught me how to do it. 'This is how you negotiate. This is the type of deal we want. These are the approvals we need. These are the minimums and guarantees. How long the term is, things we need to carve out. How to do the PR because we are working with five or six companies that have their own agendas.' All these things he taught me; I was just the one to execute them, and I learned it all along the way.

C.I. - FOREMAN has become a household name, but your path to becoming a boxer was not always set in stone. Can you tell us about that as well as your journey to a successful 16 - 0 career in the ring?

GF - It's funny. My Dad and I talked about a lot of things when we I was growing up, like owning a public company and all these crazy things. Boxing was never one of them, ever. When I was 24, I was almost 300 pounds. I was traveling 2,000 miles a week and eating hotel food. I wasn't a strong 300, you know... I needed to lose some weight, so I got in the gym. I thought boxing could motivate me. So, I asked my brother. They always teased me because I was in boarding school or with my Dad, so they would say, 'There was never any proof you were a varsity athlete.' So, long story short, I got in the gym for a year by myself and found my own trainer who would look after me. I lost 70 pounds. Then, I told my Dad I was going to have my first amateur



George Foreman III and his Dad, George

fight. He said, 'Wait, wait, let me train you.' Six weeks later, then what ultimately turned into a year, somewhere along the way, he said, 'You should just have a pro fight because then you don't have to worry about the amateur not showing up or pulling out at the last minute.' That was happening to me, so I said, 'Yes,' at which point he did train me, and I was very happy about that. I had my first fight in 2009, then I remember telling my Dad about a commercial shoot he had a week later. He said, 'Don't worry about that; we are going to fight again in July.' That's how it happened, and I became a professional boxer (laughing). It was just a father-son hobby that got out of hand. Now, 16 fights later, I am here.

EverybodyFights

C.I. - When and how did the original concept for EverybodyFights come about?

GF - Actually, it wasn't my concept, or original idea, I'll put it that way. I was a professional boxer and had 15 fights at the time. Another thing that was going on was A.J. Rich, now my business partner, while I was running around living the fast life with my Dad, traveling, he was in college working at a boxing gym, learning to teach boxing to beginners. He went on to start a few businesses: a real estate company, a concierge company, a few restaurants, etc. He's a serial entrepreneur, so he was always saying, 'George, I have this idea. What do you think about this? What do you think about that?' He even told me to write a book and all these other things. Long story short, after my 15th fight, I was a little burnt out, and I came up to visit him. We were hanging out, and he said, 'Let's go to a boxing gym.' I should

have known something was up (laughing). We walk out of the boxing gym, we're in his car, and he says, 'I got it. You should open a boxing gym.' I looked at him sideways, and he said, 'No, I really think you should.'

Three weeks later, I had moved up here. I did a lot of research on the market and found that his gut on boxing being a great market was also backed by numbers. So, I moved up here and didn't look back. I thought it was a great idea. After about six months, he had helped me so much we figured why not have him fully involved. A.J. is now the CEO of our company.

C.I. - Let's talk about your Boston flagship. How did you find the site, and why does it work for EverybodyFights (EBF)? Please describe its size, amenities and various offerings.

GF - A.J. said, 'Seaport is where you want to open this business,' and he gave me a few reasons why. So, after hoofing it around, I had walked into every gym across the whole city, took tours and found out much they were charging. In proper South Boston, there was a gym that charged \$130 a month, and it was your typical, old-school classic boxing gym. Then, 1.7 miles away, downtown, there was a local health club charging \$156 per month. So, I thought that, if I could provide the things the health club does that really matter to people but also give them an authentic boxing experience and charge the same price the traditional boxing gym charges, I'm sure there is a market for it, especially if I put the gym right in between them. So, that's exactly what we did. It took us a year to find the space in Seaport, but we finally found one, and the more we looked, the bigger the concept became, 5,000 square feet, 7,000, 9,000, 12,000 square feet, because we wanted to make sure the facility could represent what a true boxing training camp would need. You need your rope work, your bag work, your body work (Yoga, Pilates, etc.), circuit training, access to cardio equipment on off days, a juice bar, physical therapy, steam

(See EverybodyFights Page 14)

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...EverybodyFights

continued from page 12

room, etc. At the time, I thought I was going to box again, so the whole concept came together by making sure a pro boxer could come there and not have to leave the facility to execute his training camp. Two rings, never having to wait for a bag, etc., that's how the concept was driven.

C.I. - You've also opened another smaller company-owned studio in Boston, and there is another on its way in New York. What are some of the differences between these and the flagship location? With franchising on the horizon, will this be the concept going forward?

GF - What we learned in Seaport is that people responded to being able to have space, and we put a lot of energy into making sure we created an atmosphere where they felt connected to the people they were working out with, before and after classes, and furthermore, very connected to the instructor, that relationship between the instructor and fighter. These were the things we knew were our special sauce, so we asked ourselves if we needed 15,000 square feet to do it. No, the core of our gym, where all our classes are, is more like 8,000 square feet with four classrooms. So, we figured out that, with three classrooms and 6,000 square feet, we could execute the same concept. Then, we looked more in the center of the city for space, so what you will find at One Federal, which is our second location, is the condensed version of what we did at Seaport. A.J. was very crafty to make sure it still felt like a very open format. The three classrooms (circuit, bags and rope work) are all packed full of more equipment than we need for the classes to make sure that, when class is out of session, it's an efficient, open-gym atmosphere. There are showers, towel service, etc. and all the things that matter, which we learned from the Seaport location. We believe that, going forward in city centers, 6,000 - 8,000 square feet will be our sweet spot. Anything above that we've found becomes a little bit unnecessary because the more people become accustomed to the value of the classes, the less they want to use the open-gym space.

C.I. - Further, please describe the in-club concept at facilities such as Iron Grip Gym, Universal Athletic, and recently, Midtown locations in Chicago (Midtown Athletic Club) and Atlanta (Windy Hill Athletic Club). **GF** - The in-club concept is once again going back to what we found out we are good at and a little bit better than other folks in our space. Again, it was the class experience, the community and the relationship between the person and the trainer. So, what do we need? We need space, 800 to 2,000 square feet, that we could deck out and make it inherently motivating to be in when you walk into the classroom. *'I don't care what they do in here, I want to be in this classroom,'* you know? A space where the instructor can walk in and say, *'I'm excited to teach in this classroom,'*

just like putting someone behind the wheel of a Rolls Royce or a Ferrari for their first time. They are excited to be in there and want to joy ride. So, creating the space is number one.

Then, it needs to be in a place that can add the luxury amenities and services that we put in our original club. So, let us focus on the boxing, and the club provides the towel service, sauna, steam, juice bar and luxury amenities because we believe that is an important part of the experience. You work very hard and push yourself as hard as you can, safely, in the classroom. Then, when you are done, you're rewarded and treated like a champion. That's part of our brand, *'Train like a fighter; live like a champion.'* So, what we are looking for are the best 30 - 50 big-box gym operators on the outskirts of cities, right on the edge of the suburbs. Provide the 800 to 2,000 square feet, and we will provide the best boxing experience in the industry. We produce everything offsite and then ship it. It installs in about a week or so, depending how long it takes the club to paint the walls. Then, we spend about 6 - 8 weeks doing the trainer certification, most of which is online, so we can turn these locations around in 90 days or less.

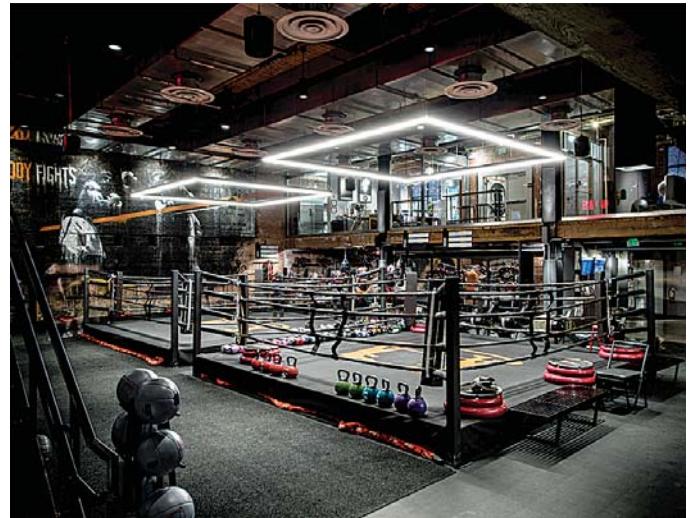
The Membership

C.I. - Let's talk about your membership. Within your current company-owned locations, there is a very clear pricing model. Can you explain this to our readers?

GF - At our flagship facility, the way our memberships work is that we have an *open-gym membership* and an *all-inclusive membership*. So, at Seaport (flagship), *open-gym* is **\$120 per month**, and *all-inclusive* is **\$155 per month**. So, for *\$35 more per month, you have unlimited access to all the classes*. Over 90% of our members are all-inclusive. We could charge more for it where it's only three classes a week, and you pay however many dollars after that, but our attitude is to be a value to people. If you want them in here all the time, don't make them pay so much.

At our other clubs, the membership rates will vary based on what the real estate costs are. So, our other location, in the financial district of Boston is at \$165 for all-inclusive, and there is no open-gym membership because of the size of the facility. In New York, we expect our rate to be around \$300 per month. Currently, our pre-sale rate is \$199 for all-inclusive, and that is a lifetime rate. We allow our members to cancel anytime, no future charges, but as long as they stay a member, they keep the rate they joined at. We allow you to put it on hold, and when you sign up, you pay your first and last month. So, if you do come in and say you cancel, we stop charging and apply that deposit. The goal is that, if you are enjoying the experience, you will never pay for anything that you don't get a chance to use.

In addition to our membership options, we do have an option to *charge by class*. If someone does want to just take a class, it is **\$35**. If you want to buy a package, the rate gets to somewhere between **\$25 -**



The EverybodyFights Boston Flagship

\$27 per class. We offer the memberships for the people who come so often that they will save money.

