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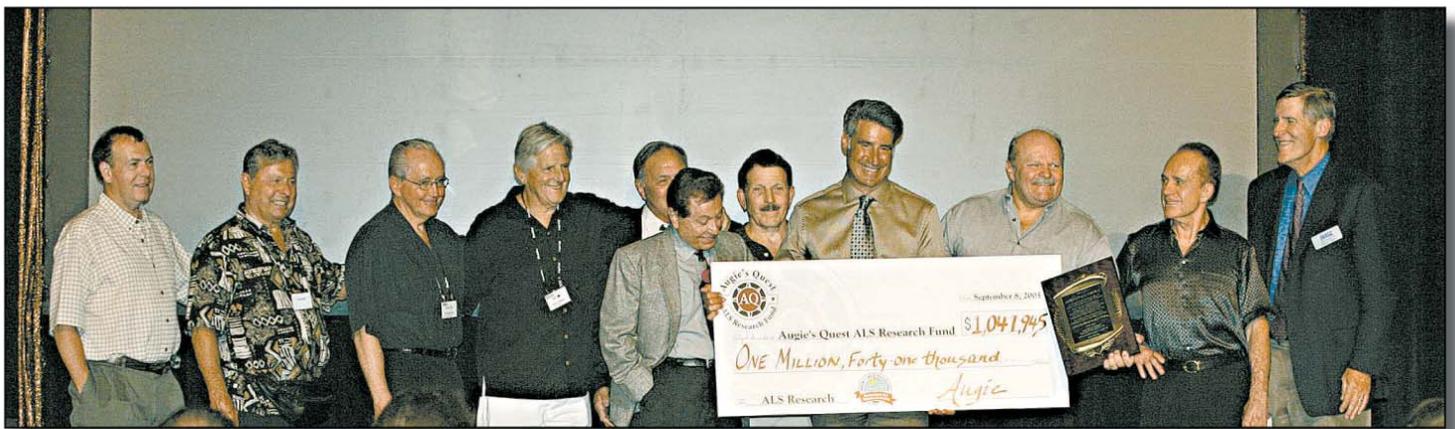
# THE Club Insider

## NEWS

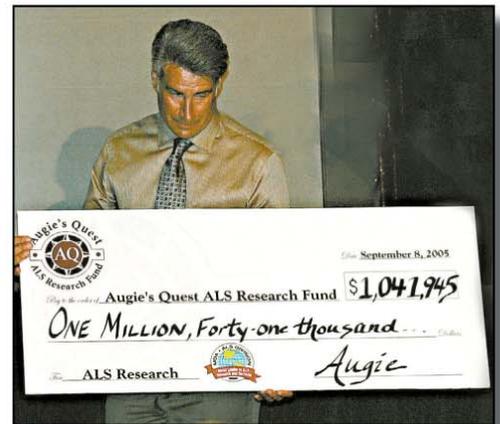
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*The Pulse of the Health, Racquet & Sports Club Business Worldwide*

# “Augie’s Quest”



Ron Hemelgarn Presents Augie Nieto with  
NFTJ Lifetime Achievement Award



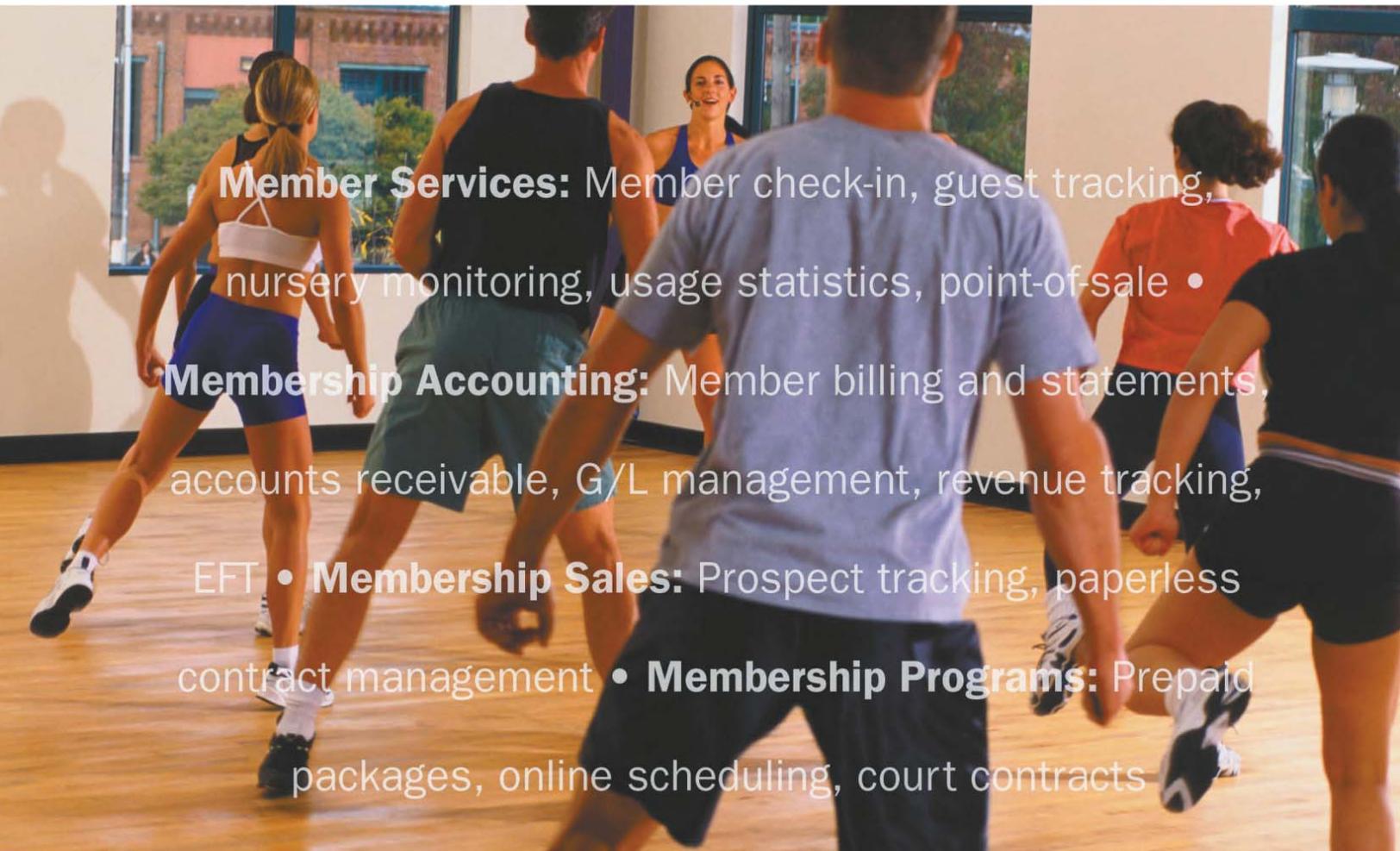
“Augie’s Quest” a Great Success!

(Top photo L to R) Previous NFTJ Lifetime Achievement Award Winners Honor Augie: Gary Jones for Arthur Jones, Rudy Smith, Bob Rice, Mike Uretz for Joe Gold, Bill Pearl, Jerry Kahn, Ken Melby, Augie Nieto, Ron Hemelgarn, Ray Wilson & John McCarthy

# “Augie’s Quest”

## Raises Over \$1 Million For ALS Research!

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# Norm Cates' **THE Club Insider** **NEWS**

## “Augie’s Quest” Raises Over \$1 Million For ALS Research!

LAS VEGAS, NV. - An award ceremony honoring Augie Nieto, Founder of LifeFitness, who is fighting ALS (Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis or Lou Gehrig’s disease), raised more than \$1 million for the Muscular Dystrophy Association’s ALS Division. The funds raised will go directly to an ALS research fund, *Augie’s Quest... Cure ALS Research Fund*, started by Nieto to help stop this deadly disease.

Nieto received a diagnosis of ALS in March of 2005 and teamed with MDA to do everything he can to stop ALS. “I am taken back by the love, support, and generosity of our Fitness Industry and our friends,” Nieto exclaimed.

“And, this is just the beginning. We hope to be able to build on this event to continue to fund *Augie’s Quest* - focusing monies to search for a cure for ALS.”

Nieto was honored with the National Fitness Trade Journal’s *Lifetime Achievement Award* at a reception and dinner held at the Rio All Suite Hotel Conference Center in Las Vegas on September 8, 2005.

The \$1,045,031.00 raised made MDA history as its largest-grossing, first-time event. The night will fund more than 16,000 hours of ALS research. Nieto will personally work with the country’s top ALS experts to choose how funds from his “Quest” are spent on ALS research.

Former recipient of the NFTJ’s Lifetime Achievement Award, Ron Hemelgarn, presented the Award to Augie Nieto, Chairman of Octane Fitness, for his long-standing support and devotion to the fitness industry. At 19, Nieto bought the marketing rights to the Lifecycle exercise bike from Ray Wilson, and later co-founded Lifecycle, Inc. with him. Under Nieto’s leadership, Chicago-based LifeFitness Inc. grew to be the largest commercial manufacturer of fitness equipment in the world.

More than 800 of the fitness industry’s top executives were in attendance including people from 24 Hour Fitness, Click Commerce, CortiSlim,

Equinox Fitness Clubs, Heart Rate Inc, LA Fitness, Leiner Health Products, Makar Properties, Paramount Fitness Corp., Quest Software, R.D. Olson Construction, Sares Regis Group, SM&A, Yogafly and many more.

ALS is a disease that affects parts of the nervous system that control voluntary muscle movement. As nerve cells are gradually lost, the muscles they control become weak and then nonfunctional. Respiratory complications typically develop and life expectancy is three to five years after diagnosis.

MDA’s ALS Division leads the world in providing research and services for people with ALS. The Association is a

voluntary health agency working to defeat more than 40 neuromuscular diseases through programs of worldwide research, comprehensive services and far-reaching professional and public health education. MDA maintains some 240 clinics for adults and children affected by neuromuscular diseases, including 35 dedicated MDA/ALS centers at major medical institutions.

For more information on *Augie’s Quest... Cure ALS Research Fund*, please visit [www.als.mdausa.org/augie/](http://www.als.mdausa.org/augie/). For more information on MDA, please visit [www.mdausa.org](http://www.mdausa.org).

## Laury Hammel and Longfellow Clubs

### “Making the World A Better Place”!

### Longfellow Clubs Celebrate 25 Years of Love!

By Norm Cates, Jr.

#### Part II

Regular CLUB INSIDER readers have already had the benefit of our Part I in this two-part series with Laury Hammel. In this Part II, we will hear from Hammel about:

- The Longfellow Holistic Health Centers
- Hot Power Yoga
- The “Service Breakthrough Project”
- Longfellows’ World Class

Programming

- Hosting national and New England junior tennis tournaments
- WHY Laury Hammel *Values* IHRSA So Much
- Hammel’s new book on Socially Responsible Business
- Laury’s Views on the ‘Low Cost Clubs’
- Laury Hammel’s Excellent Dissertation on Obesity.

Laury, I sure enjoyed sharing the wonderful story of your life and career in Part I in our August edition. Congratulations on your 25th Anniver-

sary recently celebrated on August 26, 2005! What an achievement! Let’s get into our Part II content so our readers can learn more.

**Q.** Tell us about your ‘Holistic Health Centers’?

**A.** At the Wayland club we have partnered with a local chiropractor since 1988, and at the Natick club we have partnered with a massage therapist. Each of these holistic health centers offer chiropractic massage therapy, physical therapy, acupuncture, nutrition counseling, and other complementary and alternative

modalities. Physical therapists may offer ultrasound therapy to a client and then take her to the swimming pool and have her do specific exercises in the water. Or, a client may receive an electric muscle stimulation treatment coupled with a workout on the Keiser equipment. The ability to offer our injured members specific modalities which help them get healed is a wonderful thing. Not only do we show them how to use the club to heal themselves, but we get them back to 100% activity much sooner. We’ve been doing great things with our holistic health

centers over the years, and we’re very appreciative of the leadership of Dr. Ken Hazirjian, D.C. and Claire Parkhurst, LMT. I know there are a lot of places in America that offer holistic health care, but to be honest, I haven’t seen other health clubs that offer the scope of services we provide.

We’re really working at the club to create an atmosphere where *people take responsibility* for their own health. We teach prevention and encourage them to keep themselves healthy and fit by living a healthy balance. (See *Laury Hammel* page 23)

### Inside The Insider

- “Younger Next Year”
- *Prospecting Power for Personal Trainers*
- “Make It Fun!”
- “The Way I see It”

### An Open Letter to John McCarthy of IHRSA from Laury Hammel

September 18, 2005

Dear John,

Congratulations on almost twenty five years of your visionary and dynamic leadership of IHRSA. Your great

work has not only built IHRSA into an industry titan, but you’ve helped transform our world’s culture. I have been honored to be your colleague and good friends now for over

thirty years. I have learned much from you and IHRSA, and for this, I offer you my deepest gratitude and appreciation.

