

GIRLS JUST WANNA WORK OUT



■ Heidi Isler, front, leads Maureen Feeney in a yoga class at Fitness Unlimited, a women-only gym in Milton. The gym offers 85 fitness classes every week.

BROAD SIDES

The serious firepower of womyn's words

Is it a 'guy' thing?

DO men really hate the idea of being married? Or do they just have to say so to prove their manhood?

I was thinking about this when one of my male co-workers was nearing marriage and some of us gathered at work to congratulate him over pizza. He asked if anyone had any advice to give him, and each man said "Don't do it!"

Other men who strolled by the gathering said the same thing without hearing it from any other guy there. It didn't matter what age they were or if they were on their first, second, or third marriage – it was always the same piece of what they considered advice. Weird thing is that I

believe that they really are happily married.

With me being the only married woman there at the time, I said I loved being married, and of course

the men chuckled. Then I said that if they asked my husband of four years, he would say the same. Well, they couldn't let that statement go by without noting that "of course" my husband would tell ME that. Truth is, my husband has told his friends and others that he loves being married.

He has mentioned to me on many occasions that when he says "being married is the best thing that has happened to me," his male counterparts look at him like he's got three heads. I need to mention that my husband is definitely a manly man and there's no mistake about his "macho-ness."

So, I'm wondering if it's just a "guy" thing, something guys say because it might appear "unmanly" to actually enjoy being married. It seems that men look at getting married as if it's the end of their "bachelorhood," their end of all things fun. Women look at marriage as the start of a new life as a "couple." We see things as "we" and they see things as "me and her."

To be fair, I'm not saying that I have never rolled my eyes or complained about socks on the floor. And I'm OK that my husband thinks we have a "kitchen fairy." But I never complain about being married.

TALK TO US

■ To submit a column, 400 words or less, e-mail us at womynzone@ledger.com.

— DIANA EYSIE Kingston



■ Women work their triceps in a strength training class at Fitness Unlimited. The gym offers a large cardiovascular area and an area with free weights and machines.

By **DANA BARBUTO**
 THE PATRIOT LEDGER

Stephanie Barresi has lost 60 pounds over the past eight years while gaining friends, fitness and health.

She's done so by working out at Fitness Unlimited, a women-only gym in Milton that she says offered her a sense of belonging.

"I was overweight and I had a coupon to join the gym, so I just did it," said Barresi, 50, of Quincy. "I came gradually then I met friends and I started to come more and more because I liked it here."

Many women like Barresi choose a same-sex fitness club because of the easygoing environment. Studies have shown that self-conscious women who exercise in same-sex environments are more willing to work out, and more satisfied with their workouts, said Jessica Matthews, education coordinator for the American Council on Exercise.

"Women like the support and the nurturing environment in an all-female setting," Matthews said.

Leaving a cycling class at Fitness Unlimited last week, Mary Beth Mulcahy, 51, of Quincy, said she sought out a women's gym because she thought she'd be more comfortable.

"I've never looked back," said Mulcahy, a member for six years. "I've made some wonderful friends here."

Mulcahy and Barresi met at the gym and they now have about 10 other "gym friends" who get together for social outings. They've seen movies and shows like "Menopause, the Musical." Camaraderie like theirs is certainly one of the draws unique to a same-sex gym, said Beth Whitney, the manager at Fitness Unlimited.

"It's just easy and comfortable," Whitney said. "There is nothing wrong with a coed gym, but the



■ Fran Ryan strengthens her arms with dumbbells.

Women-only gym produces long-lasting friendships as well as toned bodies

Please see **WORKOUT** — Page 26

WINDOW DRESSING ■ By VALERIE A. RUSSO/ For The Patriot Ledger

► **ART APPRECIATION** The Next Door Gallery in Mansfield features the work of local artists, including landscape painter Christina Beecher of Mansfield. Beecher's limited edition prints sell for \$40 to \$100; original oils and mixed media are \$200 to \$5,000. The gallery's address is 250 Main St., Mansfield. 508-339-1234. More information: www.christinabeecher.com.