C.I. - Please describe the audience you seek to attract.

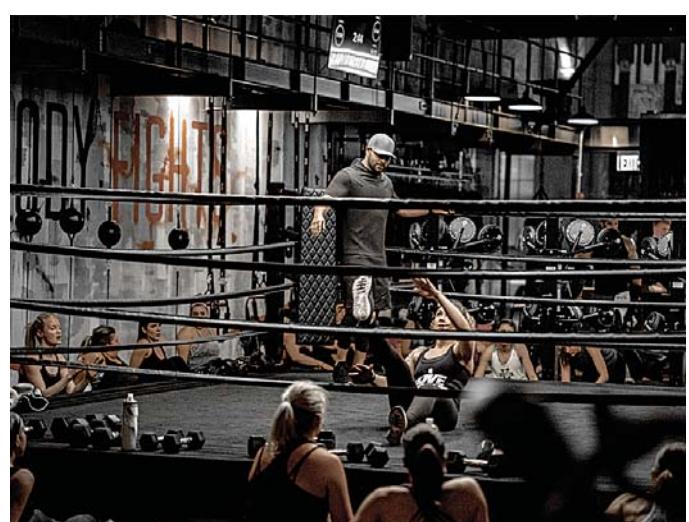
GF - If you look on paper at the people who come into our gym, the numbers show the bulk of the people are somewhere between 24 - 38 years old and 65 - 70% women, believe it or not. But, there is a strong population of men because of the size of our membership. In terms of our business model, what we put in our business plan and who we market to, our attitude is, *'Everyday fighters from all walks of life.'* People want a certain feeling when they walk in the gym, a certain swagger, if you will, to their workouts. They want to be connected to people in a certain way; they want the trainers to talk to them in a certain way. And, that typically is a person who takes a Type A attitude into certain parts of their life. That's our member. My most experienced member was born in the 1930s, and we have a kids' club on the weekends, 8,

9, 10 years old, so people come for different reasons. Our sweet spot, for sure, though, is the younger generation.

C.I. - How many members do you currently have?

GF - At our flagship, Seaport facility, we have right around 1,500 members. These are the people who pay month-to-month. Then, we have another 600 - 800 people, on average, who pay by class. They may come three times a week with ClassPass, or they may buy their package of classes from us. This skews up and down depending on the time of year, so we figure that, at any given time, we have 2,200 - 2,400 active users at the Seaport facility. At the Financial District facility in Boston, we are a month into operation, and we are right around 600 members. We hope to grow that to about 1,000, which will be close to capacity for that place, maybe a little more depending on how many people purchase single classes. And, New York opens in July.

(See EverybodyFights Page 15)



Class In Session at EverybodyFights

...EverybodyFights

continued from page 14

Certifications and Partnerships

C.I. - Please tell us about EBF's Fight School and EBF Certification Platform.

GF - We always believe in hiring on character, but we are also looking at resumes. We had these trainers with ten certifications and some with none. What we found was that certification didn't indicate anything in terms of creating the experience that we wanted. Also, regardless of certification, we still had to teach them a lot of movements that we needed them to know, especially the functional training movements and things of that nature. So, we decided to hire on character and teach everything ourselves because we are going to have to do it anyway, no matter where they came from and how long they've been in the industry. We have to have everyone on the same page, so I created a training certification. Now, instead of me having to train all new trainers who come on

C.I. - Knowing you, I'm pretty sure you'll be right back at the drawing board making your product even better.

GF - We will just because we will want our gyms to stay competitive, and to be able to look at our client with a straight face and say, 'This is the best experience.' But, for us, long-term, we want to be a service provider to the industry, which is key. We don't want to be competitive with the industry; we want to be a service provider, so I certify trainers from Title Boxing, Equinox, 24 Hour Fitness, etc. They come in here, and I teach them everything we do. We have no problem with that. We figure the better the industry is, the better everyone does executing boxing fitness, the bigger the entire market will grow, and we feel there is enough for everyone to get a piece of that market as it grows.

C.I. - EBF also announced a partnership with Xfit Brands. What does this entail?

GF - We specialize in the class experience and our trainers, so why try to be the best

with the best. That's what that relationship is about.

The Use of Technology and Production Value

C.I. - The use of technology, in-facility and virtually, is absolutely impressive, and your website and video library are second to none. Can you explain the importance of this to your concepts? What advice would you give to anyone when it comes to production value?

GF - These days, there is absolutely no reason not to be ready to capture what really happens in your business and share it with the world. Phones these days have 4K cameras, you can attach wireless microphones to them so you have good sound, there are ways to achieve good lighting, etc. All these things are available to the average consumer and average business operator, so I believe the recording of your content should be movie quality, within reason of course, but it should definitely be high definition. And, you should become acquainted with basic editing software; everyone should because, guess what, the new generation you are trying to market to doesn't really respond to advertising, they don't respond to a lot, but they do respond to what their friends are talking about on social media and things that are shared with them. So, you want to make sure that the content you are putting out there to be shared is beautiful, and beyond whether they are interested in your brand or not, it is beautiful to look at. To me, the only way companies are going to survive over the next ten years is to have a strong, free content game. So, go get a Canon, or a Sony or an iPhone 7, so that, whenever you capture things, you capture them properly, and always be willing to capture them in their pure form, as opposed to having to stage things.

There is some great technology in the industry, and most of it is really compelling but underutilized. So, our attitude on technology is: don't use technology to get people to do things they aren't already doing. You create your tech to make it easier to do the things you are already doing. So, we started with our trainer because we needed that for consistency. Our trainers are carrying stopwatches, they are creating playlists every week, they are creating workouts every week, they need to brush up on their skills and their queuing, they are improving themselves and their practice, etc. So, why not create an app that helps do it all in one place? Now, we have a trainer app that pushes new workouts to our trainers every week, new playlists and features that enable trainers to create their own workouts and playlists. When they show up to the class, they just plug their phone into the lighting cable, which transmits it to all the TVs. From there, they don't have to

touch anything; they just have to run around and be a motivated instructor. So, we take all the stress off of them updating content week by week because people are expecting a new workout every week when they come to your gym now. That was step one: simplify things people are already doing, and they are doing this because trainers are more competitive than they've ever been.

Next is the user experience. People come into the gym, they check in, they reserve classes, they want to be rewarded for being consistent, and at some point, they want to compete with the people they are in the class with or compete in some way with themselves, being able to figure out how they were doing eight weeks ago compared to how they are doing now. Those are the general things people do. So now, the next version of our app is focused on doing just that for people, tracking their consistency and progress, focusing on the EverybodyFights experience and creating friendly competition that doesn't go against what we believe. So, our thought with tech is: don't recreate the wheel, just make the wheel better. Put less friction on the wheel.

Future Growth

C.I. - A year ago, EBF received Series A funding from Breakaway. That, no doubt, set the path forward into franchising. Can you tell us about your franchise model moving forward? What are some of the ideal locations in the future?

GF - Once again, we believe we are building a community, so we believe a big part of our community is doors, places where people can come in, connect with the trainers and connect with the people. So, how do we do that? We want to open about 12 flagship facilities nationwide, places like Miami, Chicago, D.C., L.A., the major markets. We want to own those ourselves, for the most part. That's going to take 3-4 years. In the meantime, how do we continue to spread the community without having to wait for our buildouts, finding real estate, etc.? Our focus with franchising is partnering with proven operators in suburban markets with our box, right now, as aggressive as we can. And, partnering with proven operators

internationally for our flagship standalone facilities, places like the United Kingdom, Australia, Tokyo, Toronto, maybe UAE and Dubai. With international territories, we are okay with franchising because we believe local operators can do a better job than we can. You don't make a ton of money off franchising, but once again, it spreads the brand. You anchor your brand as the best in boxing fitness, or the go-to, I'll put it that way.

Lastly, domestically, for our flagships, we will be very selective because, franchised or not, I get in these gyms and try to run them like they are my own. I'm meeting every trainer, I'm checking in with them, motivating them and I develop a relationship with everyone. I'm on the camera, seeing how they are running the

(See EverybodyFights Page 16)



Class In Session at EverybodyFights

board, they can do everything they need to do online and then they would meet with me to test. It made it a lot easier to run this gym, and now, the others.

By the time we got to the end of it, I think we overdid it and recorded over 70 hours of really nice content: a movement library, classes, an online portal for testing, an app for the trainers to consume the content, show it on TV screens when they teach and we recorded enough workouts that you could run something different every week for six months for every type of class. All of this was part of our training certification. Then we thought: why are we holding onto and hiding our content? Let's make it available to anyone who would like to get involved in boxing fitness anywhere in the world. So, that's what the training certification is; it's very focused on training trainers to teach boxing fitness in our gyms, but if you want to teach it anywhere, it is probably the best content out there, for the time being, until someone one-ups us.

at producing equipment? We believe we are pretty good at picking the equipment that is best for our experience but not producing, manufacturing it, etc. We met *Throwdown* when we were looking for bag racks, and they came with a lot of confidence, saying, 'Show us exactly what you want, exactly what you need, what you want inside the bags to fill them, what you want inside the gloves, etc.' They literally built everything to order for us: gloves, racks, bags, storage for equipment, etc. All of it came from *Throwdown*, as they agreed to do everything to order for us. It's been a great relationship. There's nothing more refreshing than to say I don't want to be the best at everything, but I want to work

EVERYBODYFIGHTS

...EverybodyFights

continued from page 15

classes week by week. If we are going to run them like our own, we want to be very particular about the people we pick to work with. And, if we are running them like our own, and with franchising, we aren't going to make a lot of money considering how many times back and forth I will be on the plane teaching and running it like it's my own. So, domestically, flagships will be like joint ventures if you will, and we will be picky on the big-box operators. Internationally, only the best. Three years from now, if we can look up and have 20 flagship gyms, domestic and internationally, and 50 boxes nationally, that would be enough. We don't have to be big. There are lots of ways to make enough money that we don't need to have 400 gyms.