I am writing this letter (See *Obesity* page 10)

# •Norm's Notes•

●I've spent *most* of the last **12 years** as a "Wordsmith"... working for *all of you*. You know...communicating the latest club industry news, ideas, developments, feelings, etc. to you all. But, I sit here today at a loss for words. After several weeks since it all

happened, I am still numbed and stunned about the terrible disaster in the State of my birth, Louisiana, and in Mississippi and Alabama. All I can think of to do is Pray for all of those folks. I feel so motivated to do SOMETHING more. But, what can we do for people that have lost their lives, their loved one's lives, their homes, all their possessions, their businesses, their work places, their cars, and so much more? We can all send money as we individually may be able to afford and I hope we all have. And we can Pray for an end to their suffering. May **GOD BLESS** and **HELP** all of our fellow Americans as they try to recover from America's worst natural disaster ever. May our

fellow Americans who have perished, **REST IN PEACE**.

●The Las Vegas **NFTJ/IHRSA Conference and Trade Show** went really well as you will note in my report on **page #6**. In particular, I think it was very meaningful that literally hundreds of club owner/operators and related vendor companies, many of them current or former intense competitors, came together to celebrate a very special occasion. That occasion was "**Augie's Quest**". Congratulations to the folks at the **MDA ALS Division** for helping **AUGIE NIETO, WALLY BOYKO** (NFTJ Publisher for 24 years) and **IHRSA's JOHN McCARTHY**



*Justin and Norm Cates, Jr.*

put together a record breaking first time event.

## Thank You

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●**Rick Caro** - President, Management Vision, Inc - (212) 987-4300

●**Colin Milner** - V.P. Sales/Marketing - Founder & CEO International Council on Active Aging - (866) 335-9777

●**Shawn Codd** - Sales - Makers-info@salesmakers.com or 800-428-3334

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●**Karen Kirby** - President - Health Style Services - (210) 884-2620

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●**Geoff Dyer** - President & CEO - Lifestyle Family Fitness - (717) 456-3100 Ext. 4076

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●**Dale Dibble** - Retired - Bentley Village - Naples, Florida. Email: dwdibble@hotmail.com

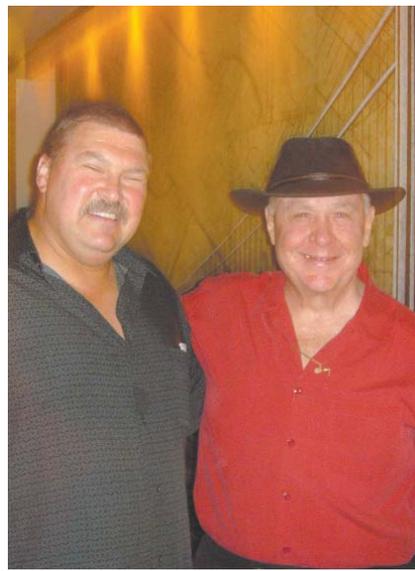
●**John Brown** - President - PCM Fitness, Inc. - (281) 894-7909

●**Gary Polic** Communications Consultants - GPolic@communication-consultants.us - 866-825-8501

●**Will Phillips** - President - REX Executive Roundtables (858)515.7835

## SAD...LATE BREAKING NEWS!

*I am so sorry to have to report that Ray Gordon, Founder of SalesMakers, called me just a minute ago to inform me that our Good Friend, Tom Ficorelli, of Ithaca, New York, has passed away. We know no details at this time. We do know that Tom was a gem of a human being. A man of passion, dedication, kindness for all and great enthusiasm for life.*  
**MAY OUR FRIEND TOM FICORELLI REST IN PEACE**



*Tom Ficorelli (L) and Norm Cates, Jr. New York City, June 2005*

●In case you've not noticed, Bally's stock has now risen to **\$4.52** per share (up from about \$3 a share a couple of months ago) as of closing on September 16th. Bally Management also obtained approval from their Bond Holders on their request to delay their required updated financial statements until November 30, 2005. And, a firm called **Pardus European Special Opportunities Master Fund L.P.** has been buying up Bally stock aggressively for the past three months. If you go to Google and look up Pardus, you will see info on the firm. I don't know the ins or outs on these matters, but it looks to me like Pardus, who is now a holder of 4,518,000 shares or 13.0% of the outstanding stock, may be interested in being involved in some form of takeover. It was announced that **STEPHEN C. SWID** has resigned from the Bally Board of Directors. It was also announced last week that Bally Total Fitness had entered into an exclusive arrangement with the **CocaCola Company** to distribute a line of special health and fitness products. **STAY TUNED!**

●**CONGRATULATIONS** to **BRIAN EVANS** and his fantastic **American Family Fitness Center** chain in Richmond, VA., as they won **Club Industry Magazine's Best of the Best Award for Onsite** (See Norm's Notes page 7)

Norm Cates' **THE Club Insider** NEWS

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# “INSIDER SPEAKS”

## Health Club Industry Needs More Women At the Top!

By: Norm Cates, Jr.

Julie Main was IHRSA's 24th President and served as well as any man or woman amongst her 23 predecessors. Annbeth Eschbach was the only other female President of IHRSA during its almost 25-year history, and she did an excellent job as well.

Recently departed IHRSA Board Members, Sandy Franco and Carol Nalevanko, served extremely well. Currently serving on IHRSA's Board of Directors are: Debra Siena of the Tennis Corporation of America and Laurie Smith of Steve Gilmour's Leisure Sports Club group in Northern California. As are Franco and Nalevanko, Siena and Smith are two very bright and articulate ladies.

It is a good thing they are serving on the IHRSA Board because they provide a perspective that is very important and it might be missed in their absence. That perspective: the “female point of view” on the health club industry.

Julie Main applied for IHRSA Board membership three times and was not chosen. Finally, on her 4th application, she was selected to serve on IHRSA's Board of Directors. Thank God for Julie's tenacity and perseverance as she continued to make IHRSA Board application after application until she succeeded to convince the Board Selection Committee that she was worthy of the important role. She handed the President's gavel to Joe Moore, IHRSA's 25th President effective July 1, 2005. However, she

will continue IHRSA service for one more year as its Ex-officio President.

### Male/Female Club Owner Ratio In The Health Club Industry Is Way Off!

A very low percentage of health clubs are owned by women, reportedly less than 10%. When I consider the lopsided balance of female ownership and other involvement in the health club industry, I ask here, “What must happen to change that?”

For starters, I think women reading this article everywhere should do what Julie Main, Annbeth Eschbach, Sandy Franco, Carol Nalevanko, Debra Siena and Laurie Smith have done. Get involved!

And, I have the perfect event for you to become involved...

### Women In Action Alliance All Day Seminar Scheduled During Club Industry

Last year at the Club Industry Show in Chicago, Sandy Coffman, the President of “Programming for Profit”; Janet Lossick, Founder of Vision Quest; and Laurie Helmick, Spa owner and consultant, based in Denver, CO, hosted the 1st ever “Women In Action” Seminar during the Club Industry Show in Chicago.

This year, on Thursday, November 3, 2005 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., “Women In Action” will return. The event will be presented by Sandy Coffman and Janet Lossick and will be

held at the McCormick Place Convention Hall, and if you're a woman, YOU are invited!

Veteran and “Make-It-Fun!” guru, Sandy Coffman, commented on this year's event, “Women's issues are more important than ever before. Our day for “Women In Action” will be packed with a strong network of women who have been pioneers in the industry. They will share ideas and experiences that will help to keep your passion alive and live life in balance while doing so! All women owners and managers need to attend. This seminar will enhance your life both personally and professionally” (see chart on page 21).

# NFTJ/IHRSA Alliance A Terrific Fit!

By: Norm Cates, Jr.

Wally and Meschelle Boyko, parents of seven wonderful children and long-time club business publishers of the National Fitness Trade Journal, hit a Home Run in Las Vegas, September 8-10th!

The 24th Annual NFTJ Conference and Trade Show was improved dramatically in educational content by the alliance with IHRSA who produced its 1st Annual Club Entrepreneur Conference.

John McCarthy, IHRSA's highly esteemed and 25-year Executive Director, did a wonderful thing last year when he made this arrangement with the Boyko's. This was a perfect fit and opportunity to replace the former sales and marketing conference that IHRSA had participated in for years with Pete Brown's Athletic Business Magazine. IHRSA had stepped aside from the event in Orlando, primarily due to low IHRSA Member attendance. This 1st annual Club Business Entrepreneur Conference did not have that problem!

Meredith Poppler, long-time IHRSA Staff

Member, deserves huge credit as she took this project on with great vigor and focus. Meredith did a masterful job. First, she arranged the World Class Speaker lineup you will read about below. Then, she used the draw of that great team of speakers to recruit 400 attendees, all of whom received much more than their money's worth.

The world class IHRSA Club Business Entrepreneur Speakers included: Mike “CLUB DOC” Chaet of CMS; Thomas ‘Make It Fun While Learning’ Plummer of Thomas Plummer Company; RayBob Gordon, Eddie Tock and Jeffrey Masden of Sales Makers; Karen Woodard of Premium Performance Training; Casey Conrad of Communications Consultants; Jim Smith of Peak Performance; and Karen Wischmann, Director of Training for Gold's Gyms International.

On Thursday, September 8th, Michael Scott Scudder spoke to what turned out to be a “Fire Marshall Managed” overflow crowd! The original room scheduled for Scudder's Thursday afternoon presentation turned out to be

way too small for the big crowd that showed up. They came to hear this terrific outspoken club consulting guru and long-time CLUB INSIDER Contributing Author speak on: “10 Questions a Smart Club Operator Should Ask Himself Each Month.” So, “Brother” Scudder has agreed to produce an article for CLUB

INSIDER with the same title. Look for that soon!

The NFTJ Trade Show had twice the number of vendors, but once again (and this is my only suggestion on how to make this entire event better), the Trade Show attendance could have been increased by routing and directing the exiting

400 IHRSA Conference attendees each afternoon right through the Trade Show Hall.

The Annual Ms. Fitness USA and Ms. Fitness World contests were fabulous as usual. Check out our website for Las Vegas photos!



IHRSA's Meredith Poppler

**...Norm's Notes**

continued from page 4

**Community Programming.** Evans' *Fit Family Program* (reported on six months ago by CLUB INSIDER) won after their first year of production of the event. Look for coverage in the *September issue* of Club Industry Magazine.

● **CONGRATULATIONS** to these **GOLD'S GYM** owners as they were honored by GGI, Inc. recently at their annual Gold's Convention: **BLAIR McHANEY**, Visionary of the Year; **SCOTT FELSTED**, Franchisee of the Year; **J.K. VALENCIA**, International Master Franchisee of the Year; and **JOHN BURRIS** received GGO's first ever "President's Award." *Precor* was also named *GGI's Vendor of the Year*. Congrats to all!

● A couple of months ago, I mentioned a fantastic book I was reading called: "Younger Next Year." I am happy to announce that in this edition we have published an excellent book review, written by **WILL PHILLIPS**, of "Younger Next Year". Will is the Founder and President of **REX Roundtables for Executives**, a Poway, California-based company specializing in Executive Roundtable facilitation for club owners. Will may be reached at: 858.513.7835.

● **Sports Club Company (SCY)** has announced that it is selling 6 of its 9

mega-clubs; 3 clubs in New York and one each in Boston, Washington and San Francisco.

● Speaking of club sales...word is that **Fitness First**, now the largest chain in the world with 423 owned clubs, is close to being sold and a deal may be done by the time this hits the press. STAY TUNED!

● Important Alzheimer's news is that overweight/obese individuals have significantly greater odds of getting Alzheimer's.

● *Speaking of being overweight...THANKS TO EVERYONE OF YOU* who noticed and kindly commented on my 'leaner look' while we were in Las Vegas last week! I have now **lost 18 inches** off my *waist* and **112 pounds** and am very close to my **5-year goal** of **123 pounds of total weight loss!**

● "Brother" **Michael Scott Scudder** is, as I write this, way up (9,000 feet) in the mountains of New Mexico all by himself on what is called a "Vision Quest"! I wish him well as he has ventured up there with **no food, no water or camping gear!** Today, September 16th is the 2nd of his 3-day wilderness venture. I hope, "Brother" Scudder, the self-described "New Mexican Renegade" makes it back home **without becoming lunch or dinner** for some **Mountain** (See Norm's Notes page 8)