► **FRESH-BAKED** There are absolutely no calories in Elizabeth Kissick's Pumpkin Pie. Featuring beads of hand-blown glass, sterling silver and Swarovski crystal, the bracelet from EK Designs of Cohasset is \$290 at the Gift Garden, 10 Bassett St. (Milton Marketplace), Milton. 617-696-6644.



▲ **COACH FARE** Traveling "Coach" has never been easier, thanks to the variety of previously owned Coach bags and accessories available at Barbara's Accessories Boutique, 49 Belmont St., South Easton. Prices range from \$15 for a Coach Outlet wristlet to \$199 for a Coach Classics leather satchel. 508-238-1513.

Come across any products for women that we should know about? Contact Valerie A. Russo by e-mail: varusso@earthlink.net. Please put "Window Dressing" in the subject line.

HERStory

Personal perspectives on life right now

Laura Sheridan
Norwell

Age: 45

Occupation: Creator and host of the RAIRA! with LauRA Television Show, author of The RAIRA! Book and CEO of Laura Sheridan & Co.

PROUDEST ACCOMPLISHMENT

Creating and hosting the RAIRA! with LauRA Show, helping people laugh and smile and look to the heavens once in a while.



LOOKING FORWARD

To finding the right network to get the RAIRA! with LauRA Show out to the masses and to having our own little RAIRA! studio that would allow more people to come to the tapings of the shows and for us to develop it more. I am also looking forward to seeing the finished documentary that is being shot about our journey and how sharing my story will help others go for what they want in life.

PERFECT DAY

Waking up next to my husband of almost 20 years, eating breakfast with my teenage son, sitting in my prayer chair for 20 minutes, doing a little dancing in my kitchen, practicing some singing, writing a few RA-Isms, funny little rhymes that make people stop and smile, and chatting with a few of the RAIRA! Queens, the many women who help me with my RAIRA! empire.

PASS IT ON

The RAIRA! Book to pass the RAIRA! along and to help people. I would share some of my RA-Isms, such as "You are what you think so don't tell yourself you stink," and "I will not look back on my bad decision only forward with great vision."

— THE PATRIOT LEDGER

Every woman has a story – Her story. Whether we volunteer our time, invest in raising our children, build a business, write a poem, paint a portrait or a community fence, there's some knowledge and laughter to share in each of us. Nominate someone you know for Herstory by sending an e-mail to womynzone@ledger.com.

WORTH YOUR TIME

Good ways to spend those precious few hours

SHOP



Make merry

■ The Pilgrim
Congregational Church will have its holiday fair from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday. The fair will include holiday crafts, baked goods, knitted items, jewelry and a cookie swap. The church is at 24 Athens St., North Weymouth. For more information, call 781-337-2075.

■ The Old-Fashioned Harvest Fair will be held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday at the First Parish Church, 24 River St., Norwell. The fair will include holiday gifts, a silent auction, gift baskets and used books for sale. For children, there will be balloon animals, face painting and a toy shop. There will also be a snack bar with chowder, hot dogs and brownies. Proceeds will benefit the church. For more information, call 781-659-7122.

RENT



'Traveling Pants 2' is one-size-fits-all fun
America Ferrera, Amber Tamblyn, Alexis Bledel and Blake Lively return as the foursome of friends who bond over a ragged article of shared clothing. This time around, the four are off on their own, attending college while trying to maintain the connection to their old pals despite the distance between them. The DVD and Blu-ray come with deleted footage accompanied by commentary from director Sanaa Hamri, plus a gag reel and a featurette on how the movie's final scene was developed. DVD, \$28.98; Blu-ray, \$35.99. (Warner Bros.)

Voice your opinion. Send a Letter to the Editor: 400 Crown Colony Drive, Quincy 02169 or to edit-page@ledger.com

The Patriot Ledger

COVER STORY

Women get toned, make friends at Milton gym

■ WORKOUT

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general consensus from women is that they want to come in and be themselves, especially in the weight room where they can sometimes feel intimidated if a man is waiting behind them. A women's-only takes out that intimidation factor."

Nestled between a flower shop and a liquor store in East Milton Square, the gym doesn't look like much more

"It's good to be in shape, but coming here is just as much a social thing for me. ... I come here to see my women friends."