C.I. - That sounds like a balanced approach. Related to that, what is the plan for managing growth?

GF - Hire good people and let them do their job. Make sure they are smarter than you. For me, personally, as one of the Founders, how can I isolate my job to only be focused on the workout experience? My client has now become the trainer, so I can't manage 50,000 members, but I can manage 300 - 400 trainers. I can chat with them throughout the month, so that's my goal, and I believe that will be the sweet spot. If I can do that, and then all the other things like hiring regional facility managers, directors of operation, head trainers at each of our gyms, I think those will be the things other people can do. *So many forget to have someone solely focused on the experience, and I think, all things being equal, that will be the most important part of our growth.*

We've gone ahead and kind of insulated ourselves for the next two years or so with staff and executives. We currently have a *Director of Marketing* (**Ben Eld**), a *Creative Director* (**Hailey Loonan**), who just focuses on content; a *VP of Development* (**Nicole Schultz**), she's ten times as educated as I am and focuses on integrating all the things my partner and I come up with; we have a *Director of Operations* (**David Bergeron**) who is just focused on keeping the lights and other operations of the facilities; and all our gyms have a General Manager, Head Trainer and Front Desk Manager. We are investing and overpaying a little bit now so that, when things hit over the next 9 - 12 months, we can grow fast. We also have a *Vice President of Franchising* (**Hannibal Myers**), who runs that show himself.

The Philosophy

C.I. - None of what we have discussed so far would really matter without the philosophy behind EverybodyFights, which is very inspiring. Please describe that for our readers. **GF** - The philosophy of EverybodyFights is very simple: **Belief. Attitude. Effort.** I believe that, with those three things, people can accomplish anything. I also believe that, when someone's back is up against the wall,

they have no choice but to have the right belief, attitude and effort. If you're back is against the wall, and you have to fight for your life, all the things you would normally have to be motivated to do, or be given a pep talk for, you would just do them. So, in the gym, we try to create situations where you are forced to give that effort. You are doing battle ropes or something safe, and you are taken to the point where you feel you can't go anymore. Then, a trainer comes and whispers something in your ear, saying something that gets you through those last few seconds you didn't believe you could. That will change your effort, therefore change your attitude about the kind of effort you are capable of giving, and with attitude and effort, with what you achieve, that should change your beliefs of who you are and what you are capable of outside the gym. What we have found is they are connected. What happens in the gym affects you outside the gym, at home, at work, etc.

The other side of our approach is to hit you from the top with belief before it comes down to attitude and effort. Can we say something that enhances your belief about yourself and what you are capable of, which will give you the right attitude, and therefore, enhance the effort that you naturally give, without your back having to be against the wall. So, belief, attitude and effort. We all have to give it at the right time. Can you come to a place that is safe where you can practice and we can push you to show you who you really are? That's what our gym is all about, a safe place to help you believe in who you are.

Community Outreach

C.I. - Please tell us about EBF's community outreach efforts, specifically with youth.

GF - I learned everything I learned to do in boxing and communicating with people from working with kids at the *George Foreman Youth and Community Center* in Houston that my Dad opened in 1983. I did everything from sweep the floors to fundraising for the place. But, more importantly, I learned how to teach boxing, so everything my Dad would teach me, I would turn around and teach every afternoon to the kids before I trained. I would be spending 4 - 5 hours a day training kids and then training myself about an hour and a half, which is where I developed the passion to be a trainer. So, when I opened the gym in Boston, you know, we are paying big time rent, so we have to make a profit. But, how do you not lose who you are in the struggle to be a profitable and successful business? So, two things I learned from my Dad:

1. When someone asks you to do something for a charity or a good cause, always say 'yes.' Find a way to say, 'yes.' If you aren't



Class In Session at EverybodyFights

available, what can you send? How can you say, 'yes?' Find a way to say, 'yes,' as opposed to the other way around. So, if a charity asks me to come speak or to send a donation of classes or something, we are going to find a way to say, 'yes,' every single time.

2. As you know in the gym business, we have about seven hours a day where our facility is a ghost town, especially on the weekend. So, if we aren't doing anything with the space, why can't we give that to charities to use as a defense space to raise awareness and to raise money? So, since day one, honestly, that has been my way to resolve my anxiety for not being a nonprofit. Afternoons, late mornings and the weekends, we try to book every hour to local charities, and we let them keep all the money that they raise. We also donate a trainer, paying for them ourselves, to teach classes. So, that's our way of making sure we are always giving back. In the future, I would love to have a foundation for EverybodyFights, but first is to use what we have to help others accomplish their goals. And, once again, we never say, 'no,' even if we have to say that we will do it in a few weeks or months, we will find a way to say, 'yes.'

Of course, we get something out of this; we get people in our facilities. It's not like we are just being fluffy, but I would urge all fitness facilities, nationwide and worldwide, to not be as focused on what people are giving you and to give first. Take a chance; you can always stop if you want. But, start by giving first. Most people want to know the terms upfront: 'Okay, we are going to let you use our facility, but can you put us in your marketing?' Can you send out an

email? How many people are going to see everything?' That's not the way you give, and I think they are missing out on the whole purpose. But, also, when you make friends with people, they will typically help you without you having to ask.

The Industry

C.I. - Is EBF an IHRSA Member? If so, what benefits do you receive from being a member of the Association?

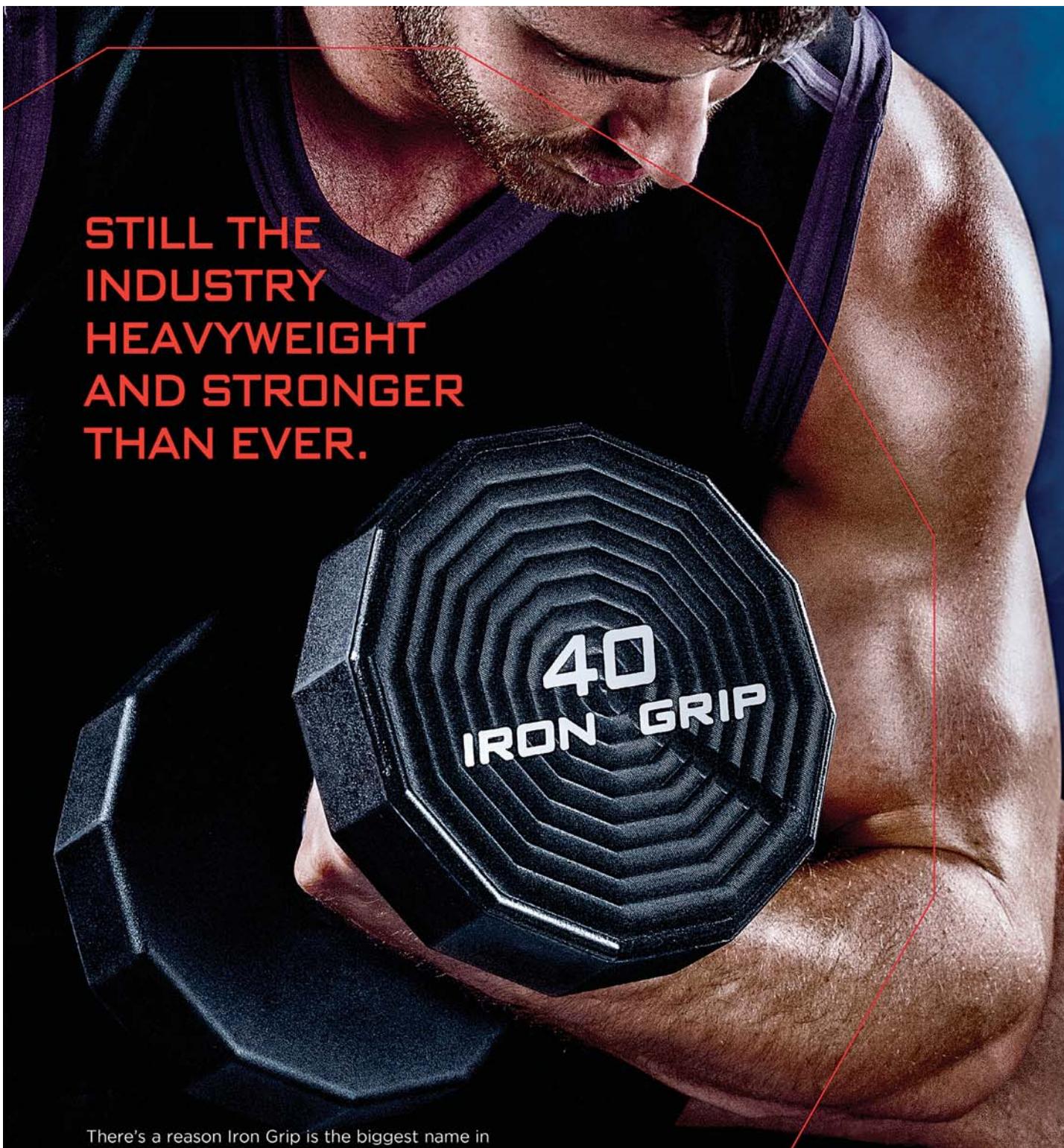
GF - Definitely the relationships. The cool thing about IHRSA is that you get tapped into what is going on in the industry, and you get opportunities to expose yourself to other people in the industry. A lot of the relationships I have built through IHRSA, those are my mentors. With a lot of them, we work out together, and they have become my friends. I host their friends at my gym. To have friends in your industry who understand your struggles and whom you can share ideas with, it makes it where it is not as lonely to be a business owner. There are things you want to talk about that only they would understand. To me, if you are going to be in this industry, you want to have friends. That's the most exciting part for me.

C.I. - From an industry perspective, what does the future hold for boxing and boxing-style training?

GF - I believe the future holds two things for boxing. You're going to see operators moving one direction where it's a very simple version of boxing in which you are throwing punches and exercising. Throwing punches is really only 25% of boxing, so I believe you will see one push in that direction, which will perform very well because it's simple and can move fast. I think you will also see a push in another direction where people are really focused on learning how to box, and only the people who make it engaging and fun are going to survive on that end; there will be just a few operators there. As a whole, every fitness facility already has treadmills,

(See *EverybodyFights* Page 18)

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What's Your Story?

