

Norm Cates'

CLUB INSIDER

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF TRUST

Dr. Kenneth Cooper *Reminiscing About 50 Years of Aerobics*



Dr. Kenneth Cooper and son, Dr. Tyler Cooper

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CLUB INSIDER

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF TRUST

Dr. Kenneth Cooper *Reminiscing About 50 Years of Aerobics*

By: Justin Cates

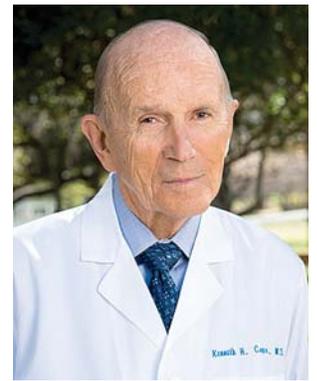
The year was 1968, and it was a tumultuous time in the United States and around the world. In January, 1968, two military events set the tone for the year to come. First, North Korea captured the *USS Pueblo*, further escalating the region's already high tensions in the Cold War. A week later, in Vietnam, the North launched the *Tet Offensive*, catching the South and United States armed forces off-guard. This signified the turning point in the decade-long war, and back home, American support of the war further eroded to a breaking point. Stateside, the assassinations of both *Martin Luther King, Jr.* and *Robert F. Kennedy* within a two-month period added shock to a public that was already tired and sad.

Life, however, must go on, and though it is easy to define 1968 as a negative year, there were also some positive notes. Specifically, in the engineering field, the now classic and always beautiful *Boeing 747 Jet* was introduced to the world. Now, 50 years later, with American Presidents still using it as *Air Force One*, its legacy will always be. Out of this world, *Apollo 8* was the first manned spacecraft to orbit the moon, and several months later, on *July 20, 1969*, the United States completed the task set out by the late *John F. Kennedy* of safely landing a man on the moon and returning him home before the decade was out. At that moment, the world stood still and looked to the sky.

I mention these events to frame the time period in which this month's cover story

takes place. It was **April, 1968**, 50 years ago *this month*, that the book *Aerobics*, written by **Dr. Kenneth Cooper**, was released. Today, what we take for granted as fact in this field was a revolution at that time. There were critics and supporters, but time eventually proved the *Aerobics* concepts and tests, as well as its supporters right, changing the landscape of physical fitness in the United States and around the world. The first edition of *Aerobics* sold 6 million copies, and including future editions, the total sold now stands at around 30 million. Dr. Cooper also went on to write 18 more books throughout his career, which is still going strong.

Related to the publication of *Aerobics*, many authors might have (See **Dr. Kenneth Cooper** Page 10)



Dr. Kenneth Cooper, Founder & Chairman

Sandi Gordon Rolling Out Rock Steady Boxing at Apple Athletic Club

By: Norm Cates

The **Mission of Rock Steady Boxing** is: *to empower people with Parkinson's disease to fight back. Rock Steady Boxing is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization that gives people with Parkinson's disease hope by improving their quality of life through a non-contact boxing-based fitness curriculum.*

How many of you have family or friends who are suffering from Parkinson's Disease? My bet, and guess, is that the answer is *a lot of you do. I do.* I have two

long-time friends, **Matt McDonald** and **George Bennington**, here in Atlanta, and my wife's brother-in-law, **Chuck Newman**, in Colorado Springs, Colorado, who're suffering from Parkinson's. While the disease is not an instant killer, for sure, it's a terrible life-changing destroyer of normality that makes living extremely difficult for the afflicted person, as well as for his/her family.

In case you're not familiar with Parkinson's Disease, here's what you get when you Google it. Wikipedia says: "Parkinson's Disease (PD) is a long-term

degenerative disorder of the central nervous system that mainly affects the motor system. The symptoms generally come on slowly over time. Early in the disease, the most obvious symptoms are shaking, rigidity, slowness of movement and difficulty with walking. Thinking and behavioral problems may also occur. Dementia becomes common in the advanced stages of the disease. Depression and anxiety are also common, occurring in more than a third of people with PD. Other symptoms include sensory, sleep and emotional problems.

(See **Rock Steady Boxing** Page 6)



Sandi Gordon and Ray Severe

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- And, of Course, *Norm's Notes*

Norm's Notes

■ **Hello Everybody!** This is your Club Insider Publisher and Tribal Leader Since 1993 checking in with our 292nd monthly edition of Club Insider!