Stephanie Barresi, Quincy

than a storefront from the outside. But inside, Fitness Unlimited has two studios for group fitness classes such as Pilates, yoga, step aerobics and kick boxing, and a third studio downstairs for cycling. Personal training is also available.

There are 85 classes held every week, starting at 5:45 a.m. and running until 8 p.m. daily. There is a large cardiovascular area with treadmills, stair-steppers, bikes and elliptical machines and another area with free weights and machines.

"We're not huge but we offer so much. We're bigger than most people think," Whitney said.

Beyond exercise, the club offers on-site babysitting, body composition testing and nutritional counseling.

Whitney, who has been with Fitness Unlimited for 17 years, remembers when the gym was "one room with a blue carpet, three machines and no weights." In business since 1980, the gym has grown "10-fold," Whitney said. Two years ago, the gym expanded into the basement and built a new locker room, adding amenities such as a sauna and steam room.

Members – who range in age from 13 to 85 – said they need a gym they can call their own.



■ Jackie Kiernan gets in a cardio workout at Fitness Unlimited in Milton.

"It's good to be in shape, but coming here is just as much a social thing for me because I have two teen boys at home and I come here to see my women friends," Barresi said.

Calling Fitness Unlimited her "home away from home," Anita McNulty, 68, of Milton said, "I love that it's all women, of all ages. I like going into a class with young people. I stand in the senior row in the back of the class and I keep up with them."

A member for 10 years, McNulty said she's developed a lot of friendships at Fitness Unlimited. "Girls my age, we all kind



■ A spin class participant pedals away.

of have a little clique going and we encourage each other," she said, adding the only missing amenity is a swimming pool.

"Maybe they can put a rooftop one in," she said, laughing.

Reach Dana Barbuto at dbarbuto@ledger.com.

SWEET AND SAVORY

Quick and easy recipes

A warm, creamy drink

Any flavor of Turkish delight – a soft candy often studded with chopped nuts and dusted with powdered sugar – works in this warm, frothy alternative to hot chocolate.

Serve it with a spoon for eating unmelted lumps of candy at the bottom.



Turkish delight frothy

2 cups milk
2 ounces Turkish delight, cut into small cubes, plus extra for garnish
½ cup heavy cream
2 teaspoons rosewater
½ teaspoon honey
1 pinch ground cardamom
1 tablespoon unsalted pistachio nuts, finely chopped

In a small saucepan over medium heat, combine the milk and Turkish delight. Heat, stirring constantly, until the mixture just reaches the boiling point. Remove from heat, set aside.

In a medium bowl, use an electric mixer or whisk to beat the cream, rosewater, honey and cardamom until just stiff.

Divide the milk mixture between two serving cups, then top with the whipped cream. Garnish with additional cubes of Turkish delight and the chopped pistachio nuts.

Start to finish: 10 minutes
Serves: Two

Pork chops with spicy cranberry sauce

4 center cut, boneless pork chops
Salt and ground black pepper
3 tablespoons butter
1 medium red onion, thinly sliced
½ cup red wine
1 cup fresh or frozen cranberries
2 tablespoons minced Peppadew peppers (or 1 teaspoon minced jalapeno peppers)
2 tablespoons honey

Heat the oven to 200 F.

Use paper towels to pat dry the pork chops. Season them on both sides with salt and pepper.

In a large skillet over medium-high, melt the butter. Add the chops and cook until lightly browned on the bottom, about 5 minutes. Turn the chops, cover the pan, then reduce heat to low and cook until the chops reach 145 F at the center, 7 to 8 more minutes.

Transfer the chops to an oven-safe plate, cover with foil and place in the oven to keep warm.

Return the skillet to the stove over medium-high heat. Add the onion, wine, cranberries, peppers and honey. Bring to a simmer and cook until the cranberries pop and the liquid has reduced to create a thick sauce, about 5 minutes. Season the sauce with salt and pepper.

To serve, drizzle each pork chop with some of the cranberry sauce.

Start to finish: 25 minutes
Servings: Four

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