Norm Cates' **THE Club Insider** NEWS

**12 Years and Counting!**  
*Established 1993*

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Greenville Racquet and Fitness	109% Increase
Aspen Hill Club (MD)	20% Increase
The Gym ( England)	Pre-Sale Sold Out
Atlantic Club (NJ)	31% Increase
Lynne Brick's Womens Only (MD)	Pre-Sale
Bel Air Athletic Club (MD)	20% Increase
PACE Fitness (Australia)	Pre-Sale Sold 2065
Club at Woodbridge (NJ)	32% Increase
Solaris Sports Club (NY)	Pre-Sale
Padonia Fitness Center (MD)	23% Increase
Club Fit (NY)	69% Increase
Spartanburg Athletic Club (SC)	24% Increase
World Gym (NY)	42% Increase
Pinnacle Health Clubs (England)	Pre-Sale
Sportivo Fitness (St. Lucia)	Pre-Sale
Court House Athletic Club (CA)	37% Increase
Ronny Barnes Fitness & Nautilus	29% Increase
Gold Coast Fitness (NJ)	Pre-Sale
Genesis Health & Fitness (KS)	27% Increase
Westside Club (SC)	62% Increase
Maryland Athletic Club (MD)	Expansion
Court Sports I & II (NY)	30% Increase
Shulas Athletic Club (FL)	Expansion
Evanston Athletic Club (IL)	24% Increase
Spa at Fountainbeau (FL)	31% Increase
Gold's Gym (IN)	104% Increase
Sportset (NY)	31% Increase
Welshback Squash & Health Club	40% Increase
Lifestyle Health & Fitness (NC)	58% Increase
Westbay Athletic Club (FL)	Pre-Sale
Millennium Health & Fitness (NC)	32% Increase
Hudson Athletic Club (NJ)	31% Increase
What a Racquet Athletic Club (CA)	27% Increase
Westchester Health & Fitness (NY)	41% Increase
Westlake Sport House (CA)	30% Increase
Apple Athletic Club (ID)	44% Increase
The Ridge (MT)	34% Increase
Gold's Gym (VA)	34% Increase
Sports Club (Sweden)	44% Increase
Gold's Gym (CA)	23% Increase
Gold's Gym (GA)	17% Increase
Gold's Gym (NY)	38% Increase
Viva! (England)	Pre-Sale Sold Out
Evolution, Salt Lake City, UT	93% Increase
Sportsclub Simpsonville (SC)	PRESALE
Lakeview Golf Resort & Spa (WV)	34% Increase
Pikecreek Fitness (DE)	37% Increase
Cherry Hill Health & Racquet Club (NJ)	EXPANSION SALE
Better Bodies (KY)	20% Increase
Silverlake Family Center (KY)	42% Increase
The Clubs at Rivercity (IL)	16% Increase
Huntsville Athletic Club (AL)	18% Increase
Towne Athletic Club (OH)	23% Increase
Wimbledon Sportsplex (TN)	16% Increase
Mercy HealthPlex (OH)	56% Increase
Cornerstone Health & Fitness (PA)	28% Increase
Aerofit Health & Fitness (TX)	64% Increase
Premier Athletic Club (NY)	32% Increase

Sportsplex Bethel (CT)	↑↑↑↑↑↑
Sportplex Stamford (CT)	↑↑↑↑↑↑
Sportsplex New Windsor (NY)	↑↑↑↑↑↑
Mt. Kisco Athletic Club (NY)	↑↑↑↑↑↑
Saw Mill Club (NY)	↑↑↑↑↑↑
Sportclub Greenville (SC)	↑↑↑↑↑↑
Gold's Gym Belleville & Whippany (NJ)	↑↑↑↑↑↑
Spring Valley Tennis and Fitness (PA)	↑↑↑↑↑↑
Memorial Herrman Hospital and Wellness Center (TX)	↑↑↑↑↑↑
Equinox New York (NY)	↑↑↑↑↑↑

*This is only a partial list of SALES MAKERS SUCCESSES!*

↑↑↑↑↑↑ Your Club could be here ↑↑↑↑↑↑

**Onsite Seminars**

Quest Fitness (MD)	Midwest Athletic Club (IA)
Universal Athletic Club (PA)	Court South (TN)
Westmoreland Athletic Club (PA)	Creative Health and Fitness (CT)
Matrix Club (CO)	Worcester Fitness (MA)
Jordan Fitness (MA)	Plymouth Athletic Club (MA)
Worcester Athletic Club (MA)	Printing House Fitness (NY)
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### ...Norm's Notes

continued from page 7

*Lion or Big 'Ol Bear! God Speed Scudder!*

• **BOOK IT NOW** and be in **CHICAGO November 2-5th** for the always fabulous **Club Industry Conference and Trade Show**. This great event celebrates its **20th Anniversary** this year and is one of the learning and buying mainstays in the industry today because of the

terrific work of **HOWARD RAVIS, SAM POSA and HERB GREENBAUM**, to name a few of the great team! Check out the ad on **page #29** of this edition. Check out the ad on page #29 of this edition and see our Advertiser Exhibitor List on this page.

• **MARK MASTROV** is at it again with more and more marketing and branding going on. The **24 Hour Fitness logo** is prominently plastered all

over the place in the 2nd year of the TV reality show... **The Biggest Loser!** And, it was just announced today, **24 Hour Fitness Mastrov** will serve on **GOVERNOR ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER's** 12-member Advisory Committee to fight obesity. The **Summit On Health, Nutrition and Obesity** was produced and launched today by the **'Governator'** to fight obesity in California. **Best wishes to all for this great effort!**

• My sincere apologies to **MIKE GRONDAHL's MOM (and to Mike)** for misspelling Mike's last name.

• Also, *sincere apologies* to our **Contributing Author, GARY POLIC**, as I made an editing error on the very first sentence of his great article last month entitled: **"Management Mentoring Disciplines"**. The first sentence should have read: "If you want to achieve **'Greatness'** in this wonderful industry..."

• **Tesser Company** of

San Francisco has been chosen to brand and design **123 Fit's** Franchise package. **123 Fit** clubs were scheduled to open in Houston and San Diego in late August.

• The 1st Annual **Anytime Fitness** Conference was held in St. Paul, Minnesota at the Radisson Riverfront Hotel in late August. **Anytime Fitness** now has 119 operating franchises with over 250 territories sold. The clubs average 4,500 square feet and offer 24 hour access to members.

• **CHUCK LEVE** does it again! **iHRSA's 2nd Annual "I Lost It at the Club! Challenge!"** is off and running. For information contact **LYNNE FUSSTEIG**, **iHRSA** Assistant Director of Business Development at: lsf@ihrsa.org or 800.228.4772.

### More NORM's Notes!

• The wires on the internet were **burning this Monday morning, September 19th!** It was announced today that **Bally**

**Total Fitness** had entered into an agreement to **sell Crunch Fitness to Marc Tascher**, a club entrepreneur and industry veteran in partnership with **Angelo, Gordon & CO., an investment management firm with \$9 billion in capital under management.** The selling price: **\$45 million!** The sale includes all **21 Crunch Fitness locations in New York, Chicago, L.A., Atlanta, Miami and San Francisco**, as well as **2 Gorilla Sports Clubs** in San Francisco and 2 of **Bally's Pinnacle Fitness Clubs** in San Francisco. Closing of the transaction is expected by the end of 2005. Beyond that, **heavy duty BTF stockholder, MANUAEL R. PEARLMAN**, filed a lawsuit on behalf of himself and other **Bally stockholders last Friday, September 16th**, seeking to **force Bally Management** to hold a Board Meeting by **October 28, 2005** to select four new Board Members. **THIS JUST IN:** **Bally CEO** and President, **PAUL TOBACK**

(See Norm's Notes page 28)

### CLUB INSIDER News Advertisers'

#### Club Industry Show Exhibit #'s

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ABC Financial Services- #425

ActiveXL- #126

Affiliated Acceptance- #343

CheckFree Corp.- #1149

Club Industry Fit. Bus. Pro- Reg. Area

Core Spiral Fitness Systems by MedX- #1301

Cyber International Inc.- #701

Fitness Management- #339

iHRSA- #437

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## ...Obesity

continued from page 3

because I continue to be motivated by the suffering of friends, neighbors, and members. My 1999 letter originally responded to an inappropriate (in my view) advertisement making fun of overweight and obese people. The ad was created by a chain of health clubs (an IHRSA member). In my letter I discussed the growing crisis of obesity, which I'm sad to say, has only gotten worse in the past six years.

I appreciate all the good work IHRSA has done over the years, and my hope is that this revised letter will encourage IHRSA to continue this good work and increase our Association's commitment to combating the obesity epidemic. IHRSA has long been a "thought leader" in promoting positive attitudes toward health

and fitness. It is my wish and hope that IHRSA will make this campaign a top priority. Dealing with obesity is an immense challenge and one, that if effectively addressed, could have a profound impact on millions of people.

As you know, I'm the owner of The Longfellow Clubs, a group of health clubs, children's centers, and camps, with over 12,000 members and serving thousands of others in programs. A major focus of our programs and marketing is aimed at reaching overweight and obese people. If IHRSA were to take the lead in an anti-obesity campaign and encourage clubs and manufacturers to join in, we could change the world and bring the happiness and joy of a healthy body and confident state of mind to millions of people.

The following comments set a context for my recommendations:

**1. IHRSA has been a leader in educating our population about the dangers of being overweight. Obesity is a serious national epidemic directly responsible for chronic disease and millions of premature deaths.**

Most studies available clearly state that no matter how positive certain health indicators are; if you are obese you are putting yourself at great health risks. For example, the number one cause of Type II diabetes is obesity (good nutrition, exercise and weight loss being the most effective cure). America is one of the most obese nations on earth with over 45% of the adult population suffering from obesity. There are over 100 million obese people in the USA. That is 1/3 of the world's obese population. What is of even greater concern is the rapid increase of obesity in our adult population which is approaching the previously unthinkable number of 50%. If the current rates of increase were to continue, all of the adult population will be obese in thirty years. IHRSA has a moral and business imperative to fight this serious health problem.

**2. The sources of this nationwide epidemic of obesity are primarily life-style related.**

Our culture is currently designed to encourage high caloric and non-nutritional eating as well as fostering a sedentary lifestyle dominated by computer terminals and television screens. Add to this equation the increasing pressures on our time and the emotional and cultural dynamics associated with food and we've got ourselves a devastating national health crisis.

**3. IHRSA Clubs have an extraordinary opportunity to serve an expanding market by meeting the need of preventing or eliminating obesity.**

This market now numbers in the millions, and obese and over-weight individuals desperately need the expertise and services our clubs have to offer. Because obesity is 70-95% related to lifestyle choices, IHRSA clubs are *uniquely positioned* to positively influence the lives of obese people. The 'quick-fix' programs available are not the answer. At best, they don't work and create demoralization, and even worse, they can cause long-term physiologi-

cal damage. Specially designed programs offering a long-term approach toward lifestyle behavior changes are capable of transforming a person's life forever.

**4. IHRSA has spent years looking for strategies and programs to bring the 'deconditioned market' into IHRSA clubs.**

Presenters at the IHRSA convention often make the plea for IHRSA clubs to create a welcoming and non-toxic environment for people who *may not look like* the people who grace magazine covers. Practically speaking, this means that IHRSA clubs are charged with developing a club culture that *understands* the seriousness of this national health problem, and does not ignore, degrade, or make fun of people who already feel badly enough about their bodies.

**5. If IHRSA aims to grow to 50 million members by 2010, then IHRSA clubs need to create a welcoming and inviting environment for obese and overweight people.**

IHRSA clubs need to create a wide variety of dynamic programs addressing the particular issues overweight people deal with. We need to *create a club culture and atmosphere that is inviting, accepting, and understanding*. We should loudly raise the health risks of obesity, but love and care for people who suffer from this health problem. One IHRSA Vanguard Study stated clearly and concisely that many potential club members *felt intimidated* by the atmosphere of our clubs. They found our clubs uncomfortable and felt that they had to *'get fit' to even walk through the front door*.

In 1999, I made the point that IHRSA clubs had largely failed in attracting this market and were missing an opportunity by not meeting the needs of overweight and obese individuals. IHRSA clubs, by and large, lacked effective programs for this market. My comments turned out to be quite prophetic. Since 1999, Curves and other similar small storefront fitness studios have found a way to meet the needs of overweight women by offering facilities and programs for hundreds of thousands of women (many who are obese). Although this is a positive step, many of us in the industry feel the Curves program and others do not go far

enough and do not ultimately meet the needs of overweight women. Unfortunately, most IHRSA clubs are playing *catch up* with these small clubs. We have a long way to go to bring this important demographic to our clubs.

**6. Our culture and media (movies, TV, magazines, newspapers) continues to push an over-emphasis on body image and promotes an unrealistic and often unhealthy body type.**

The cultural phenomenon of an over-emphasis on an unhealthy body image does serious damage to the mental and physical health of millions of women, and increasingly, is also negatively impacting millions of men. Admiring fit and healthy athletes has been a part of societies for thousands of years. But, wanting to emulate athletes is not what we are talking about. Superior athletes in all sports come in a variety of shapes and sizes. However, the media is pushing something different - a super thin body image for women and an overdeveloped muscular image for men. Being thin or muscular is not necessarily bad, but these images are realistic, and in fact, healthy for a very small percentage of our population.

The body images being promoted by the media have created two serious problems:

**A.** It has increased eating disorders such as bulimia and anorexia among young women.

**B.** It has added to an over-emphasis on appearance in our culture, as well as increased the embarrassment and self-hatred of overweight people about the condition of their bodies.

IHRSA clubs need to consciously and practically look for ways to promote healthy bodies of all shapes and forms, and not go along with these negative and unrealistic images.

**7. IHRSA clubs need to promote a positive and realistic body image.**

As leaders in the health field, we need to be honest with ourselves and acknowledge the harsh reality that being a member of an IHRSA club is no guarantee (in fact it is highly unlikely) that any of our members will ever have bodies that even closely resemble the so-called ideal appearance promoted by our culture. If we are at all

(See *Obesity* page 12)

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## ...Obesity

continued from page 10

serious about attracting overweight people to our clubs, we need to promote a balanced and healthy body image in various shapes in all of our advertising and promotions.