■ **Is America a GREAT country, or what?** Where else could someone buy a used Apple MacIntosh computer for \$100 from a good friend named CATHY BROWN MILLER and then become a 25-year publisher of a newspaper called Club Insider that thousands of great folks like you read every month? **Only in America!** God bless America! God bless all of you, too!

■ **Congratulations to IHRSA's JOE MOORE, ANITA LAWLOR, TOM HUNT, MEREDITH POPPLER** and many more, great IHRSA Teammates... *as they've done it again and put together another Block Buster of a Show with over 12,000 people convening for four days in beautiful San Diego, California, March 21st thru 24th!* And, congratulations to DEREK GALLUP for the great job he's done as IHRSA Chairman this past year, Finally, best wishes to JIM WORTHINGTON, as he steps into Derek's shoes as IHRSA's new Chairman on July 1st.

■ **Boy oh boy,** am I excited after attending and enjoying IHRSA's 37th Annual Convention and Trade Show in beautiful San Diego! To think that this was our 37th

IHRSA Annual Convention and Trade Show, and that I've never missed one, kind of blows my mind. On top of that, we celebrated the 25th Anniversary of Club Insider while in San Diego, and that, too, was thrilling for Justin and his Mom, Ilena, and me. Thanks to every one of you who helped us celebrate and that have been with us at Club Insider all these 25 years!

Going to IHRSA Conventions, to me, is a lot like going to a high school or college reunion. Seeing many long-time friends, people from across the USA and around the world, was and always is exhilarating and a real treat. If I had a chance to see you, I'm glad I did. If you didn't attend, or you attended, and I missed seeing you, I'm sorry.

I started off this year's show by enjoying DARON "ROCKETMAN" ALLEN'S 75 Minutes With Top Club Operators by Visual Fitness Planner, for which Daron was the Moderator and included: JEFF CARLSON, DAVID PATCHELL-EVANS, CRAIG PEPIN-DONAT and JOSHUA RIDER, all industry experts. And, I also enjoyed attending BILL McBRIDE's great session, "Winning In Business Requires Strategy." Thanks also, to Bill McBride for his 9th Annual Active Connections Party, which many of us enjoyed. And, last here, but really deserving to be first: My sincere Thanks and Appreciation to RICK

CARO, "Our Industry's Best Friend," for hosting his 22nd Annual Financial Panel, which included: BRIAN WOOD, Managing Director, Imperial Capital; MARK GRABOWSKI, Partner, TPC Growth; and ROB SJOBERG, Partner, Perpetual Capital Partners.

■ **Congratulations to my friend, DR. ART CURTIS,** as he was honored at IHRSA37 in San Diego with the Dale Dibble Distinguished Service Award. Boy oh boy, talk about a man who's served IHRSA and our industry. Dr. Art has done a TON, including serving two terms as Chairman of the IHRSA Board Way to go, DR. ART!

■ **Congratulations to the DAVE WRIGHT,** and his Team at MyZone, as their company was honored by IHRSA as its 2018 Associate of the Year! What a great honor for a great company. Way to go, Dave and Team!

■ **Congratulations to KRISTEN GREEN,** as she was honored with the JULIE MAIN LEADERSHIP Award. Julie Main was a friend of mine and many of us, and we all miss her a lot.

■ **Congratulations to AUGIE and LYNNE NIETO,** and to Big JOHN MCCARTHY, as Augie's 2018 Bash on March 24th was a raging success... raising over \$6 million!



Norm Cates

Plus, major kudos and credit is due the Orangetheory folks as their #BurnForALS campaign stepped up and crushed goals raising over \$4 million for the Augie's Quest Bash. This shout out is a hooray for all of the amazing #OrangeNation members who literally put their blood, sweat, and tears into making this the best year ever for Augie's Quest! Stay tuned, folks, as Augie and Lynne Nieto wait for the research on PT - 1501 to be full speed ahead!

■ **Congratulations to KEVIN McHUGH,** Chief Operating Officer of The Atlantic (See Norm's Notes Page 7)

About Club Insider

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF TRUST

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Exercise IS Medicine!

By: Mike Alpert

We all know that exercise has a powerful effect on health. Also, we all agree that we are in this industry to help people lead an independent, healthy lifestyle. And, we say that we care about our staff, the people who run our clubs and are 100% responsible for the success that we have as a business. We say that we want them to be healthy and be active. We encourage them to workout. But, do we really mean it?