By: Derek Barton

How many times have we looked at someone inquisitively and wondered, "What's *his* story?" Other times it's, "What's he smoking?"

The truth is, we all have a story. If we tell our story right, it could inspire people and open many doors. Told wrong, it could turn people off and even become a deal breaker.

Case in point, I have been consulting for a start-up company that has the potential to be a billion-dollar brand. They're already making money and receiving positive publicity in their field, but they need a little more capital and some extensive social media resources to take them to the next level. So, I recently arranged a meeting between their top two executives and a very successful marketing friend of mine, who brought along his investment partner, whom I had never met before. We all flew in for a scheduled 2 1/2 hour meeting at my friend's corporate office.

The CEO of the start-up was excited about the meeting and hoped to come away with a commitment of my friend's valuable social media resources and a big capital investment to complete his company's funding.

I had a Apple Keynote ready to show my friend and his partner the salient facts about my client's business. My Keynote slides were cued up on the monitors in the huge boardroom where we were assembled. The CEO and COO of the start-up were each asked to give a 60-second bio about themselves. The COO went first. I was impressed that he gave his bio in under 60 seconds. Then, it was the CEO's turn. To the surprise, and dismay, of us all, he rambled on and on for over 20 minutes!

Because of my long-standing business relationship with my friend, he and his investment partner were respectful during the 20-minute soliloquy. Me? I was looking for a gun, a giant hook or a trap door. It was like the story of the bad actor who performed Hamlet and came to the most famous line of that play and uttered, "To be... or... LINE?"

Since the atmosphere of our business meeting quickly changed after that, I did my best to lighten things up and keep things moving. We got through the slides, and my friend and his investment partner asked the CEO questions regarding the financials and revenues of his business. He couldn't answer those questions succinctly either.

The meeting ended earlier than expected. Gee, I wonder why? As my

client and I were walking out of my friend's building, the CEO said to me, "I may need your help to get my bio down a little shorter." *Ya think?* Obviously, I wish he had asked me that before the meeting.

Before I flew back home, I asked my friend for his honest opinion of my client. As he always does so well, he sandwiched the negative between two positives by saying, "My partner can see why I like and trust you so much and thinks you're the genuine article. That company's CEO lost all credibility when he gave a 20-minute introduction of himself after he was asked to give us a 60-second summary. But, we loved the way you handled that Derek, priceless honesty as usual."

I'm sharing this story with you because we can all learn from it. It reinforced for me how important it is to tell your story well and in as few words as possible. It all comes under the heading of marketing, which began as story-telling, dating back to the caveman days. They would sit around the stone fire pit (once Og invented fire) telling stories while drinking their brontosaurus nectar, dreaming of an ice-cold beer and a good cigar. No television, radio, internet or smart phones. All they had back then were their stories. Their stories could elevate their status within their tribe or help them acquire hunting partners, and they could even help win over a mate if they didn't go on and on about themselves. I think that's where the term "a tall tale" comes from. Through the centuries, those "tall tales" have been called "B.S."

Well-known marketer and best-selling author, Seth Godin, wrote a book in 2005 titled, *All Marketers Tell Stories*. Great marketers have the ability to tell an inspirational and powerful story about a product or service so that people become interested and want to buy that product or service. That's what we get paid to do.

Marketing guru and author, Gary Vaynerchuk, said, "No matter who you are or what kind of company or organization you work for, your number one job is to tell your story to the consumer where they are, and preferably, at the moment they are deciding to make a purchase."

Today, there are many different marketing channels through which to tell your story: newspapers, magazines, billboards, books, radio, television, movies, public speaking, websites, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snap Chat, YouTube, Podcasts, and meetings, whether in person or on Skype or a conference call. And, still going strong after thousands of years, the good old campfire, which in urban areas has evolved into the gas fire pit. Either one usually comes with an ice-cold beer and a

good cigar.

No matter where you tell the story about your life, your company, your product or service, tell your story with authenticity, humor and brevity. Remember, all stories reveal certain truths. And, keep in mind what singer/songwriter Garth Brooks once said, "Both songwriting and advertising want the same thing: to get to the point in as few words as you can."

Did you hear the story about the guy at a business meeting who was asked to give his bio in 60 seconds and lost the deal because he spoke about himself for 20 minutes?

(Derek Barton is a brilliant marketing guru and as good as they get in getting to the point. Derek can be reached at Derek@bartonproductions.com)



Derek Barton

...EverybodyFights

continued from page 16

bikes and other things; every fitness facility will need a boxing gym. Essentially, it can be 500 - 1,000 square feet, but there will be a boxing facility in every gym, the same way there used to be boxing gyms on every corner 80 years ago. I also think you will see a lot more people wanting to box at home, and I think the industry leaders will be those who service people not only in the gym but at home. A lot of people can't make it into a boxing gym, but they can do it at home, and I think that will be a big part of establishing yourself as a good partner to the industry.

C.I. - To close this great interview, I'm sure our readers would love to know: How's your Dad doing these days?

GF - Excellent. We talk every few days, and he keeps bugging me to make sure I keep a hobby. I say, 'Dad, this is my hobby.' So, he sent me a dog, a little Rat Terrier that I walk in the morning, afternoon and evening. He's training German Shepherds; that's his big thing, and he's got several international champions, which he is very proud of. And, other than that, going to church. He's a minister by trade and preaches four times a week.

• • •

My sincere thanks and appreciation to **George Foreman III** for his time interviewing for and contributing to this cover story. Thank you also to **Ben Eld** for his assistance with photos and graphics.

(Justin Cates is the Assistant Publisher of CLUB INSIDER and grew up in the health and fitness club industry. Justin was born into a club business family in 1985, and from the age of eight, he spent his non-school and sports hours in a home that doubled as CLUB INSIDER Headquarters. He has lived and breathed this industry for 32 years, since his own day one. Cates graduated from the Terry College of Business at The University of Georgia in 2007 and then went on to two years at The Art Institute of Atlanta, where he studied Interactive Media Design. Now, he is an integral part of the "Story" of Norm Cates and CLUB INSIDER. Justin can be reached by phone at 423-314-4310 or email at Justin@clubinsideronline.com)

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Risk Management:

Minimize the Likelihood of Medical Emergencies and Mitigate Your Responsive Liability

By: Paul R. Bedard, Esquire

Most health club owners and operators rightfully find themselves contemplating the inevitable medical emergency. It has been reported that more than 10,000 people are treated in emergency rooms daily for injuries stemming from exercise, sports and recreation. Many suffer injuries while using exercise equipment, with treadmills being involved in a significant percentage of these incidents. More than 250,000 Americans die annually due to sudden cardiac arrest, with a significant number of these cardiac events transpiring within health clubs. Although certain types of medical emergencies are beyond anyone's control, consistent operational practices guided by a targeted risk management strategy can reduce the likelihood of others.

This article is the third and final article in a series that explains in reasonable detail some of the most common legal risks within the health and fitness club industry and how to minimize legal exposure to these risks. However, these articles are not intended as legal advice. Widely varying laws specific to each jurisdiction prohibit one-size-fits-all recommendations. Please consider these comments as merely an educational guide to assist you when you consult your own attorney for specific direction.

Injury-Proof Your Facility to the Greatest Extent Possible

Although a medical emergency triggered by an underlying health condition may be unavoidable, club owners and operators can reduce the likelihood of those emergencies attributable to faulty equipment or facility issues. As one of my law school professors repeatedly reminded me throughout law school, all areas of the law are ultimately related. In this case, although we're addressing medical emergencies, premises liability considerations come into play.

From a legal standpoint, health club members and guests are considered invitees. Invitees are owed a duty of reasonable care, safe from injuries caused by reasonably foreseeable dangers. Club owners and operators have a duty to warn of dangerous or defective conditions they know or should know about, as well as dangers that invitees are unlikely to be able to see or avoid. A dangerous or defective condition can include, but is not limited to, wet or unsafe flooring, poor lighting, unsafe equipment or facility design, or

hidden hazards.

To ensure that a dangerous or defective condition does not go unnoticed, have personnel regularly inspect all areas of the premises, both interior and exterior. Consistently retrain employees to conduct these inspections and periodically conduct more intensive facility safety audits. Provide checklists of what must be assessed and monitor for compliance. Document these ongoing operational practices. Maintain a facility inspection schedule and archive for future reference. Empower personnel to take immediate action when defective conditions become present.

Prepare Your Team for the Inevitable

Regardless of club upkeep, equipment condition or facility design, some medical emergencies are unfortunately inevitable. A member or guest going into sudden cardiac arrest likely represents the scariest potential scenario in this regard. These tragic events typically transpire in the absence of fault. However, clubs must be prepared to swiftly and effectively respond during these instances in order to mitigate their responsive liability.

Begin preparing employees for medical emergencies on Day One. Standardize onboarding, certification and training procedures in this regard. Immediately provide a comprehensive employee handbook, including the proper use of equipment, facility maintenance standards, first aid, CPR and AED certification requirements and detailed medical emergency procedures. Have each employee sign an acknowledgment of having received their handbook.

Outline medical emergency training procedures in detail. Have qualified personnel available to provide this training early and throughout the employment relationship. The written medical emergency plan should address the reasonably foreseeable medical emergencies, including, but not limited, to sudden cardiac arrest, heart attack, hypoglycemia, stroke and orthopedic injuries as well as less foreseeable emergencies, including, but not limited, to fires and natural disasters. Maintain detailed records of all medical emergency training.

Determine whether your jurisdiction mandates an AED at your facility. Numerous states require AEDs in health clubs, while some effectively impose no legal duty beyond the dialing of 911. Given that health clubs are particularly

high-risk areas for sudden cardiac arrest, the leading cause of death in the United States, most if not all club owners and operators feel a moral obligation to maintain an AED regardless of jurisdictional requirements. For clubs that maintain an AED, varying Good Samaritan laws provide protection for users in all states. However, specific employee training, equipment inspection, maintenance, record-keeping and ongoing AED software updates are essential.