### 8. IHRSA needs to help build a culture that is supportive of people suffering from obesity.

The atmosphere in our clubs needs to be supportive and inclusive. Even if some people become motivated by humiliation in the short term, the overall effect of negativity is a loser. Our culture thankfully has long ago tossed the humiliation strategy for motivating children or employees into its rightful place in the trash can of history. Those few examples of people who may be motivated to make changes by embarrassment, generally do not buy into the behavior change and the change does not stick. Changes outside are reflective of changes inside. We want to transform feelings of deep internal fear, distress and shame into those of affirmation, hope, positive motivation, understanding and compassion. Positive reinforcement and an affirmative environment has proven to be the most successful strategy for motivating people to embrace a more healthy lifestyle.

### 9. Making obese people the source of humor is not funny.

Making 'fat people' the butt of jokes is a cheap way to get a laugh. Our internal and external advertising of our clubs should avoid the dangerous trap

of poking fun of people who experience such great physical and psychological pain because of the condition of their body.

In addition, the caricature of the jolly fat man or woman who laughs about their weight is such an erroneous misconception. It is a common defense mechanism for people suffering from a particular problem to laugh at themselves and joke about the issue. Obese people may join in the self-scorn as a way of making light of the situation, denying the seriousness of the problem, or as a way of dealing with the embarrassment. But, just as diabetes is not funny, neither is obesity a laughing matter; it's not funny to die early, not funny to have heart disease, and not funny to feel ugly and embarrassed. Obese people have a long history of joking about the problem, even though at one level it may be tearing them up inside.

### 10. Obesity and the over-concern with image and appearance is growing among the male population, but obesity is clearly also a serious gender issue.

Women in particular suffer at a very early age from unhealthy attitudes about their bodies ranging from self-hatred to a preoccupation with their physical beauty. This cultural phenomenon has resulted in millions of American women suffering from such eating disorders as bulimia and anorexia and millions more tormented by low self-esteem and a negative self-image. There are specific reasons why the vast majority of people participating in weight-

loss programs are women. In general, women gain weight easier than men, women lose weight slower than men, and men's metabolism is faster. Being an overweight man in our society is much more acceptable than being an overweight woman. This fact has created one of the greatest emotional and psychological challenges of growing up and living as a woman in our world.

### 11. How you appear is not necessarily a statement of your overall health and a person's weight is not simply an issue of will power.

Although the common notion that overweight people are fully responsible for their physical condition has certain merit to it, it is still a gross oversimplification. The source of obesity in our society is a complex and multi-dimensional dynamic and is not simply a question of will power. Obesity is a chronic disease and needs to be treated as such. It has, as its cause, a culture that constantly searches for ways to decrease energy expenditure and to make things easier by eliminating any physical activity. We live in a world that consciously pushes and markets a high caloric and non-nutritional diet. It also has a basis in the psychology of how our society treats bodies and builds our self-image. Consider the following:

**A.** We all know slim and unfit people who get away with their unhealthy lifestyle psychologically and socially unscathed. They are members of the 'unfit in disguise'.

**B.** We all know people who exercise a ton (some professional athletes or models for example), who look 'good', and whose diets are imbalanced and unhealthy and may use steroids or other unhealthy drugs. These people may die early, but they never receive the ridicule overweight people do. Unfortunately, many unhealthy but proficient athletes or models are undeservedly viewed as role models for health and vigor.

**C.** Most research now indicates that there are definite genetic factors that make losing weight more challenging for some people. We all know people who eat better than we do, exercise every day, and are still obese. It is easier for some and harder than for others.

**D.** The idea that all people would look like a cover girl or boy if they just joined our

clubs and did what we asked is simply not true. A tiny percentage of us will ever look like these relatively new 'ideal bodies' (ultra-thin for women, ultra-buff for men) promoted through the media. Many of us who are only slightly overweight, but not obese, and may have more fat in us than we would prefer, are still very healthy and fit.

**E.** Overcoming obesity is one of the most difficult tasks an individual can work to accomplish. Most of us know about this problem from the personal experience of struggling to shed a few pounds. Imagine that you have been obese for many years and that you feel embarrassed or ashamed or are in denial. Imagine how difficult it is to overcome obesity when the regimen required is a severe behavior and lifestyle change. Overcoming obesity is a battle that few people in our culture ever win. Why is the country that spends billions a year on weight-loss programs one of the most overweight countries in the world and getting worse? It's because of the power and influence of our culture on all of us and some of us are more susceptible than others. Even though a willingness to take responsibility for your health is an important step in building a healthy body, people suffering from obesity should not be viewed as lazy, gluttonous couch potatoes.

**F.** There are millions of women and men (more women than men) who have eating disorders that have, as their origin, a variety of physical and psychological traumas such as physical, emotional, or sexual abuse.

**G.** Finally there are a very small number of people who have biological and chemical and glandular issues that are often beyond their control and only partially related to lifestyle. All of these people can of course benefit from (a) improved nutrition and (b) exercise, but joining a club will not make them look buff.

### 12. There are degrees of obesity and degrees of fitness.

There are good reasons for drawing a line in the sand and classifying people with a certain Body Mass Index (BMI) as being obese. This line enables health professionals to clearly and sharply state to a person that their long-term health risks are life-threatening. However, there

are people who are overweight, but not obese, who are also at great risk for early death. Combined with the current 45% obesity rate, this group brings the percentage of the total U.S. population at risk up to 63% or an estimated 180 million people.

And, there are people who are obese who are in an exercise program and have much lower health risks than other obese people who do no exercise. IHRSA clubs want to have, as members, millions of obese people who are working on improving their health. Most may never completely overcome their weight challenges, but they can make significant improvements in their health and self-esteem.

Similarly, there are degrees of fitness. Our clubs will always be filled with people who are overweight but not obese, working to optimize their personal living experience, and hoping to increase their chance of living long happy lives. We need to tread that fine line of encouraging optimum health without making people feel ashamed if they don't achieve an ideal healthy physical condition.

### 13. The latest exercise recommendations from the US government that recommend 1-1.5 hours of relatively intense exercise a day is right on the money and this fact needs to be hammered home!

When it comes to weight loss, the laws of thermodynamics cannot be denied. You need to burn more calories than you take in. As we age, our metabolism slows down, so in order to maintain our ideal body weight, we must do a combination of eating less and burning more calories.

On the one hand, we have to let members know that walking (or gentle exercise that doesn't get the heart rate up) by itself won't do much for losing weight (unless you walk 2-4 hours a day). On the other hand we need to congratulate those that walk and encourage walking and other moderate physical activities for sedentary people as a great first step to improving their health.

It's a balance of telling the truth about health and weight-loss and encouraging positive first steps.

I make the following recommendations to the IHRSA (See *Obesity* page 14)

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**...Obesity**

continued from page 12

Board of Directors:

1. **IHRSA should develop a major campaign that will encourage and support IHRSA clubs to be centers for combating the obesity epidemic.**

IHRSA clubs are in a terrific position to be the leaders in our communities for promoting healthy lifestyles and combating obesity (The Longfellow Clubs and other clubs have proven this through successful nutrition and exercise programs set up specifically to support overweight and obese individuals). As I have pointed out, this is not an easy task. But, by developing a national campaign, we can increase the use of our clubs by the overweight and obese population and make a positive impact. This campaign can also encourage clubs to work with other community groups and schools on this issue. IHRSA clubs working together with other community leaders can help eliminate the plague of obesity and build a

more healthy community.

2. **A major part of this proposed campaign should be to publicize to the world that IHRSA is committed to promoting a positive, realistic, and healthy body image.**

Without a change in our culture, the impact of IHRSA clubs is limited. IHRSA needs to consciously look for opportunities to promote realistic and healthy body images. IHRSA should promote an acceptance, and inner appreciation of a variety of body-types while at the same time aggressively pointing out the immense dangers of obesity.

IHRSA clubs could incorporate IHRSA-created programs into their services and marketing. Articles should be published in CBI and speakers at conventions should continue to highlight successful programs specifically addressing this national epidemic.

3. **IHRSA should publish articles and offer programs that encourage IHRSA clubs to become community centers that deal with the whole person - mind, body, and spirit.**

We are more than just our bodies. We have emotional, spiritual, intellectual, and social lives. Back in the day, IHRSA used to feature a Mind/Body seminar at national conventions and it was always well-attended. What happened to this leading edge program? Our clubs are excellent venues to encourage an integration of our minds, our bodies, and our spirits. We can create an atmosphere in our clubs that honors different shapes and sizes just as we revel in our common commitment to a healthy and active lifestyle. We must be strong, aggressive, and passionate in promoting health, and simultaneously balance this with love and care for every individual.

My hope is that you, IHRSA, and other people who share a compassionate and understanding perspective on how to deal with this national health crisis will intensify and broaden a benevolent and massive campaign to wipe out obesity.

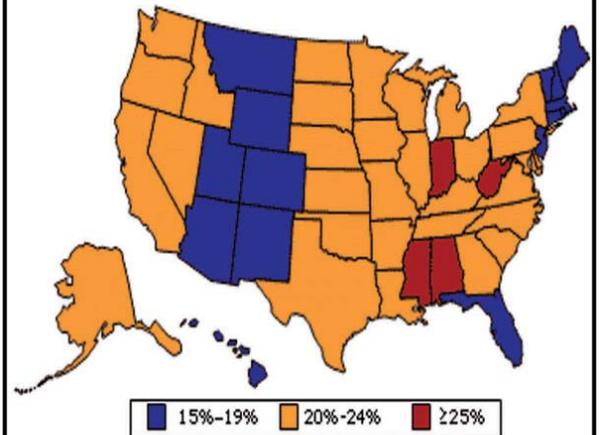
I welcome responses from my IHRSA colleagues on how IHRSA can make a major

impact on this growing health crisis. Through open and honest dialogue, IHRSA members and the IHRSA organization can work together to bring about a peaceful, healthy, and happy

world.

Yours in Health,  
Laury Hammel  
President, The Longfellow Clubs

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## Additional References

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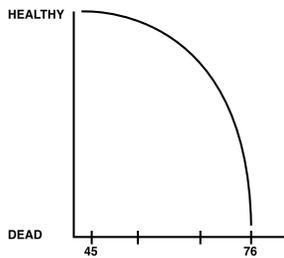
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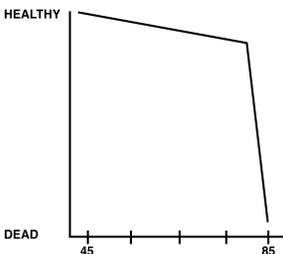
By: **Chris Crowley and Henry S. Lodge, M.D.**

Only a few books of the 70,000 books published each year get excerpted in *FOR-TUNE Magazine*. This is one of them. Why? It’s a very important and crucial book. More importantly, it’s well-written. Most books on health, exercise and nutrition are BORING! *Younger Next Year* is a good read. It is an inspirational read! And, that is what makes it stand out from the pack.

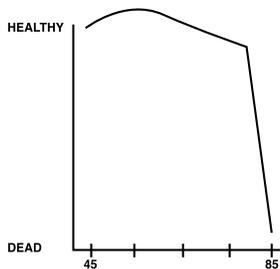
The message can be summed up in three graphs. First, the graph of the second half of your life:



The first half of your life is a wonderful upswing. Now, it’s the down swing. The authors speak of a rising tide buoying you up the first 35 or 45 years. Then the tide slacks. You think nothing is happening. It is. It’s changing direction and soon starts to go out, slowly, inexorably until death. We call this aging. The authors call this the decay curve. Then point out that aging and decay are different. They argue forcefully that most of what we call aging is really decay. Seventy percent of premature death is caused by lifestyle choices you make. Premature in their words means death before you are deep into your 80’s. Fifty percent of all illness and injuries can be eliminated, not delayed but eliminated with lifestyle changes. Here is what that graph looks like:



Notice the effect of fighting the decay process. Even better, the second graph is longer, ten years longer! This is a new message! The lifestyle changes that produce this much better curve are exercise, eat better and get connected. They expand these into Harry’s Seven Rules. Let’s look at the impact of aggressively following these rules; following them as if your life depended on them and that you received a little luck:



Look at that up tick! Those at midlife can become functionally younger for the next five to ten years. Seventy percent of what you feel as aging is optional, because it’s decay, not true aging! As we age, our hair grows thinner or falls out while all that hair energy is redirected to our noses and ears; our skin gets interesting and more complex, our teeth grow yellow; you will sag and shrink. That’s inevitable. You will look old, but you don’t have to feel old or act old.

What you think you know is that ‘aging means every year a little fatter, slower, weaker, more pain-racked. You can’t hear and you can’t see. Your hips go. Your knees go. And, that great friend and amusing companion in your lap curls up and goes to sleep. Except when you have to pee, which is every half hour. Much of this is a ‘choice, not a sentence’; it is not inevitable; it’s decay, not aging. Let’s see who is telling us all this news.

### The Authors

Harry is a Board-certified internist and gerontologist leading a twenty-three doctor practice in New York City and serving on the faculty of Columbia College of Physicians and Surgeons. He is consistent-

ly rated one of the top doctors in the U.S. He delivers superb medical care and was distressed by the poor health of his patients. Chris was one of his healthy clients, a retired attorney, in his 70’s, and an active biker, skier, windsurfer, rower and Romeo. They alternate chapters.