Consider the following: (1) a large percentage of our staff are women; (2) a good percentage of them have young children at home, and (3) many have a spouse or significant other. We want them to work out at our clubs but most often require it to either be prior to or after work or on their lunch break. Think about that: Many moms take care of preparing breakfast and dinner for their family; are the main person taking their kids to doctors and dentist appointments, as well as sporting events on weekends; doing their family's

chores like washing and house cleaning; and the list goes on and on and on. In addition, a man can do a 30 - 40 minute workout, shower and be back at his desk or department within one hour. Is this possible for a woman who has to dry her hair, put on makeup and get dressed in that same hour? And, for her to work out prior to or after work means that she must be at the club in many cases by 6:30 AM or be willing to get home after 7:00 PM. (I am assuming an 8:00 AM - 5:00PM schedule).

Let me tell you about an experiment we did at The Claremont Club a few years ago with the women who work in our business office. I agreed to pay them for their entire scheduled hours (8:00 AM - 5:00 PM) but allow them to workout between 3:30 - 4:30 PM each day, Monday through Friday for eight weeks. We all agreed that they would get their work done accurately and timely and that they would not miss their workouts. I had my CFO track their job performance during the eight weeks; our Director of Human Possibilities

tracked morale, attendance and team work; and our Wellness Director and Registered Dietician tracked weight loss, energy levels and their overall feelings about how they felt about themselves. An *amazing* thing happened: **it worked very, very well.** Their work did not suffer in the least bit, and as a matter of fact, it improved as did the morale in the office and their overall quality of life.

This was simply an experiment. The challenge is how to make it fair and available to all staff without raising labor costs by leaps and bounds. Departments like Childcare and the Front Desk are difficult to do this for without adding many more staff hours. And, as a policy, it must be available to all or none.

Many clubs that I visit continue to have a policy of not allowing staff, even when they are off the clock, to work out during "prime" times at their facility. It is very clear that we need to serve our members in order to remain open. But, shouldn't we begin with the people who make our businesses run? Your staff should be a



Mike Alpert

priority because if we take care of them, they will take care of the business. **So... what are you doing to make sure that your staff participates in what we preach that: Exercise IS Medicine?**

(Mike Alpert is the CEO and President of the Claremont Club in Claremont, California. He can be reached at malpert@claremontclub.com.)

...Rock Steady Boxing

continued from page 3

The main motor symptoms are collectively called 'parkinsonism' or a 'parkinsonian syndrome.'

Wikipedia continues: "The cause of Parkinson's disease is generally unknown but believed to involve both genetic and environmental factors. Those with a family member affected are more likely to get the disease themselves. There is also an increased risk in people exposed to certain pesticides and among those who have had prior head injuries, while there is a reduced risk in tobacco smokers and those who drink coffee or tea. The motor symptoms of the disease result from the death of cells in the substantia nigra, a region of the midbrain. The result is not enough dopamine in these areas. The reason for this cell death is poorly understood but involves the build-up of proteins into Lewy bodies in the neurons. Diagnosis of typical cases is mainly based on symptoms, with tests such as neuroimaging being used to rule out other diseases."

Sandi Gordon Is Making a Difference at Apple Athletic Club

Sandi Gordon is a long-time friend of mine, and she is the lovely wife of my good friend, **Ray Gordon**. Ray, Sandi and I have been friends in our industry since the 1980s, and they're both employed at **Steve Vucovich's Apple Athletic Club** in Idaho Falls, Idaho. Ray is the Director of Sales, and Sandi is a Personal Trainer at Apple Athletic Club. It was there that recently Sandi introduced **Rock Steady Boxing**,

a special program for the treatment of the symptoms of Parkinson's patients created by **Scott Newman**, a Marion County, Indiana prosecutor after he was diagnosed with Parkinson's at age 40. In 2006, Newman founded Rock Steady Boxing to help him and others cope with symptoms of Parkinson's.

Sandi introduced the program to Apple Athletic Club in February, 2018 after returning to visit her former club, *Fitness On The Move* (which was purchased by Fyzical) in Florida, where the program was being implemented successfully. Sandi came back and immediately scheduled herself for the Rock Steady Boxing Training Camp in Indianapolis. It is an intensive training program required to teach the Rock Steady Boxing program. She soon began to install the program at Apple Athletic Club, and she says that the response has been terrific. *Apple Athletic Club Owner, Steve Vucovich*, commented: "We have seen a very positive increase in interest for the Rock Steady Boxing program. Apple's newly-formed Parkinson's support group, in which we had our first meeting today, had 29 participants! Many became emotional because of their new-found support."