Ensure that all employees obtain first aid, CPR and AED certifications promptly. Archive employees' certification certificates. Note certificate expiration dates in order to proactively schedule certification renewals and avoid lapses in certifications. Consistently enforce a policy of zero tolerance when it comes to maintaining certifications. Have first aid, CPR and AED-certified personnel on staff at all times. Document this requirement within your employee handbook.

As earlier stated, medical emergencies often involve premises liability considerations. Premises liability represents one of the greatest aspects of legal exposure for health and fitness clubs. Therefore, as a baseline measure of protection, have a comprehensive yet not overly broad liability waiver signed by every member and guest. At a minimum, the waiver should expressly bar claims due to employee negligence, identify potentially dangerous activities and inherent facility risks, detail the assumption of risk on the part of the member or guest and be in clear and conspicuous language. Archive these waivers to correspond with your jurisdiction's statute of limitations.

In 2016, a Pennsylvania federal court denied a plaintiff's claim for serious injuries suffered during a training session. The court granted summary judgment to Fitness & Sports Clubs, LLC (doing business as LA Fitness), finding that the club was shielded from liability based upon the member's signed liability waivers within the club's membership and personal training agreements. Conversely, a Kansas City CrossFit and one of its affiliates were each ordered to pay \$100,000 in damages to a plaintiff who injured his back while deadlifting after the defendants could not produce a liability waiver signed by the plaintiff. The plaintiff was awarded \$400,000 in damages in this instance but was found to be 50% at fault for his injuries. Although jurisdictions vary as it relates to the enforceability of liability waivers, these are just two of the many examples that underscore the importance of a proper liability waiver.



Paul R. Bedard, Esquire

Review your general and professional liability each year to confirm that your coverage has kept pace with the evolution of your business. Verify that no gaps in coverage are present. Given the unique insurance concerns of the health and fitness industry, work with an agent and a company that specializes within the industry.

Take Immediate Action During and Following Medical Emergencies

A well-trained staff with a detailed written medical emergency plan will immediately rise to the occasion during an emergency. Have a code word that can be announced over the loudspeaker to alert all personnel of a medical emergency. Tend to the victim and call 911 when necessary. Safely secure any unsafe equipment or areas. Obtain any information that may be available as it relates to the victim's health history. Share with emergency responders when relevant. Direct a staff member to be visible outside of the facility to guide emergency responders to the victim as quickly as possible.

Following an emergency, promptly document the occurrence. Take photos, obtain witness statements and generate a detailed incident report as soon as practically possible. Some medical emergencies are unavoidable, while others may be all or partially attributable to negligence on the part of the victim, club or others. Regardless of the party at fault, documentation will help to ultimately clarify exactly what happened and why. This may prove effective in defense of a claim for injuries or serve as a valuable learning tool for improving club operations after a subpar response to an emergency.

After the incident, follow up
(See *Paul Bedard, Esquire* Page 21)

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continued from page 20

on the affected party to check on their wellbeing. Thorough documentation, along with a demonstrated and genuine concern for the victim, may help avert a potential lawsuit. Ensure that the person making contact understands how to stay on topic and effectively communicate without risking additional legal exposure.

In Conclusion

Club owners and operators can minimize the likelihood of equipment and facility-related medical emergencies through consistent operational practices guided by a targeted risk management strategy. They can also mitigate their responsive liability by ensuring that their clubs are prepared to respond swiftly and effectively to these events. Proper employee

training, facility maintenance and design, medical emergency training procedures, ongoing certification compliance and documentation, appropriate liability insurance and a suitable liability waiver will help minimize your club's legal risk regardless of the nature of the emergency.

(Paul R. Bedard, Esquire, has nearly 20 years of experience in the health and fitness industry. As a practicing attorney, Paul's health and fitness industry operations experience provides him with a unique perspective when advising on or litigating matters involving health club contracts, policies, disputes or injuries. Paul strives to be active in his local community and has served on the Southington Zoning Board of Appeals and the Board of the Central Connecticut Regional Planning Agency. He also volunteers his time and fundraises for various local charities. Paul can be reached at pbedard@smdlaw.com)

Congressional Fitness Challenge Allows Nation's Leaders to Encourage Healthy Lifestyles

SAN DIEGO, CA - The American Council on Exercises (ACE) announced the winners of its annual Congressional Fitness Challenge, a 6-week competition that saw participation from more than 300 congressional staffers and 10 members of Congress. The challenge offers Congress and their staff the opportunity to serve as role models of healthy living by tracking various forms of physical activity, including the steps they take each day, as they strive to incorporate more movement into their daily lives. According to ACE, the friendly contest proved bi-partisan in nature, drawing almost equal numbers of teams from both parties.

"Our leaders are showing America the value of exercise and healthy habits, not just with words, but with actions," says ACE President and CEO Scott Goudeseune. "With this challenge, Congress and their staffers embody the idea that a more active lifestyle can be as simple as adding more steps to your daily routine."

The Challenge offers both a team and individual competition. To be eligible to enter the team competition, congressional offices needed to have at least 25% of

their staff participate. Twenty-nine offices entered teams this year, several of them returning from last year, and more than one-third of teams included their Congress member as well. The competition was divided into two categories: participants who counted their daily steps and those who measured other activities as well, including swimming, biking and weight lifting, which were converted into units of "steps."

Both Republicans and Democrats got into the spirit of healthy competition, sharing progress on social media and by email. Representative Jim McGovern's (D-MA-7) office tweeted a picture of a group of teammates participating in a burpee challenge. Representative Buddy Carter (R-GA-1) completed 500 push-ups a day, in addition to the cardio workouts he recorded for the challenge. Representative Hastings' (D-FL-20) office held their own additional challenge that resulted in some fun inter-office competition with the winner taking 539,224 steps over the course of four weeks.

For more information on how ACE is advocating to create a fitter, healthier nation please visit www.acefitness.org/advocacy.

Make It Fun!

Workplace and Medical Fitness Case Studies

By: Dave Beadle

In their *2015 Vision Report*, the American Council on Exercise (ACE) observed that the Affordable Care Act's "essential health benefits" and other factors have spurred the conversation about scaling fitness in the workplace. With little regulatory guidance and stifled innovation, there is no clear path forward for the small-to-medium-sized business (500 employees or less) where most Americans work. The report continues by stating that what is needed is for these businesses to tap into the content, programming, facilities and qualified expertise available in the community around them.

Recently, *Club Industry* posted a series of questions they asked of a number of industry veterans and thought leaders. One was related to the greatest missed opportunity facing the industry, and nearly all of them agreed it was related to connecting with the healthcare community. Due to a perceived lack of credibility and respect, health care providers fail to see the fitness industry as partners in delivering on the promise of a healthy population.

The fitness industry certainly needs to do more to elevate the standards for certifying trainers and exercise leaders. They also need to understand how healthcare works in this country today and where they could plug into the health care continuum as a valued contributor.

Stifled innovation? Lack of credibility and respect? Failure to deliver? The fitness industry needs to change. I am not the first to say that and certainly will not be the last. I believe we are on the cusp of positive, disruptive change, and there are innovators out there leading the way. I offer a somewhat unique perspective, and if you would indulge me just a bit, I will share that perspective with you. But first a little personal history...

My career in the fitness industry began in 1981 checking out equipment at a campus recreation center. Over the next 35 years, I worked in clubs, sold exercise equipment, ran a fitness testing lab, organized tournaments and managed corporate fitness programs. In fact, nearly 20 years of my career was dedicated to providing fitness services on site for major employers, in-house, as a provider and

outsourced. From 1996 to 2015, I was responsible for the operation of 24 fitness centers, a medical clinic and provision of work-life balance and wellness services on a global basis for a Fortune 100 company. These services were a key factor in this high-tech company being named to Fortune's 100 Best Companies to Work For ten years running.

During that time, one of my biggest challenges was finding a cost-effective way to provide fitness programming for our employees. You see, I wanted to partner with health clubs. They had the expertise in trainers and group exercise instructors. They had name recognition in the community. They had facilities in cities where we had smaller offices without on-site gyms. But, they had no idea how to put all that together in a package that would meet our needs. So, we took the program in-house for a few years and eventually ended up contracting with one of the top-tier corporate fitness management companies for a national contract worth approximately \$700,000 annually.

Given these experiences, here's where changes are needing to happen. You see, in all those years, I would routinely get calls from local clubs, and the pitch was always the same: "Mr. Beadle, our club has a Corporate Membership program. All you have to do is pay for (insert number here) discounted memberships, and we will waive the initiation fee! When would you like to start?" Gym discounts like this are a commodity. They are nothing more than a check-box on the to-do list of someone in HR charged with offering a "wellness program." The employer will look for the cheapest buy-in and deepest discount because nothing else of value is offered. Sound familiar???

I believe the industry can do better. I believe there is a huge opportunity for clubs to drive new revenue, dues and non-dues, to their clubs by changing the way they approach the workplace and medical fitness opportunities and offering real value. We all know that the number of clubs is growing faster than the rate of new members. The industry is just carving up the same 16 - 17% of the population who are gym members into smaller and smaller pieces; the pie is not getting any bigger! What we need to do is grow the pie by reaching out to that 80% of the population who are not members of our clubs using new business models and innovative programming.

There are certainly challenges that need to be tackled to successfully service the employer and medical markets.



Dave Beadle

Is your club ready? Do you have what it takes to seize either of these opportunities and grow your business in new ways? Or, are you sitting back and scratching your head wondering how the heck you would even get started?

There are club operators who are leading the way, and we want to find out who they are. So, we have an invitation for you: **If your club is innovating in the areas of workplace or medical fitness, we want to hear from you.** *CLUB INSIDER* has asked me to find these clubs, talk to you about your best practices, what lessons you have learned, and most importantly, what results you achieved for your business. Every other month, one club will be featured as a case study – an opportunity to share with industry colleagues what differentiates you from the competition so that others may learn and adopt your ideas to their unique markets.