Harry gives us a look at recent and emerging breakthroughs in evolutionary and cellular biology. He reduces the impact of genes on our health to less than 20%. He then shows us how, through millions of years, our ancestors’ bodies evolved for survival success. Then, they developed a body and brain to deal with hunting and physical challenges. And, how in the last few hundred

years our environment has changed dramatically, vastly less physical; a relative life of ease with ample highly processed food available 24/7. The chemistry of our bodies has not caught up. In fact, it takes our so called life of ease and totally misinterprets it reacting in the worst possible ways. Here are a few of the details:

Cytokine 6 is master chemical that drives decay while its partner, Cytokine 10, is in charge of growth and repair. Serious exercise drives C6 up logarithmically. Exercise destroys cells! This may sound bad but is good since C6 also triggers C10 which now floods our blood and bathes our muscles and joints and organs with their magic repair solution. Even



**Book Review Author**  
**Will Phillips**  
though the muscles did the  
(See Chris Crowley page 18)

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## ...Chris Crowley

continued from page 16

work, the whole body benefits. This strengthens us and counters all the diseases that kill us.

### The Style

Irreverent, in your face with humor, chiding the reader who thinks golf is exercise or that walking three days a week will stem the tide of decay.

Chris and Harry up the level of urgency to emergency. Do nothing and decay, or take responsibility for your life, the way you took responsibility for your job. Remember all those days when you did not feel too good, but sucked it up and went to work? Well, now it's time to treat your health like your job. After fifty, it is your number one priority. The authors want you to be healthy so you can enjoy your life, immerse yourself in the spirit of living; celebrating with friends, doing challenging activities and having lots of affection and sex. We are mammals and physical touch between humans produces serotonin which, in turn, blocks the corrosive tide of low level adrenalin and cortisol, which create stress related illness and eventual decay.

### The Message

The August CBI reported that the NW University School of Medicine studied 6,000 arthritis patients. Non-exercisers were 90% more likely to suffer a reduction in function. In another ten-year study of 295 elderly men, the non-exercisers showed a 4X greater mental decline. Kaiser Permanente reports that being male and obese in your 40's means 74% more dementia in your 60's. For women, it's 200%. So what do we do? The authors give us a whole system solution for overriding decay and living a meaningful, joyful second half. Here are the author's Seven Rules:

1. Exercise six days a week for the rest of your life. Even your car needs maintenance every 5 years!! And, your body is a lot more complex and for many there was no maintenance the first fifty years.

2. Do serious aerobic exercise four days a week the rest of your life. Get a heart monitor. Use it. Learn your

rates for fat burning and glucose burning. Stop trying to read the paper while you exercise; it's probably not aerobic.

3. Serious strength training two days a week for the rest of your life. You will lose bone density and you will become weaker if you don't. When the legs go, you are cooked. That means a cane, a walker and the cart.

4. Spend less than you make. Retirement is not financially easy until you truly deal with inflation, and the fact you may live another 30 to 40 years. Get used to spending less. Happiness is not connected to money after you've covered the basics. Good health is the foundation of happiness.

5. Quit eating crap. Stop the fast food, the white foods. Stop trying to diet. Eat good food and exercise and the weight goes and stays away.

6. Care. All our positive emotions-joy, love, pleasure and play are best nurtured in relationships where we truly care. Single men die years earlier than married men. Women with metastatic breast cancer who met six times in a support group lived twice as long as those who did not.

7. Connect and commit. Volunteer! They are two and a half less likely to die in the same time period. Get involved. Make a difference for others and yourself.

### The Implications for Your Club

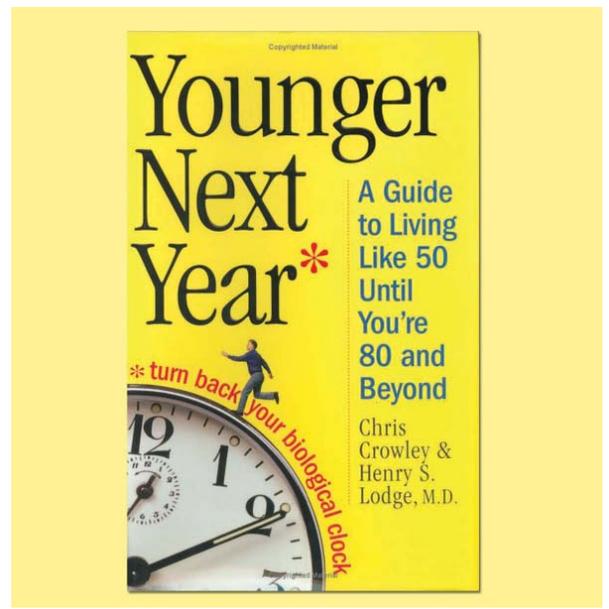
1. **STAFFING** - Can a twenty-something understand someone in midlife or late life? Even a forty something will be severely challenged. Get your staff in line! Hire seniors to connect with seniors!

2. **CHALLENGE** - Chris talks about motivating himself by setting big, irrevocable goals, like signing up and pre-paying for a weeklong bike tour in Barcelona. This pulls him into his exercise. And, once he goes to Portugal, the joy of the trip springboards him forward. We know that the Leukemia foundation raised \$84 million dollars last year in its challenge marathons. It motivated lots of non-athletes to train seriously. What does your club do to help members set big time, exciting and rewarding goals? What adventures? What contributions? Last August, I climbed Kilimanjaro because my daughter Anna challenged

me! Spring 2006, I hike the Grand Canyon. These challenge me and turn me on. Too many clubs have taken all the challenge out of exercise. Leukemia marathoners report that their health club is boring.

3. **SKIN TO SKIN COMMUNITY** - Emotion is much more powerful than thinking. The authors report that close, caring relationships contribute just about as much anti-decay juice as serious exercise. The Roseto Pennsylvania study on heart disease showed amazingly low incidence, and the only distinguishing factor, compared to other towns, was the very close community. Later as the community disintegrated, heart disease rose to normal. Research on customer loyalty, by Frederick Reichheld of Bain and Company (*The Loyalty Effect*), shows that emotional attachment is the core of all retention of customers. Tennis players stay longer than exercisers. Families stay longer than couples who stay longer than singles. Too many clubs still behave as if health were all physical with a few smiles - if you are lucky at the front desk. There appears to be total neglect of the research on the extraordinary benefits of emotionally connected people. Clubs will make real breakthroughs in retention and health results when they start hiring anthropologists, sociologists, psychologists and community organizers. Remember Dean Ornish has been telling us via his IHRSA presentations for a decade that 'It's very hard to motivate people to maintain healthy lifestyle changes, if we don't deal with the underlying psychic, social and emotional needs, even spiritual dimensions, and only focus on diet and exercise.' Of course, most clubs don't help much on the nutrition side and get distracted with selling supplements.

4. **YOUNGER NEXT YEAR PROGRAM** - Since I have been promoting this book to club owners for about four months, several have begun YNY Programs for members. This basically means creating a community of YNYers who support one another on the Seven Rules. I think the audio recording of the book could be on an Apple ipod, so the YNYers can listen to it while exercising. Your creativity is the only limit to what an YNY Program would look like.



### Younger Next Year

This is a significant book. It speaks to you about your market with much insight. It tells you how to serve the members health needs. It speaks of the whole person not just the physical person. Finally, it is a wonderful gift for any one 50 to 85 years old.

**Related Reading:** *Eat, Drink and Be Healthy: The Harvard Medical School Guide to Healthy Eating* by Walter C. Willett, P. J. Skerrett reverses the old food pyramid; no fads here; good guidance for a life of not eating crap! *Club Industry White Paper 2005* by Will Phillips describes ten factors where health clubs are not connecting with their markets to produce the commitment and results of *Younger Next Year*.

(Coming soon to Club Insider!)

(Workman Publishing, N.Y. 2004 - Reviewed By Will Phillips - Will Phillips is the founder of REX Roundtables for Executives which operates twenty-one industry roundtables for business owners in five industries. Will is the chair of seven Roundtables for Club Owners. He can be reached at will@REXonline.org.

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# Prospecting Power For Personal Trainers

By: Karen Kirby

If you are like most trainers, people are not standing in line to give you money so you have to go out and find them. How lucky we are when we work in a health club because there are so many people all around us. We are even luckier because people working out in a club are already making a financial, as well as, time commitment to their health. In this article we will discuss ways to increase your personal training business by understanding how to prospect within the club.

News Flash: How to do your own prospecting, and, even better, how to get your co-workers to do it for you.

### Do your own prospecting

It is important to remember the goal of prospecting is to close an appointment, not a sale. How to turn an appointment into a financial commitment to sessions is a great topic and will not be discussed at this time. Your goal with the people you interact with when prospecting is to get them to commit to a specific time to meet with you. (Tip: be sure to have your date book with you when you are prospecting!) As you are working the fitness floor, look for people who are easy to talk to. They can be spotted on the cardio equipment, taking a short break between sets or, by their eye contact; you can tell that they would welcome an interaction. Introduce your self, listen carefully for their name and get them talking about their workouts, by saying, "How is your workout?" Your goal as they talk is to listen for their fitness goals. Your prospecting conversations should be short, maybe 10 – 15 minutes. You need just enough time to understand their goal before you offer the key phrase that will lead to closing an appointment with that person.

Here it is: "I can definitely help you. Why don't we get together so I can show you some exercises for your \_\_\_\_\_." The words in the blank might be for your back, for your shoulder, for your balance, for your posture, for your neck, for your glutes, for your triceps, for your golf game. Whatever you find out as they talk, be sure you use the phrase above and invite them to schedule a time with you. (Tip: keep in mind if you are talking to people mid-morning but you only have evening appointments available, you might get several folks that want to meet with you but their schedules will not allow it.)

I know it sounds too easy, but it absolutely works. If you convey with confidence that you can show them



Karen Kirby

something that will help them and invite them to set a specific time to get together, they will rarely turn you down.

### Get your co-workers to prospect for you

Think about who in the club has an opportunity every day to put you in front of a prospect who is excited to hear about how you can help them. Who are those powerful teammates who have the ability to help you make money? And once you know who they are, how do you get them to help you?

Your newest best friends are from different areas of the club. One area is the membership sales department. They talk to people every day. They talk to old members, new members and prospective members. Their conversations have everything to do with finding out about people's fitness needs to see if they can show them something or introduce them to someone that can meet their fitness needs. Do personal trainers fit in that equation? Absolutely! Membership sales associates have many opportunities to talk about awesome trainers who can really help people make life changes. I guarantee you they are more likely to talk about the trainers they know, like, trust and have been through workouts with.

Another great resource includes your group exercise teachers. Have you ever wondered why the professionals that choose to teach classes and train one-on-one are always full? Group exercise teachers have students walk up to them after every single class to ask them questions about exercise. They have huge opportunities to encourage their participants to seek the advice of a personal trainer. Because their students trust their advice, they will only recommend trainers who they have established relationships with and have experienced as a

(See Karen Kirby page 30)

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# “MAKE IT FUN!”

By: Sandy Coffman

There has probably never been a better time to write an article about *MAKING IT FUN*, reading an article about *MAKING IT FUN*, or making a deliberate attempt to look at how you are programming *FUN* to your members. Our industry has a direct responsibility to respond to the stressful times in the world around us, and now, Katrina has added to that need. Now is the time to ensure that every visit to your club is a fantastic experience because you will *MAKE IT FUN*. The real operative word is *YOU*. Only *YOU* can *MAKE IT FUN* no matter what it is. People respond to people and if you want to *MAKE FITNESS FUN*, you must have *FUN PEOPLE* running your fitness programs.

### HOW “WE” MAKE IT HAPPEN

Now zero in on the word “*WE*.” As you may know, I love to bring *FUN* programs and programming ideas to clubs as I travel to those of you who gather your staff together for one of my training seminars on customer service, programming, and retention. Lately, the first priority I have is to raise the morale of the entire staff before we can get excited about delivering the programs. Our first priority is how we present ourselves to our members and prospective members. We are representatives of our clubs and, indeed, our industry.

A fitness program will only be as good and productive as the member’s attitude towards it. Your members must look forward to coming to your club, knowing that their experience will be energizing and fulfilling. That means we must be full of energy, enthusiasm, and excitement. Not only that, but we must be able to communicate that feeling in a positive, sincere, and professional manner. Not only that, but we must be able to transfer that energy into a workout and an exercise routine. Not only that, but we then need to put that workout and exercise routine in a program that delivers a *FUN* experience as well as a *HEALTHY* one. That’s a tall order and we (owners, managers) must make sure that the staff is prepared to do all that in a consistent, honest, knowledgeable and practical manner. That takes training and practice. Training that goes beyond physiological expertise. Training that separates the gyms from the clubs. Training that develops the fitness professionals who we are expected to be. We create the experiences within the programs that will bring your members back and encourage them to bring in their friends.

I often mention how our clubs are, and must continue to be, *THE THIRD PLACE* in people’s lives, and now more than ever, we may be the only place for your members to come and relieve stress, release tension, or get a break from frustration, depression, anxiety, worry, and uncertainty. This is what

“mind, body, and spirit” is all about. We need to lift our spirits in order to clear our minds and work towards a positive goal to keep our bodies healthy.

We clearly have an opportunity to do all that through the way we market our programs and communicate our mission, but, more importantly, we are taking the responsibility of doing things differently and calling attention to the spirit of the mind.

### CREATE A “CLUB” ENVIRONMENT

People need other people to have fun. That’s exactly what our business was born to do. The word “club” reminds us of sociability, conversation, and laughter; therefore, whenever you have the opportunity of putting people together while working out, do it. We are quick to suggest that our members should find a workout partner because it’s easier to be motivated to exercise when you are committed to another person, and of course, the social experience *MAKES IT MORE FUN*.

The problem, however, is that it is not easy or comfortable for people to find their own workout partners or organize their workout routines. That’s when we must realize that it is our responsibility to create programs that automatically put people with other members sharing a common goal towards fitness and a common experience of exercising.

### TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE CALENDAR

Your programming calendar year begins in the Fall. Kids go back to school and adults get back to a routine. Moms look forward to taking some time for themselves and enjoying adult experiences. Men schedule their workouts to meet with business associates. Snowbirds move to new climates, and they need things to do, places to go, and people to meet. People make exercise commitments in the fall, much like they do in January with New Year’s resolutions. Take advantage of this time and create a program that puts people together to ensure participation, *FUN*, and retention. It could generate lots of new business too!

### GET SET FOR SUCCESS

Be sure the program has a definite beginning and definite end. A six to eight-week timeframe gives your members a reasonable opportunity to live up to their responsibility. Everyone needs a goal to reach and obviously that goal will be reached more readily if the member is having *FUN* reaching it. A lifestyle or life-long commitment can seem - and is - endless, but a six to eight-week project is doable! The duration of the program may be the difference between success and failure. The program becomes more *FUN* when the end is in sight, the commitment is shared with someone else, and each six to eight-week project is one more step towards success.

Keep in mind, *YOU* should be having as much *FUN* as your member. Being directly accountable for the participation of the member makes it *FUN* for you too. A successful club experience is *FUN* when it is shared between the member and the club, not when it is left to the individual member to grind out alone. A successful program is one that experiences the joy of uniting with others to reach a common goal, and then to share the joy of victory together.



Sandy Coffman Fitness Business Latin America Magazine BALANCE YOUR FALL

A professional, but *FUN*, program must begin with a professional, but *FUN*, promotion. Use this time of the year to capitalize on creating the initial interest. Create a *FUN* title to create the initial interest. Make it sound like *FUN* rather than drudgery. Use a little “tongue in cheek” humor to set the tone. If you give the message of *FUN* directly to your member through communicating it in your title as you create the initial interest, you will again set yourself up for success. The program will sell itself. For example, an exercise program that runs for a seven-week period could be called “The Seven Week Workout” or “Balance Your Fall.” Which title do you think will create an initial interest that will make the member want to learn more about it?

We all know that most people don’t read fliers and bulletin boards, so use pictures to get their attention. Pictures can be boring or pictures can be *FUN*. You can use a picture of a perfect body lifting an unreasonable and intimidating amount of weight or you can use a picture of a turkey balancing an unknown, therefore attainable amount of weight. It’s cute, it’s easy, and it’s *FUN*. It shows a little sense of humor and certainly appeals to the mind and spirit of the program as well as to the body.

(See Sandy Coffman page 21)

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### ...Sandy Coffman

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The picture, the title, and the activity should promote camaraderie, sociability, and **FUN**, as it begins to offer a complete club experience to the member getting into an exercise program during this fall season. The buddy system works, but it's **YOU** who must encourage it and make it happen within your programming structure.

#### BALANCE YOUR LIFE

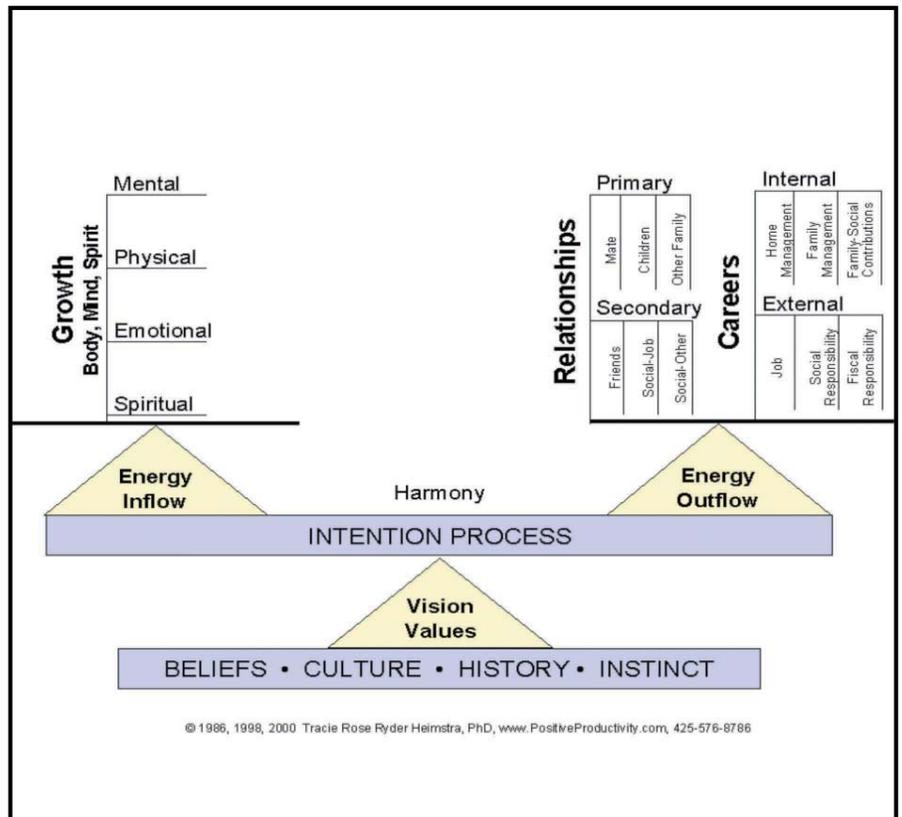
In these times of stress, turmoil, sadness, and fear, we all need balance in our lives to remain strong and productive. Now, more than ever, we are all trying to come together, to

unify, and to find new strength every day in many ways. There is strength in numbers. A team effort accomplishes more than an individual. Our clubs may be an answer to attaining the strength we need by finding a balance in our lives and sharing the opportunity and the responsibility of becoming stronger in many ways. Help your members achieve that balance, and work as professionals to program an uplifted spirit and an energetic mind into your exercise programs. You will help make it happen if you "**MAKE IT FUN!**"

(Sandy Coffman - Programming For Profit - 6921 Chickasaw Bayou - Bradenton, FL 34203 - (941) 756-6921

## Women In Action

Club Industry - November 3, '05 - 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.



# MAKE IT FUN!

# “The Way I See It”

*An exclusive column featured only in Norm Cates' Club Insider News*

By: **Michael Scott Scudder**

## “TIDBITS”

This month I *must* comment on a few timely and very pertinent issues facing all of us who are in the fitness facility business. Chalk it up to what happens when you've been out here long enough in the high desert country of New Mexico...but bear with me - it may just be worth reading!

### **BALLY: WILL THEY MAKE IT?**

This is contrary to what all the other “prophets” are saying... but I don't think so, at least, not in their present form. Why? Too much debt service to overcome... not enough net income... too little cash flows too late... insider-stockholder animosities...and running out of the most precious commodity - time.

My guess? A re-organizational bankruptcy, announced relatively soon, the closing of weak-sister clubs, shuffling off of subsidiary companies, cutbacks beau coups, and a re-emergence of a smaller, more compact, expense-tight organization.

### **HERE COME DA BIGS!**

People get ready... there's a train a' comin'...and it's called a whole lot of “bigs”, dominating several sectors of marketplaces throughout the country. Some that will control the “multiplex club” sector, those that will ride herd on the low-priced segment, and others that will be very, very strong in particular regions. A couple that will surface as the major players in the “middle of the market.”

Very similar to *Wal-Mart* and *Target*... *Circuit City* and *CompUSA*... *Quizno's* and *Subway*... only in the health club marketplace. It will be harder and harder for large-population-area, urban-independent operators to carve out a profit unless they already have their niche. What's the safest haven? Rural, ex-urban fitness and “express” operations.

### **GOLD'S GYM: WHAT'S GOING ON?**

Several *Gold's Gym* licensees, old friends all, called me following the recent *GG* convention in Las Vegas. Seems as though *Gold's* corporate has thrown down the glove and told all how they're gonna play... or else.

This is probably a good move for *Gold's* corporate. They'll likely make more money doing it the new franchise way than they ever did shepherding 500 loosely-tied-in licensees.

The downside? There is a lot of bad blood being produced with faithful old licensees who created the brand and now will be left by the wayside. I look for 300 or more gyms to leave the fold within the next couple of years.

### **CONSTITUENCIES - SEGMENTS - FRAGMENTATION - CONSOLIDATION**

In July's CIN, containing many great articles, particularly Part I on Joe Moore (a brilliant piece on an equally dynamic man), reference was made to the “constituencies” or “segments” that are building up in our business.

I've been talking about it for over three years. We have multiplex mega-clubs - over 100,000 square feet. There are huge variances in pricing. *LifeTime Fitness* seems to be re-defining the standard here. Large old-time *IHRSA* athletic clubs also still have a strong presence in a lot of markets.

We have mid-size clubs - a misnomer - because they range in size from 30,000 square feet to just under 100,000 square feet... from mostly-dry “big gyms” to multi-services facilities. Again, prices ranging from low-\$40's monthly to well over \$100 a month. *Y's*, *JCC's*, hospital-based and others are formidable players in this arena in many regions of the country.

We have small clubs, loosely defined as under 20,000

square feet. Again, these are mostly fitness and group-exercise oriented. This is the largest sector, and generally, most poorly run, highest concentration of independent ma-and-pas. Presently, they are getting hammered in many areas by *LA Fitness*, strong regional-chain operators and the up-and-coming low-price quality players, led in the East by *Planet Fitness*.

We have mini-clubs, again a loose definition at under 10,000 square feet. Some of them express clubs but most just small versions of the “small club” players, trying to do the same thing as them but on a lesser scale. Also getting clobbered by competition, pricing and lack of management capability. Studios, niche operations, and organized express clubs like *World Gym Express* licensees are starting to take big market share here.

The end result? Look for the disappearance of several thousand clubs in the next few years. Will they be replaced by newer versions? Who knows. Profits? They'll get cut to the bone in several sectors.

It's unfortunate, but it's the way of consolidation and the result of living off the fat of the land for too long and not planning for future growth and establishing a local brand as more and more competitors emerged.

### **WHAT ARE THE NUMBERS, ANYWAY?**

I echo Norm's sentiments about the number of members being tossed around. It's nice if we do actually have 43 million... but, how do the numbers get established? Is there an actual count? Or, is it at best an educated guesstimate?

We need to know. I CHALLENGE!

### **IHRSA: A BRIEF PERSPECTIVE FROM THE FRINGE**

Flagship. Standard-bearer. Benchmark. Call it what you want, the venerable Boston-based Association has born the leadership role for our

entire industry for 25 years. John McCarthy has been an amazing general manager of the team... akin to Red Auerbach in the *Boston Celtics* dynasty years.

Times are changing. *IHRSA* has seemingly lost some touch with all of the segments of the industry, concentrated on international growth as they've slowly lost domestic share. Though a brave and noble attempt, it did not get the smalls. Now, they're trying really hard to bring them into the fold once again (See this month's Page #6 article entitled, NFTJ/IHRSA Alliance A Terrific Fit!). All of the absolute experts on independent operations were there.

Many veterans in the industry are now saying that *IHRSA* has to divisionalize under the next-generation leadership and separate out into larger chains and smalls. Some even want to see the inclusion of not-for-profits in the mix.

*IHRSA* has a daunting task ahead of it... pulling in so many factions while at the same time keeping the core group and central operational themes that have earmarked the organization for over two decades. At the same time, thunder is rumbling in the skies about the possible introduction (on several fronts) of new, rival associations to compete for the independent-operator small-club segment.

My take? They will accomplish some of it and miss



**Michael Scott Scudder**

the mark on other parts. This will not include not-for-profits. It's almost too much to expect one association to make it all happen. I'll guess that within a couple of years there will either be an increase in independent-of-*IHRSA* regional club alliances and/or the emergence of a new national association.

Thanks for reading. Comments and responses are welcome.

(*Michael Scott Scudder, a contributing author for the “Club Insider News,” is a PERSONAL BUSINESS TRAINER operating FITNESS FOCUS, a consulting company offering private workshops, sales, personal training and marketing systems, and telephone conferencing on pertinent fitness business matters. Michael can be reached at 505-690-5974, by email at mss@michaelscottscudder.com or at his web site, www.michaelscottscudder.com.*)

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**...Laury Hammel**

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anced life. Then, when they do have a problem they need to resolve, we can provide treatment that is less invasive. Because we're offering many other modalities, our members can often avoid the use of drugs and surgery, which would be the last resort. In fact, part of our Holistic Health Care Center includes our weight loss program. We call it 'Weight Masters'. Through 'Weight Masters', we've helped cure people of Type II Diabetes, and we have helped people lose hundreds of pounds and kept it off. 'Weight-Masters' addresses the multi-dimensional aspects of a person's life. By integrating our various positive programs and complementary modalities, we have authentically created a center for holistic health; it's not just a buzz word. Working to integrate mind, body, and spirit is a crucial part of the overall culture of the club we are working to create at Longfellow.

**Q.** Tell us about the 'Hot Power

Yoga'?