If you are interested in sharing your story, contact me directly at dave@fithappensintentionally.com.

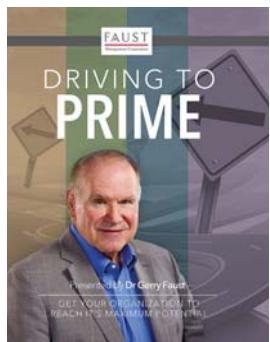
(Dave is the Founder and Chief Intentional Officer of Fit Happens Intentionally! A health and fitness innovator on a mission to help people Move More. Eat Better. Live Better - Intentionally! He brings over 35 years of fitness industry experience starting in clubs and equipment sales to over 20 years delivering workplace wellness programs at Fortune 100 employers. He is recognized as a thought leader who is not afraid to challenge conventional wisdom, a creative problem solver. Now as an entrepreneur, he is helping to disrupt and reshape the fitness industry to better serve those who need it most. Dave holds BS degrees in Marketing and Exercise Science from Oregon State University and an M.S. in Clinical Exercise Physiology from UC Davis. Dave can be reached at dave@fithappensintentionally.com)

Here's a Special Offer for Our CLUB INSIDER Friends:

A 50% Off Discount on Dr. Gerry Faust's New DVD series, Driving to Prime!

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**Blink Fitness
Launches "Tune Out
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NEW YORK, N.Y. - Americans are experiencing record levels of stress. To raise awareness of the importance of mental health during National Stress Awareness Month, Blink Fitness has launched "Tune Out While You Work Out," an initiative to encourage members to minimize stress and focus on themselves. Every Monday for the month of April, Blink will be switching its television programming to mood-lifting and news-free content in all locations, while inspiring members to take a step back from social media and all of their daily stressors through exercise. The content will include comedy, entertainment, music and educational programming.

According to an annual survey conducted by the American Psychological Association (APA) earlier this year, there was a significant increase in stress amongst Americans for the first time since the survey was first conducted in 2007. Factors that play into Americans' stress include the current political climate, personal safety and even constant technology use. As a result of these stressors, 80% of Americans have reported at least one health symptom because of additional stressors.

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"We always want Blink to be a place our members turn to when they need a mood boost," said Ellen Roggemann, Vice President of Marketing for Blink Fitness. "After seeing the results of this survey, we wanted to do something that would serve as a reminder that exercise is just as important for our members' mental well-being as it is for their physical health. We are removing stressors from our gyms like news content from our TV screens and are encouraging members to go social media-free during their workouts so they can tune out while they work out."

Exercise offers a plethora of benefits for your body and mental well-being. It has the ability to help with relaxation and calmness, counter depression and mitigate stress. Even better, it boosts endorphins that produce the brain's feel-good transmitters, serves as a form of meditation that rids daily tensions, and best of all, improves your mood!

Is Your Organization's Culture Independent or Integrated?

By: Karen Woodard-Chavez

Part II

In **Part I** of this article, you were exposed to the elements that outline differences between organizations that operate in an independent culture and organizations that operate in a more integrated culture (included as a sidebar). You were also asked to determine which culture your organization most resembled. In **Part II**, we will discuss tools you can utilize to become more of an integrated culture.

Elements of An Integrated Culture

Let's look at each of the elements of an integrated culture and the tools that will help you build your culture:

Team Members are aware of everyone's contribution to the end result and acquiring additional insight leads to better results.

In your organization, when you select someone to become part of the team, is their training based solely on the department in which they will be working? For example, if you select a tennis pro, is their training limited to the business of the tennis department? If you select someone as a Personal Trainer, is their training limited to the fitness department? To integrate departments and staff within those departments, utilize the following tools:

1. Primary purpose - All team members, regardless of position, have a *primary*

purpose and a *secondary* purpose. The *secondary purpose* is the task or job description of their specific department in which they are working, which obviously, varies per department. However, the *primary purpose* is the *same for all staff* regardless of department and is what every team member is expected to do to support the vision, mission and culture of the business. *It is exactly the same for absolutely every team member.* What most businesses do is emphasize the secondary purpose and neglect the primary purpose, leaving the primary purpose (vision, mission, culture) to chance, luck or annual meetings. Primary purpose is a tool that is utilized in staff selection, staff direction, staff training, decision making, discipline and more. An example that would be the very first substantive paragraph on any job description (preceding secondary purpose) might be the following:

Primary Purpose: To create an environment where *all* Members, Guests and Team Members feel a part of the community that is our club, not separate from the club in any way. We will do this daily by engaging Members, Guests and Team Members to have their best personal experience at the club each time they are with us.

2. Staff launch - Upon being selected as team member of your organization, every team member will complete an operational training program that gives them exposure to all elements of the organization. The short-list of examples would include:

•Meet with the GM to understand the vision, mission and core values of the club.

- Meet with every department head for 15 minutes each to understand the essence of what their department contributes to the club and to the member. All staff must understand the five key benefits of each department and be tested on these benefits.

- You may also want to add experiencing a variety of club experiences so they understand what the member should experience.

3. Sharing of Strategic Goals and Achievement of Goals - At the beginning of each year, all team members need to know what the organization's strategic goals/plans are and what their role is in achieving the goals and plans. Additionally, all team members need to be updated regularly as to the organization's progress in achievement of the goals and plans and celebrating when we achieve success.

4. Departmental Partnership Program - This program relates initially to leadership in the organization, and once complete, can and should be extended to the entire team. The purpose of this program is to further integrate the leadership team of the organization resulting in the following outcomes:

- Broader and deeper understanding of each department and each manager's jobs and challenges within each department;
- Integration of the management staff;
- Integration of the departments within the organization, rather than independence from each other;
- Utilization and growth of management talents in a more collaborative manner.

The format for the program would entail two managers to team up for two months during which they would meet for 30 minutes per week with a focus on helping each other with departmental challenges, issues or for creative purposes.

Prior to the formation of the team, they would define the three issues for which they each are seeking help. The defined issues would also be given to the GM for tracking purposes. As the two months progress, other issues will come up that they will be able to assist each other with. At the end of the two months, a written summary of what they learned about each other's departments as well as the assistance/benefit they received from the each other would be given to the GM, as well as shared with the rest of the management staff.

This format would be repeated until all leadership has had the opportunity



Karen Woodard-Chavez

to work with every other department in the organization.

Team is the first and primary mechanism for accountability. Instead of talking about each other, they talk with each other.

In your organization, if a team member is behaving in a way that does not deliver Primary Purpose or even Secondary Purpose, do you, as their manager, step in and intervene, or do the team member's colleagues step in before it gets to you?

If you are where the buck stops, then you are the primary mechanism for accountability. The goal is to have the team be the primary mechanism for accountability. This happens when all team members are clear about Primary Purpose, clear about strategic plans and goals and are committed to the organization.

In your organization, do you have a culture of feedback or a culture of nice? To be clear, a culture of feedback would allow any team member, regardless of position, to provide helpful, constructive feedback to any other team member, regardless of position --same level, superior or subordinate, in same department or not-- and the receiving team member would receive it as helpful and do something with it. Does this happen in your organization consistently with *all* team members? OR, when a team member attempts to give feedback to a superior, or someone that is not a direct report, is the general response, "who does he think he is telling me what to do?" If your response is the latter and not the former, *you have a culture of nice*.

A culture of nice is not a highly functioning culture. It is characterized by team members not wanting to say anything because they do not want to rock the boat, offend, hurt anyone's feelings or feel it is not their place to say anything. It's not the most functional culture for business.

A culture of feedback is based on (See Karen Woodard-Chavez Page 25)

Elements Defining Culture Independence or Integration

Independent Culture:

- Individual preoccupation with own task, lack of understanding, awareness of overview and others contributions.
- In conflict, fingers are pointed at other group members and expectation is for a manager to solve issue.
- Suspicion and caution about what is said to not look stupid.
- Control forms the basis of management, group members "lend a hand" to get it done.
- Training is focused on short-term vocational skills to get the job done.

Integrated Culture:

- Members are aware of everyone's contribution to the end result and acquiring additional insight leads to better results.
- Team is the first and primary mechanism for accountability. Instead of talking *about* each other, they talk *with* each other.
- Everyone's comments and contributions are valued.
- Focus is on gaining commitment to goals, not just utilization of hands, but of minds as well.
- Training is focused on collaboration, communication and trust, as well as vocation.

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...Karen Woodard-Chavez

continued from page 24

all staff knowing and doing what it takes to fulfill the Primary Purpose on a daily basis, knowing when colleagues are doing it, or not, and being able to direct/redirect each other to deliver in a way that does fulfill Primary Purpose. Primary Purpose is emphasized because, if you remember from earlier in this article, *EVERY team member has the same Primary Purpose*, so we all know what it takes to make it happen. We may not all know what it takes to make the Secondary Purpose happen in another department, but the Primary Purpose becomes the agreement that we all have with each other that creates our culture. If someone is not fulfilling that agreement, why would we not help with that?

Developing a culture of feedback does not happen overnight. It requires agreement, commitment, training, practice and accountability to Primary Purpose.

As a starting point, have your Team answer questions 1 - 3 on a scale of 1 - 5, with 1 being lowest and 5 being highest, and have them answer question 4 however they feel best describes their position.

1. What is your comfort level in providing

feedback to a colleague?

2. What is your comfort level in providing feedback to your supervisor?

3. What is your comfort level in providing feedback to someone who is not your direct report?

4. What is the biggest impediment to not being a "5" with the previous three questions?

This will provide some terrific discussion in your organization as to what you need to work on supporting or eliminating to develop a culture of feedback and have a more functional culture where the team is the primary mechanism for accountability.

Everyone's comments and contributions are valued.