**A.** I've been doing 'Hot Power Yoga' for 3 years now. When I started, I had a sore shoulder, elbow and foot. These three problems have been healed. It might have been coincidence, but I'm giving Hot Power Yoga much of the credit. After you do a Hot Yoga workout, you feel so good because you stretch, twist and strengthen every one of the muscle groups in your body. Due to the heat (95 degrees), not only can you get a deeper stretch, but you cleanse your body when you perspire. It's a great feeling! We provide these classes in Wayland at our 'Lumina' Club and at Longfellow Natick in our yoga room. It is a terrific form of recovery after playing tennis or running. It's so good! Tennis is a very physically stressful sport to your bones and muscles. It is like basketball, in that you're constantly moving your feet and changing directions. In addition, during a tennis match you might swing the racquet a thousand times or more. So, after I play tennis, I try to fit in a 'Hot

Yoga' class, and when I come

**Q.** Laury, how would our readers go about establishing Hot Power Yoga in their clubs?

**A.** To provide your members with a 'Hot Yoga' class program, the first thing you need to do is find instructors. Our instructors were trained by a well-known yoga instructor, a man named Baron Baptiste. Next, you need to find a room of suitable size for yoga and install a high temperature thermostat with a heating system capable of bringing the room temperature to 95 degrees. You should also have, if you plan to use the room for other purposes, a well engineered exhaust system to remove the hot humid air from the room after the class and cool the room back to 75 degrees or cooler. I am not aware of any clubs offering 'Hot Power Yoga' at this temperature or greater. This is a great thing for anybody who is very athletic and that pushes themselves. As I said it has a profoundly cleansing impact on your body and soul.

**CIN** - Laury, you are one of the



**Laury Hammel**

few people I know of that has attended ALL 24 IHRSA Conventions and Trade Shows. Congratulations for your support of and participation in IHRSA!

**Laury** - When you raise the subject of 25 years of IHRSA, I am

trying to remember who else might have perfect IHRSA Convention attendance for 24 years now. I know you have, Norm. And, I know Rick Caro, John McCarthy and Chuck Leve have been to all 24 IHRSA (See Laury Hammel page 24)

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### ...Laury Hammel

continued from page 23

Conventions. I think there may be 4 or 5 others. There's a bunch of the original members who have not been to Conventions for a few years.

**CIN** - Well Laury... You, I, and some others need to be on the phone to people like Peter Donahue, Jennifer

Michel, Dale Dibble, Todd Pulis, Nick Cotsidas, Bob Petersen, Jim Farrell and many more that were original IHRSA Founding Members and get them all to come out to Las Vegas - March 20-23rd, 2006! I know it will be a great event, especially with Big John "The Master of Alliances" McCarthy retiring and all the events that will send him into retirement with LOVE from the

Association Members! Now, my question is: What are the most important things IHRSA Membership and Convention/Trade Show attendance have done for your business during these almost 25 years?

**Laury** - First, let me say that I feel so blessed for so many reasons to be in an industry like our industry. What a great business to be in! Isn't it great when your job is to make people healthy and happy! I consider my clubs to be 'endorphin factories'! I tell people in my community that 'We create more endorphins at my clubs than in any place in our community!'

When people come in, we greet them with a smile, we use their name, and we try to talk to them as much as we can. When people come out of the club after working out hard, they are happier, and when they leave, we always try to say 'Good Bye' with a smile. Imagine what it would be like if you worked as a 'Caretaker' at a funeral home? You would be dealing with sad and mourning people all day long! In our business we cele-

brate every day! We're joyful every day and we cheer people on...it's just a GREAT INDUSTRY!

### Why Club Industry Wizard Laury Hammel Values IHRSA Greatly!

**Laury - 1.** I thoroughly enjoy being a part of this relatively 'new industry'. Because it was so new, we had a trade association that came in and brought great energy and a fresh perspective. Our Association was born with a veritable cornucopia of ideas and great enthusiasm. We always look to innovate, and in John McCarthy, we had a leader that shared that 'Vision'. IHRSA has built this industry. 'I feel that IHRSA created this industry as much as this industry has created IHRSA'. That's an amazing statement and accomplishment. I consider myself to be a club owner that is a 'product of IHRSA'. When I started in 1980, my club was a tennis-only facility. Without IHRSA I don't know if I would have gone into

fitness at the same time and in the same ways that I did. I don't know if I would have even still be in business because I've learned so much and have gotten so much help from the experience of IHRSA as a whole. I've learned an awful lot from the club owners that I've gotten to know and love. The presentations I've heard at the IHRSA Conventions and Conferences are always on the cutting edge. I really feel that IHRSA is largely responsible for the massive number of health clubs in this world and has set the standards for how we manage and program our clubs.

2. I have literally gotten hundreds of specific programs, ideas, concepts and tools that I could take back and use for my business.

3. My staff has been trained and motivated to a degree that never could have happened without IHRSA.

4. It keeps us excited and jazzed up and enthusiastic about our 'Mission and Vision'.

So, I am a huge fan of (See Laury Hammel page 26)



**IHRSA Presidents – Past and Present**  
 (L to R) Julie Main, Geoffrey Dyer and Joe Moore



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## ...Laury Hammel

continued from page 24

*IHRSA and a huge fan of our club industry. I feel incredibility lucky to be part of this great industry. It ROCKS!*

**CIN** - Laury, I know I also feel the way you do about IHRSA, and so do our friends in our great industry across the world. But, I want to tell you, Laury Hammel, YOU have been an enormous contributor to the hugely productive and loving organization called IHRSA and to this fitness industry across the world. I really mean that sincerely. Because I have been involved in and cared about IHRSA since the early days in 1980, when Rick Caro and I spent many long distance phone hours creating IHRSA, it is just wonderful for Rick and me to see IHRSA's status in the world now. What we've all done as a TEAM and made happen over the years is a very wonderful testimony on the "Power of Great Teamwork"! And very importantly I think, IHRSA has been and will continue to be very important and good for America and the rest of the world.

**Laury** - Well Norm, I want to thank you and Rick for making this thing called IHRSA happen! I was a member of the 'old' association, the National Tennis Association (NTA), and one day I got a fax from you guys telling me that you had just combined the NTA with the National Court Clubs Association to form a new organization called IRSA. I reacted by saying, 'Great' and I sent my check in right away

*(Author's note: International Racquet Sports Association (IRSA) was the original name of IHRSA until the letter "H" for Health was added in the summer of 1994).*

**Q.** Please describe the "Service Breakthrough Project"?

**A.** The "Service Breakthrough Project" was one of the most profound experiences I've had in my business life. I worked with 10 owners of clubs across the country who were committed to dramatically improving the level of member service in clubs. We just felt that, at that time in 1992, there was not enough focus and attention being paid to Member Service in IHRSA. I think IHRSA does spend a lot of time now talking about service, but there is still, to this day, more time focused on sales and numbers, etc.

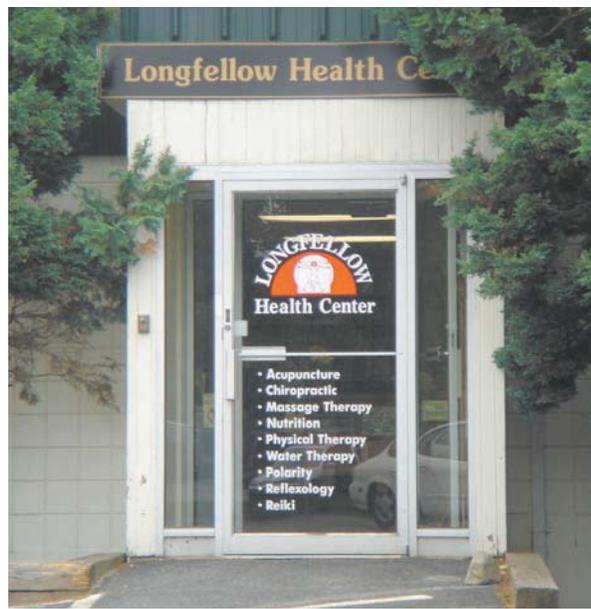
Todd Pulis, IHRSA's 3rd President, (behind you Norm and Rick Caro 2nd President), was one of the key people involved. Todd introduced us to a book called "Service Breakthrough". We took that book and engaged in a three-year project called the "Service Breakthrough Project" to totally ramp up service in clubs across the country. We felt that if the industry, as a whole, was providing better service in clubs, then the whole industry would grow. That was our way of trying to make a 'statement on service'. We produced an inch and a half thick book and donated it to IHRSA. They made the book available to people in the vast IHRSA library of educational materials. Part of the "Service

Breakthrough Project" involved us 'auditing' each others clubs using a powerful 35-page audit. When you are evaluated by your peers, it really makes you think and work hard. It was a powerful program that had ramifications beyond our own clubs. When we gave that seminar at the IHRSA Convention in 1996, there was a 'packed house' with standing room only! Six people represented our group. We passed out the materials and many people told us afterward that it was the best seminar they'd ever heard. For me, it was a wonderful experience to be able to work with people in the industry who are so committed to a similar cause. It was **PROFOUND...LIFE CHANGING STUFF!**

**Q.** Laury, you also contributed to IHRSA through your involvement in the development of Convention Focus Groups. Please share that experience with us.

**A.** One of the things at IHRSA that I was pushing for was to get more activity and interaction so there would be more opportunity for my staff and other people's staffs to come together. My staff would kind of 'stick together' because they really didn't know the other attendees. This was in contrast to what I would do at the Conventions, which was to network a lot, because I knew a lot of the people, and I love 'networking' at the Conventions.

So, we set up these 'Focus Groups' under different topics that would be suited for managers, sales people, service people, etc. Each group would meet for an hour and a half. We pre-trained all the focus group leaders before the meeting. To start each day off, I got up and 'led a fun little song' and talked to the groups about the goals of each Focus Group. We had these special sessions on two different days, and they went really well. People had a chance to learn from each other, ask questions of their peers, get new ideas and get to know other people who shared the same goals and challenges. It was GREAT! For some reason, IHRSA stopped offering those Focus Groups *(Author's Note: Laury should be happy because in our August issue during Part II of Joe Moore's Special Edition Report, Joe indicated that IHRSA was moving back to more focus group activity!)*.



## Longfellow Holistic Health Center

**Q.** Laury, please describe your world class programming offered in all of your clubs and your Programming leaders.

**A.** This is an area that we at Longfellow are excited about. Anyone can lease a space and throw together a bunch of high quality equipment, but bricks, mortar, and equipment, a health club do not make. A health club is a place where people can be trained, educated and motivated to get healthy. It's our feeling that the quality of the staff and the effectiveness of the programs is what will differentiate a real health club from a place that poses as a health club. All of our departments are expected to offer a variety of programs that address the needs of our members, and as a result, we have a very active membership, each of whom really looks forward to coming to the club.

We pride ourselves in being leaders of the industry in creating fun, educational and motivational fitness games. We've offered innovative games that educate our members to the importance of strength training, on our formula for healthy aging and living to be a centenarian, on cross training, and many more... We're particularly fortunate to have the 'mother of all fitness games' - Teresa Newton-Moineau as our Group Exercise Director. She is a well-spring of creative energy, and every three months, she comes up with a new and creative game that has a fun twist and includes one or more important health messages. Our walls are filled with cards from the 200+ people who

participate, and they can be seen writing down their results to make sure they complete the game and receive the wonderful surprises of sweatshirts, bags, head phones and many more...

These games are of course much more than games. These motivational programs support our members in keeping their commitments to themselves, teach them important lessons, and create a social atmosphere of fun at the club.

**Q.** The Longfellow Clubs are also noted for directing the only national junior tennis tournament in New England. Share that very important aspect of your club operations along with your readers in this area with us please.

**A.** Since 1981, Longfellow has hosted the only national junior tennis tournament in New England, which currently is called the USTA Boy's 16's National Open. Managers Myke Farricker and Denise Griffin direct this wonderful event and they do a spectacular job. Denise also is the Tournament Director of the New England Sectional Junior Championships and the New England Junior Hardcourt Junior Championships - the two largest tournaments in New England. We also host over 30 USTA tournaments a year.

Our national tournament has included many great tennis players such as James Blake, Andre Agassi, Luke Jensen, Aaron Krickstein, and Jim Courier to name a few. We *(See Laury Hammel page 27)*

## Service Breakthrough Project Team

- **John Atwood**, The Longfellow Clubs, Natick and Wayland, MA
- **Beth and Bill Beck**, ClubFit Jefferson Valley, Jefferson Valley, NY
- **Julie and Kevin Boorse**, Sports Club Mgt. Inc, E. Stroudsburg, PA
- **Jack Dennison**, Cedar Springs Athletic and Racquet Club, Burlington, Ontario, Canada
- **Rene Ellington**, The Renaissance Club, Phoenix, AZ
- **Myke Farricker**, The Longfellow Clubs, Natick and Wayland, MA
- **Laury Hammel**, The Longfellow Clubs, Natick and Wayland, MA
- **Carole Oat**, New England Health and Racquet - Bristol, Bristol, CT
- **Faith Pulis**, The Thoreau Club, Concord, MA
- **Kathy Schilling**, New England Health and Racquet - Hanover, Hanover, MA
- **Ernie Zaik**, Western Reserve Club Family Sports Center, Tempe, AZ

...Laury Hammel

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thoroughly enjoy hosting this event and bringing high quality junior tennis to New England. We emphasize good sportsmanship and having fun as a way to develop character, as well as reaching their full tennis potential. On opening night at the player's meeting, I morph into my alter ego, 'The General'. I don an army helmet and lay down the law to the juniors through song (singing Every Hook You Take), and I direct a fun game show. They get the message and are simultaneously amused.

We do these tennis events to promote our industry, to bring excitement to the club, and most of all, because it is the right thing to do. We have received so much, and we should give back whenever we can.

IHRSA 23+ year veteran and now retired, Rick Devereux, commented on Laury Hammel, "Club industry leaders must be innovators and survivors. No one I've known has systematically generated more new ideas and creative programs for members and staff than Laury Hammel - or tried harder to implement a lot of them. Every operator can learn a lot from his experience: both his successes and failures. And, all would envy his energy."

**Q.** Laury, in Part I, you mentioned you had written a book on something you're very passionate about. Tell us about your book on "Socially Responsible Business".

**A.** I've founded several business organizations committed to changing the world through the institution of business. I've also been a member of the Social Venture Network (SVN), a

group of business leaders committed to transforming business and building an economically just and sustainable world. SVN is doing a book series about how 'Values-Driven Businesses are Changing the World'. They asked me and Gun Denhart (the founder of the Hannah Anderson child clothing catalogue) to write a book focusing specifically on how businesses can contribute to the community, and that's exactly what we're doing.

It's titled 'Growing Local Value - How Values-Driven Businesses Can Build Strong Communities'. It's being published by Berrett-Koehler, and it should be out by next spring. In fact, I'm speaking at the 25th IHRSA Convention on this theme, and specifically, on how health clubs can build strong communities. I encourage our industry to read the book when it comes out and find

out the many exciting things that businesses are doing to help strengthen communities.

One of the themes of this book is that when business leaders make decisions, they need to consider the needs of all stakeholders - customers, staff, stockholders, management, the community and the environment. This is why locally-owned, independent businesses have such an advantage over chains. So often, chains are tied to one stakeholder - the stockholders and the financial bottom line. I've seen so many examples of fine clubs being purchased by chains and losing their heart. They no longer appear to care about the needs of all stakeholders. This is why I'm doing what I can to encourage and support locally-owned, independent operators to not sell-out, but preserve the wonderful clubs they've created. Let's keep the legacy alive, the legacy we've worked so hard to develop.

**Q.** Laury, I imagine you're familiar with the new Planet Fitness operations and other "Low Cost Clubs". Do you have them (Planet Fitness) competing with you yet? What are your thoughts on the new "Low Cost" Competition?

**A.** We are fortunate that we have few of what you call "Low Cost" competitors. This is partly because our clubs are not in densely-populated areas and the average income is very high. Our market also has a number of strong, high-quality, independent IHRSA clubs as friendly competitors, including: the Thoreau Club (which was part of the "Service Breakthrough Project"), Dick Trant's Weston Racquet Club, and the Wayside Racquet Club. I like to think that, together, we've set a standard of excellence that our market now expects.

The price a club charges is not really the way I would frame this issue. On the one hand, if a club does a great job and offers members a way to get healthy and enjoy life, isn't \$150 a month a small price to pay - and therefore a "Low Cost Club"? On the other hand, it seems to me that if a club can find a way to provide superior service to the members at a below market price, then I congratulate them. However, if a club operator is paying their staff well, training their staff effectively, providing great

facilities, and offering superior member service, the price of membership cannot be "Low Cost" in comparison to other clubs.

After owning and operating clubs for over 25 years, I've observed that the clubs that are still around and thriving are those who charge a fair price and provide a great value. Those that sell memberships for \$29 a month have eventually gone out of business. In fact, clubs that sell memberships at well below market rates are not actually generators of members, they actually are in the business of creating former members. They can't service the needs of everyone who joins, and they know it. They're planning on people giving up and not using the club. It's in their business plan.

Unfortunately, our industry then has to pick up the pieces. Thousands of these ex-members are now cynical about their ability to change their lifestyle and skeptical about the value of a health club. In contrast, The Longfellow Clubs (like many IHRSA clubs) has a vision that every single person who joins will experience success and improve their health. We want them to use the club and use it often. This is what IHRSA is all about, and it is the future of our industry.

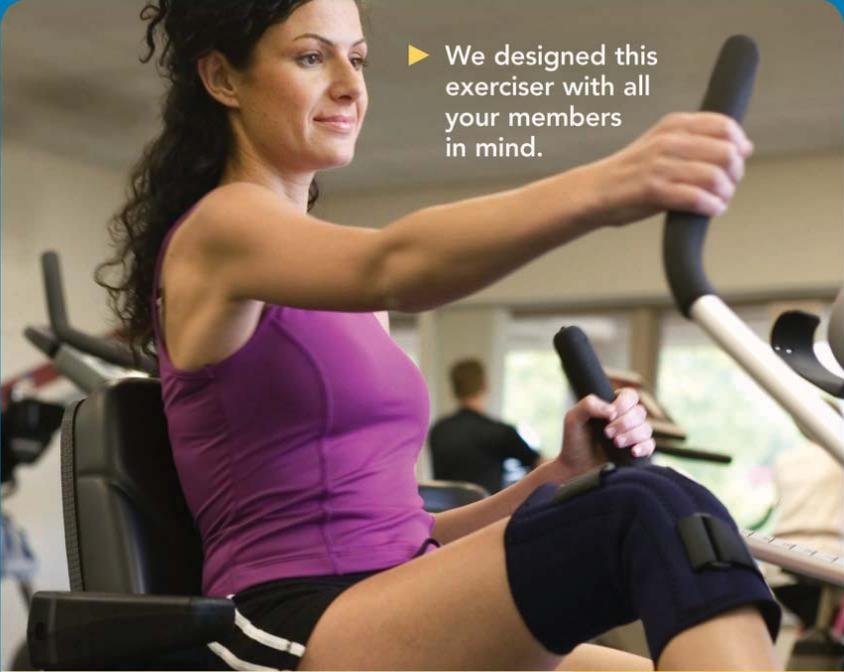
**Laury Hammel  
Passionate On Fight  
Against Obesity!**

**Q.** As you know Laury, I am publishing in this, our September issue your letter/article addressed to John McCarthy on Obesity. I have read your updated version, and it is excellent. Please give us a 'nutshell' overview of your Obesity article in this issue for our readers.

**A.** My concern about the issue of obesity, from a health club owner's perspective, is that I recognize we have a **National Obesity Crisis**. The issue of obesity in America, where the average weight and the number of people who are overweight and clinically obese is rising every single year in the United States must be brought under control!

The Obesity crisis is being caused by a **combination of two problems:**

1. The steadily declining *quality of the food people are eating. Many people now* (See **Laury Hammel** page 28)



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**...Laury Hammel**

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are eating. Many people now consume food that is very high in calories and very low in nutritional value.

2. People everywhere are much less active! They are walking less, exercising less, moving less and their jobs are sedentary in nature. Compared to 100 years ago, millions of Americans are obese today because they simply live totally inactive lives and they consume much more caloric-laden food!

This has become a treacherous combination for our nation! People are moving less and eating more. This is resulting in a real health crisis in our culture because people are so negatively impacted health-wise by being obese. They experience both short-term and the

long-term problems caused by obesity that are really treacherous. These problems include: all forms of cancer, heart disease and diabetes. As a health club owner I am committed to creating a world where people live happy, healthy, vibrant and balanced lives. I am concerned about this crisis. I want to do what I can to support the fight against obesity. That's why I wrote the original letter on obesity and have updated it for its 2nd publication in this issue of CLUB INSIDER.

On top of the two major causes of obesity: moving less and eating more, we have this major problem in American society of 'body image'. This is increasingly so in young people because we're being inundated through print, TV, movies and computers with people's 'concern with body image'. In

essence, the messages are asking for a 'body image' that the average person cannot achieve. Many people end up having this constantly nagging feeling that we're not good enough because we don't look the way magazines, TV ads, etc. are saying we should look.

**24 Hour Fitness  
Billboard In  
San Francisco Area:  
"When the Aliens Come...  
They Will Eat the  
Fat Ones First!"**

In addition to people being hammered by that 'body image' message, whom for an obese person is very discouraging, people who are overweight and obese are being made fun of. They are laughed at and joked about. I consider that to be the lowest form of humor

because it is easy to make fun of people who are downtrodden, having challenges and difficulties. I do not find that amusing. That's why I was so upset about the Billboard ad that came out six years ago by 24 Hour Fitness. I feel that billboard was inhumane and just cruel. I objected because that billboard was picking on people who were already suffering from huge self esteem issues.

My job, as a health professional is to be incredibly committed to eliminating the problem of obesity, but at the same time, NOT to attack the people that are the victims of obesity!

**CLUB INSIDER** - I want to thank Laury Hammel and his Team as well as Alan Schwartz and Rick Devereux for their contributions to this Part I and Part II Series. Laury

Hammel's story is an extremely interesting and very compelling one. His feelings about America's battle with Obesity, first articulated and published by CLUB INSIDER in 1999, have been revised and updated and are set forth as one of our Page #3 articles for this issue.

(Norm Cates, Jr. is the founder, owner and Publisher of The CLUB INSIDER News. Cates was the 1st President of IHRSA and a Co-founder of the Association in 1981. Cates a 31+ year veteran of the club industry was honored by IHRSA with its 2001 Dale Dibble Distinguished Service Award. Cates may be reached by phone at: 770.850.8506 or by email at: clubinsidernews@mindspring.com)



**The Longfellow Club Café**

**...Norm's Notes**

continued from page 8

countered this afternoon by announcing: "The Company Expects to File Financial Statements by November 30, 2005 and the Company Intends to Notice and Hold Annual Meeting of Shareholders in Mid-to-Late January 2006.

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•**GOD Bless our fellow Americans in the Gulf Region Katrina Disaster zone, our Troops, Airmen and Seamen in Iraq as they fight for our Freedom, the families of our servicemen for they too sacrifice greatly for all of us and the poor citizens of Iraq as they try to survive the relentless attacks by the insurgents. GOD Bless you all and GOD Bless America! STAY TUNED!**

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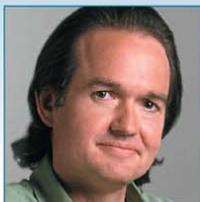
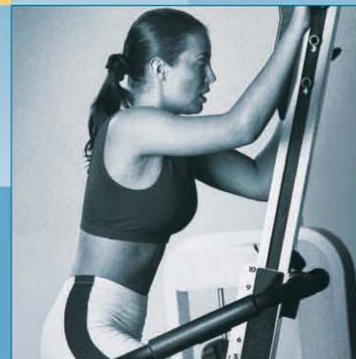
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**...Karen Kirby**

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trainer.

Your power team helpers are endless. They will work in the spa, at the front desk or in the kids club. They will come from the experienced

trainers who are already full. They all field questions about fitness and have opportunities to mention your name. Do not think these referrals will happen just because you have good credentials or several specialties. Your teammates will help you because you take the time to

help them, get to know them and show them who you are as a fitness professional. (Tip: make sure they have plenty of your business cards!)

Good luck getting in front of more people. If you enjoy people and have a passion for helping people change their

life through exercise, prospecting will always be fun and easy. As you meet one on one with your prospects, be sure to let your care and enthusiasm come through. That will be the number one reason they buy from you.

“What you will do matters. All

you need is to do it.” -Judy Grahn

*(Karen Kirby is the President of Health Style Services. She can be reached at (210) 884-2620)*

# Lifestyle Family Fitness Announces Grand Opening of 27th Location

ORLANDO, FL. – Lifestyle Family Fitness, the largest privately held co-ed fitness chain in Florida, held Grand Opening celebrations for its newly built Apopka facility on Friday, Sept. 23 through Monday, Sept. 26, 2005. The \$2 million fitness center is located at 3030 East Semoran Blvd., Orlando, Fla., in the Colonial Shoppe's Bear Lake Center. The new facility is Lifestyle's third location in the Orlando area and 27th companywide. Lifestyle also owns and operates two other fitness facilities in the Orlando area and plans to open additional locations in Orlando in the next 12 months.

Amenities in the 31,000 square foot facility include the latest strength and cardiovascular training equipment, as well as a group fitness area that will feature a \$20,000 suspended wood deck floor system. Other amenities include group fitness and cycling classes, on-staff Certified Personal Trainers, standing tanning booths, locker rooms and a Kids' Club (childcare services).

Grand Opening festivities included: FREE health screenings with health-related vendors, world-class group fitness demonstrations, personal training clinics including functional, strength and flexibility

training, hourly raffle prize giveaways all weekend that include gift certificates, Lifestyle gear and more club tours of the new, state-of-the-art facility. Food and refreshments will be provided by local vendors

“We are excited to enter the Apopka community as well as expand our presence in Orlando,” said Geoffrey Dyer, Lifestyle Family Fitness

President and CEO. “We look forward to continuing our strong relationship with our Orlando area members. We believe new members will find we provide the highest level of customer service, an impeccably clean and well-maintained facility, and the latest programs and equipment to help keep them motivated and excited every time they visit the club.”

Lifestyle's mission is

to fulfill members' needs and build lasting relationships through a fun and friendly fitness experience. And, as with all Lifestyle Family Fitness clubs, all new members will enroll on a month-by-month basis with no long-term contracts. Lifestyle also offers new members a 4-week money-back comfort guarantee and three complimentary sessions with a certified personal trainer.



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