In an organization where agreements exist among the team to serve both a Primary Purpose and Secondary Purpose, there is clarity and commitment about each person's contribution to the strategic plans and goals as well as provide honest helpful information for each other to the result is people feeling that their opinions matter. To access the collective

genius of the team is incredibly valuable to your organization.

Focus is on gaining commitment to goals, not just utilization of hands, but of minds as well.

When people are *committed to goals* they will do whatever it takes to make them happen. When people are *compliant to goals*, they will only do what they are *told to do when* they are told to do it. Not much thinking or acting on their own happens. To gain commitment to goals, it is critical to understand who you have in your organization. Assess the following for each current team member as well as those you are considering bringing into your organization:

•How similar are the core values of your team members to the core values of your organization?

•What is their connection to the Primary Purpose?

•Do they feel *a part of* the organization vs. *apart from* the organization?

•How energized are they about your organization's strategic plan and goals?

•What does achieving the goals mean to them personally?

•Do they see a fruitful future for themselves in your organization?

Assessing each team member with these questions will reveal whether they are committed or compliant. You will no doubt find both. Also, know that some people will always *only be compliant*. To move those that are *compliant to committed*, enroll them in collaborative processes where they have ownership in something (an initiative, project, process improvement, etc.) with others in your organization. Utilize collaborative small group work in meetings to accomplish things rather than the leader of your organization telling team members what or how to do. Leaders need to explain the "why" of organizational initiatives, and the team should be trusted to come up with the what will be done and how it will be done to achieve success in such initiatives. Continue to work in this way, and you will notice a different sense of commitment begin to grow.

Training is focused on collaboration, communication and trust, as well as vocation.

(See Karen Woodard-Chavez Page 27)

At IHRSA 2017, We Asked, “What Makes You Great?”

By: Matt Zagrodzky

Last month, IHRSA 2017 came and went, and as usual, it was a great show. The keynotes were great, as usual. The Exhibit Hall was jammed with great vendors representing the best of what the fitness industry has to offer, as usual. The IHRSA educational tracks provided great content, as usual. The best of the best in fitness were in attendance... as usual.

As an IHRSA exhibitor for more than ten years, another trade show with the usual was just too much to bear. We wanted to try something a little... *unusual*. What could we do different that would make the show more interesting for us and everyone else? As the gears of innovation started to turn, we realized that we really are in the business of helping making fitness clubs great. And, as we thought about it more, we wanted to find out what else makes fitness clubs great. Not just great, but **REALLY great**. The kind of greatness that makes members want to stand on the rooftops and shout about how fantastic their fitness club really is. The kind of fitness club that would make a member ask themselves, “*Why would I ever want to work out anywhere else?*” What could a fitness club possibly offer to create that kind of a raving fan? Then, we realized: we are exhibiting at the best fitness trade show the world has to offer, with some of the best fitness club operators in the world. Why don’t we just ask: **“WHAT MAKES YOU GREAT?”** So, we did. Now, we want to share what we learned with you.

Instead of the usual trade show booth, we set up a video camera and lighting and asked every fitness operator who passed by to answer, “what makes them great.” To add a little incentive to coax the camera shy to participate, we partnered with Augie’s Quest to offer an incentive:



For everyone who gave an interview about what makes them great, we donated to Augie’s Quest to find a cure for ALS. We also challenged others to donate as well. A long-time titan of the fitness industry, Augie Nieto is an inspiration to thousands. Twelve years ago, he was diagnosed with ALS (Lou Gehrig’s disease). Augie and his wife Lynne started the Augie’s Quest foundation to raise money to find a cure for ALS, and to date, they have raised more than \$46 million.

The result of our effort? A lot of money raised for Augie’s Quest and 50 interviews with fitness club operators around the world telling us about what makes them great.

Creating A Sense of Community In Your Club

After spending two days interviewing and talking to fitness club owners, we learned quite a lot. Despite the diversity of the people we interviewed, we noticed one common theme. Good club operators do not want their fitness club to be known as just another place to work out. They want to differentiate themselves by developing a sense of community, that sort of feeling that you belong. It turns out there are lot of different ideas about how to create a community feel in a fitness club.

One of our favorite interviews was with **Pam Muellenbach** with *Wisconsin Athletic Clubs*. They have a chain of 7 clubs in and around Milwaukee and are very proud of their “bar system.” I asked if this was some kind of exercise system,

and she said, no, it’s an actual bar. They offer “microbrews and yoga, a variety of mimosas and things like that,” she said. When asked if she thought there was a conflict with offering microbrews with fitness, Pam explained: “It comes down to retention. You want people to stay so they make these lifelong friendships doing what they enjoy. And, if part of that is beer, and part of that is yoga, that’s great!”

Another great interview was with **Fausto Di Giuolio** with *SlowFit* located near Rome, Italy. Fausto explained (in both English and Italian) that the easiest way to make members feel welcomed is to simply smile when they come in. And, make them sweat. When asked what they do to make their members feel extra special, Fausto said “We organize a weekend on a ski resort for 300 people. We’ve been doing that for 20 years.” Talk about creating a sense of community!

One other great way to create a community feel is with group fitness programs. Many options are available, with some more successful than others. Another is finding a great cause to support. **Kelly Beauparlant** with *Newtown Athletic Club* in Newtown, Pennsylvania shared how their club raises funds for ALS research. Last year, they raised more than \$200,000, and they have a goal of \$500,000 this year. They also hosted a ball where they expected to raise more than \$200,000. Kelly said this has a big impact on creating a community environment because, “Our members love to give back to charity and want to know that they are part of something bigger than fitness.”



Matt Zagrodzky

The Bash For Augie’s Quest

The best part of IHRSA 2017 was attending Bash For Augie’s Quest the last night of the event. Hundreds attended. When Lynne Nieto told the story of Augie’s quest, there was not a dry eye in the place. The night’s highlight was when they announced how much money was raised to help find a cure for ALS: **\$3,487,463**. A special shout out and thanks to **Orangetheory Fitness**. They ran a campaign leading up to IHRSA and raised more than \$2 million. **#IBurnforALS**.

Thank you to everyone who participated in our interviews and helped support a great cause. If you’d like to check out all the interviews and ideas these club operators shared, like us on Facebook (@igofiguresoftware) or subscribe to our YouTube channel.

(Matt Zagrodzky is Vice President of iGo Figure Software. iGo Figure Software has been helping make fitness clubs great for 20 years with world class fitness club management software, payment processing, scheduling and member retention tools. Find out more at www.fitnessclubmanagementsoftware.com)



(L to R) Lynne Nieto, Matt Zagrodzky, Augie Nieto and Randy Ivey



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...Karen Woodard-Chavez

continued from page 25

In your organization, how much time and money do you invest in making your team *better people*? Not simply training them to be better service desk staff, sales people, trainers, managers, etc. (fill in the blank on the position). There is no doubt you need to train your team to be effective in their departmental roles. However, when you train your team to work better together, to trust others, to communicate more effectively, to see the bigger picture, to think differently... then you are training them to be better humans. When you have better humans in your organization, you have a better organization. Not only does the impact of this type of training impact your organization, it impacts numerous lives outside your organization.

Assess which of the **5 Elements of Integration** will be most important for your organization to begin with. Please know that all five elements are equally important to commit to and consistently practice. However, relative to your organization, you will recognize a need for one over another to begin with on your journey to create a more integrated culture.

(Karen is President of Premium Performance Training in Boulder, Colorado and Ixtapa, Mexico. Karen has owned and operated clubs since 1985 and now consults and trains staff throughout the world on sales, service, management and leadership. These services are offered on-site, online and through her books, manuals and DVDs. Karen can be reached at karen@karenwoodard.com or 303-417-0653.)

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Equinox Unveils First East Bay Club in Berkeley

SAN FRANCISCO, CA - Equinox, a high performance lifestyle leader, announced the opening of its first club in Berkeley, California. Located in close proximity of the world-renowned university, the 30,000-square foot club combines the unparalleled experience that Equinox offers at each of its 87 global locations with touches that feel unmistakably "Berkeley."

"Equinox Berkeley, our 6th club in Northern California, was inspired by the area's vibrant culture and conceived as a new community hub," said John Klein, Senior Vice President, Real Estate for Equinox. "The club's progressive design, programing and culture perfectly complement our local members' values, and it will foster community through our shared commitment to high performance living."

The 2-level club inspires transformation with its dramatic color accents and luxurious finishes. "The design concept emphasizes our connection to the environment, incorporating shifting movement and translucency," said Aaron Richter, VP of Design for Equinox. "Studios are strategically placed allowing maximum natural light to flow, while refined textures,

including raked black granite, Calcutta marble, Douglas fir beams and white oak floors, enrich the space."

Equinox Berkeley features four dedicated studios for yoga, Pilates, cycling and group fitness classes. Expert Equinox group fitness instructors will lead the Berkeley community in a variety of innovative and diverse classes such as The Cut, a cardio-forward boxing class, The Pursuit by Equinox, an immersive, technology driven cycling experience inspiring competition, to unique barre and yoga formats.

Equinox's fitness floors unite free weights and cardio equipment with functional training space, creating an inspirational setting where members can work out on their own, or with one of Equinox's highly skilled personal trainers.

Beyond the fitness floor lies The Spa at Equinox, featuring a menu of offerings to rejuvenate and pamper the body, as well as the Shop and Café making Equinox Berkeley a true urban lifestyle experience. Equinox Berkeley is also home to a Kids Club, offering members childcare while they enjoy the facilities.

Make It Fun!

reACT Strength Trainer Joins CLUB INSIDER Advertising Team

Publisher's Note: CLUB INSIDER is pleased to welcome the reACT Strength Trainer to the CLUB INSIDER Advertising Team. We present an introduction interview with **Greg Maurer, Director of Education:**

CLUB INSIDER (C.I.) - Who invented and developed the reACT Strength Training Machine and when?

Greg Maurer (GM) - Terry Jacobs invented the genesis of the product about ten years ago, initially called the Quadmill. His initial concept was designed as a mogul ski simulator for the U.S. ski team, but he soon learned it had applications far beyond skiing. As we learned about its broader potential, the name changed to reACT (Rapid Eccentric Anaerobic Core Trainer).

C.I. - Where was the reACT Strength Training Machine created and where is it manufactured now?

GM - As is the case with early stage, disruptive products like reACT, Terry initially manufactured the product here in the U.S., primarily to ensure it performed to all the precise specifications he had designed into it. As volume grew, it was only natural to move production to the Far East to take advantage of manufacturing economies of scale, as is the case for most products of this nature once they hit critical mass. Over the recent years, and up to today, it is manufactured in China, but under the same, strict quality assurance and quality control standards of the initial concept.

C.I. - Beyond simply for exercise, why was the reACT Strength Training Machine created?

GM - Terry understood that a product that focused on the eccentric phase of exercise, or, the *muscle lengthening* phase, could produce benefits that not only complemented, but improved upon traditional resistance training, allowing the user to enhance and accelerate the benefits in a fast, safe protocol. As I mentioned, we started with the ski industry, but based on the movement and the physiological benefits achieved in a rapid and safe environment, we've now seen success in a number of applications, from elite athletes to rehab to active aging, senior citizens. We're even involved in a research concept now to determine how reACT can better prepare military paratroopers for impact landing based on strengthening their lower body through eccentric muscle training.

C.I. - How is the reACT Strength Training

Machine used, for example: primarily in health clubs or in health clubs and hospital fitness centers or where else?

GM - When I say reACT's addressable market extends from elite athletes to active seniors, and everyone in between, it's really the case. While our primary segment remains health clubs and fitness studios, we're also installed in 18 NFL training centers, multiple college athletic centers, the military as well as rehabilitation centers and senior living communities. The safe, easy-to-execute movement pattern makes the application widespread in a wide range of vertical markets.

C.I. - What things can you share about the member satisfaction with the reACT Fitness Machine?

GM - That's the great thing about reACT. Members love it. It's simple to learn and operate, and it provides a quick, no-impact lower body workout with zero vertical load on the spine while also being easy on the knees. Members control the speed of movement and their range of motion. They also have the freedom to start and stop the machine whenever they want, therefore allowing anyone at any fitness level ease of use while receiving tremendous benefits in a short period of time. Women, in particular, rave about the product and its ability to tone their legs, shape their buttocks and strengthen their core in only 2 - 3 minutes per session. For our health

club operator customer base, they tell us it's filling a void in their offering and helping address specific wants from their female members.

The product also addresses other very important member needs as well; it provides rapid increases in strength and power compared to other training methods, so advanced athletes get great benefits: improvements in kinesthetic awareness, balance and coordination help our older users, and because it improves the muscles' ability to absorb force safely, it helps on the rehabilitation side through better injury prevention and treatment.



Greg Maurer

C.I. - How many reACT Fitness Machines have been built and sold to date?

GM - Over the past year, there have been about 500 units sold worldwide, which is a good start, but based on the positive feedback we continue to get from our customer base, we've recently retooled some aspects of the product and are in the process of overhauling our marketing and distribution to ignite even greater growth. We're building off this foundation to grow globally. Coming off a tremendously successful IHRSA Trade Show and having just returned from FIBO, I'm very excited about the interest and enthusiasm we've received from both shows.

C.I. - Name some of the clubs who've purchased and now employ reACT Fitness

Machines? For example, Workout Anytime has over 100 Franchises. Do all of those locations have the reACT Machine?

GM - Yes, this is a key differentiator for Workout Anytime, and it has become an established brand standard for all of their 100+ clubs nationwide. LifeTime Fitness is using the product to deliver a differentiated member experience, as well as Sport&Health and Hockessin Athletic Club, plus a number of specialty fitness studios that cater to unique and different methods of fitness and wellness.

C.I. - What other nuggets of wisdom can you share with us?

GM - I would say that what a club gets with reACT is a truly unique, differentiated product that provides benefits that no other product can. Members and trainers love the product, and not only do they have fun using it, but they love the results they can achieve in a short amount of time, which is the name of the game in this industry. However, while the product is simple to learn and use, it's hard to master, so it gets used by everyone in the club, from deconditioned, newcomers to those recovering from ACL surgery to the fittest/strongest member in the gym. We have what we call the "reACT 2-Minute Challenge," which is our challenge to all members to get on and see what a quick trip on the product can do to really work the lower body and core. The feedback and results have been extremely positive. It's really getting to be a lot of fun re-launching the product, and I encourage everyone to check us out.

Check out the new **reACT Strength Trainer Ad** on the **Outside Back Page**.



Instinctive Insights Joins CLUB INSIDER Advertising Team

Publisher's Note: CLUB INSIDER is pleased to welcome **Jeramy Fishel**, and his company, **Instinctive Insights**, a health and fitness club marketing company to the CLUB INSIDER Advertising Team. We asked Jeramy to describe his company and its objectives in his own words. Jeramy wrote:

"Our goal at Instinctive Insights is to

help our fitness club clients be *more successful* in *acquiring* and *retaining* members. By utilizing our in-depth, data-driven demographic research in targeting prospects, we increase the percentage of positive responses, lower marketing costs by eliminating wasteful engagements and arm our clients with intelligence to make smart, ROI-driven marketing investments. Providing real, tangible and measurable

results and value is at the core of our process.

We are the high-tech leaders in Direct Mail, keeping clubs successful in the channel by leveraging a rich collection of 400+ demographic and psychographic data points across their entire target market. This data feeds into our proprietary, predictive-modeling engine to score and predict which prospect households are most likely to become a member, if targeted with persona-driven creative, messaging and offers. While this process is somewhat standardized and repeatable, the data elements utilized and leveraged are completely customized, not only for each club client, but for each of their locations and membership types.

Direct Engagement is our passion, and direct mail certainly plays a key role in delivering ROI. Last year, we launched several email-nurturing campaigns using our Engagement Weave™ Application, both for B2C and B2B prospects, as well as Pay-Per-Click and Digital Re-Marketing Programs, all of which we are rolling out to more clubs in 2017. Wherever marketing is trackable and provable, in terms of ROI, we're helping clubs determine, as in *really determine*, how much money they get back from every dollar they invest."

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"If a fitness club is looking to save money, get better ROI and find more members, I just haven't found anything better than Instinctive Insights. I'm looking at vendors all the time, and there hasn't been a better solution in terms of a targeted means of marketing," states **Thomas Deere**, *COO of Five Seasons Sports Club*. "Today we're sending out less direct mail, spending less money and seeing significantly greater return. Results are great. Since we started honing in on segments of attractive prospects with Instinctive Insights... well... I've been shocked by the results."

"Instinctive Insights had previously completed a market-penetration



Jeramy Fishel

analysis for our club and provided guidance on possible site-expansion opportunities using membership trends and robust demographic data. Their system is by far the most comprehensive we have seen. It gives us the ability to accurately track prospective client activity and adjust our marketing efforts, thus converting them into sales. We have launched several new investments because of our success reorganizing our direct mail spending," explains **Mary Frank**, *Director of Marketing at Cincinnati Sports Club*. "Partnering with Instinctive Insights, we used direct mail to reach profile groups previously unidentified, like seniors with health ailments, launched a B2B prospect-email marketing program, a sweepstakes contest on Facebook and a digital re-marketing program."

• • •

Instinctive Insights launched in 2013 after being acquired and rebranded, shifting in focus from utilities to health and fitness clubs. Their team of data-driven scientists, creative artists, project managers and marketing experts are headquartered in Columbus, Ohio, with offices in Atlanta and Baltimore.

Be sure to check out the new **Instinctive Insights Ad on This Page**.

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Thanks and Appreciation

At CLUB INSIDER, we are excited to be in our **24th Year** of this home-based health and fitness club trade publication! The thought that this publication was *founded to serve an industry I truly love*, and so that *I could become a Mister Mom for my son, Justin*, is still *intriguing and amazing* to us. I wish to extend our most sincere **Thanks and Appreciation** to everyone that's made this amazing 24-year run possible.

A very sincere **Thanks and Appreciation** go to **Rick Caro**, **Dr. Gerry Faust** and the **Faust Executive Roundtable #1** for helping me decide in 1993 what my home-based business would be. **Thanks and Appreciation** to my long-time friends, **Ron Hudspeth** and **Cathy Miller** of Atlanta's **Hudspeth Report** for the tremendous assistance they provided us during *our first eight years of publication*. **Thanks and Appreciation** to all of the folks at **Walton Press** in Monroe, Georgia. They've done an absolutely excellent job for us all these years and have printed every one of our **280** monthly editions! **Thanks and Appreciation** to all of our **READERS**. Sincere **Thanks and Appreciation** to our **CLUB INSIDER Advertisers**, past and present, for their kind and dedicated support of this publication. It's amazing to know that we have several advertisers with over 15 years of continuous advertising with us. Plus, we have one advertiser, **National Gym Supply**, with over 23 years advertising with us! We also want to say sincere **Thanks and Appreciation** to all of our **CLUB INSIDER Contributing Authors**, past and present, who've contributed *hundreds and hundreds* of excellent articles to help our readers with their Best Business Practices. **Thanks and Appreciation** to **IHRSA** for all it does.

Sincere **Thanks and Appreciation** to my son, **Justin**, who started working part-time for **CLUB INSIDER** when he was just 8 years old (helping with mailings). This young man, pretty much behind the scenes for 24 years now, has truly been a fantastic partner for his Dad in **CLUB INSIDER**. **Justin** does our editing, publication layouts, all of our website design and maintenance, all of our bookkeeping and subscription processing work, as well as archive management and anything else that needs doing, including writing eight cover stories per year.

Last, but surely not least, this writer who refused to fear failure when many told him he didn't have a chance of surviving the publishing business for even a year did survive. He would like to give sincere **Thanks and Appreciation** to the power that made that survival happen: **God**.

Very sincerely, with love in my heart for you all,

Norm Cates, Jr.

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