From the distance, the Rock Steady Boxing training appears to be simple boxing drills. But, Sandi Gordon has a method that she follows when she conducts weekly classes for Apple Athletic Club members with Parkinson's. As Sandi said when commenting to a local newspaper reporter, "It's kind of like dance, in that we focus on routines, and they must focus on footwork. The class is kind of like a dance."

According to Rock Steady Boxing's



(L to R) - Scott Kent, Kelly Cheney, Ray Severe, Sandi Gordon and Joe Anderson

website (www.rocksteadyboxing.org): "The Parkinson's Disease Foundation estimates there are more than 1 million people in the United States diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, and more than 60,000 people are diagnosed each year. Rock Steady Boxing is the first gym in the country dedicated to the fight against Parkinson's. In our gym, exercises are largely adapted from boxing drills. Boxers condition for optimal agility, speed, muscular endurance, accuracy, hand-eye coordination, footwork and overall strength to defend against and overcome common opponents. At Rock Steady Boxing, Parkinson's disease is the opponent. Exercises vary in purpose and form but share one common trait: They are rigorous and intended to extend the perceived capabilities of the participant."

The website continues: "**The Rock Steady Boxing Solution** - Various studies in the 1980s and 1990s supported the notion that rigorous exercise,

emphasizing gross motor movement, balance, core strength and rhythm, could favorably impact range of motion, flexibility, posture, gait and activities of daily living. More recent studies, most notably at Cleveland Clinic, focus on the concept of intense 'forced' exercise and have begun to suggest that certain kinds of exercise may be neuro-protective, i.e., actually slowing disease progression. Our clients attest, and academic institutions, such as University of Indianapolis and Butler University, are reporting and documenting the improved quality of life among our boxers. Discovery of a cure may be many years away, but in the last seven years, there is evidence that progress is being made in all stages of the disease by those participating in the Rock Steady Boxing program."

For first-hand information from Sandi Gordon at Apple Athletic Club, she can be reached at (208) 529-8600.

...Norm's Notes

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Club, as he was honored with the **2018 Augie's Quest Leadership Award**. Kevin is shown in the **Photo on This Page** at the **2018 Augie's Bash, March 24th, in San Diego** receiving his award! Not only was Kevin honored, but recently, **PAT LAUS's** amazing **Atlantic Clubs in Manasquan and Red Bank, New Jersey** earned the **prestigious Medical Fitness Association certification, becoming known as the safest place to exercise in New Jersey!** To earn this certification, the Atlantic Club underwent a *year of compliance testing and evaluation* and a rigorous two-day, *209-point inspection*. Under scrutiny were the club's programming, facility cleanliness and accessibility, emergency response protocols, child care safety standards, staffing credentials and more. See the **Press Release on Page #28. Congratulations to Pat Laus and Kevin McHugh!**

■The **2018 IHRSA Slide Show** is now available to you by going to: www.clubinsideronline.com/ihrsa2018.

■Next month, I want to write a special **2018 IHRSA Convention and Trade Show** article, in which the content will be what I hear from you about your thoughts, observations and ideas about the IHRSA Convention and Trade Show. If you attended, or even if you didn't attend, I want to hear what you think. So, please pick up the phone and call me at (770) 635 - 7578. I want to hear from you no matter whether you're a *club owner/operator*, or if you're a *vendor/Associate IHRSA Member*. IF you don't want to call, then send an email to me at Norm@clubinsideronline.com. Tell me about your observations at the convention site in San Diego, or from afar. Tell us what you saw and what you think about it. In general, tell us anything

you think would belong in these Notes, and I will cover it in my article that will appear in our May Edition. Help me out here with your feedback! **Inquiring minds want to KNOW what you think!**

■**Congratulations to Dr. KENNETH COOPER, as he and his Team in Dallas, Texas are celebrating the 50th Anniversary of their organization!** Dr. Cooper is a walking, talking **Legend in his own time**, and we're very honored this month to feature and present an absolutely incredible in-depth **Cover Story** about **Dr. Cooper, written by my son and partner, JUSTIN CATES**. Dr. Cooper is **87 now**, and he's going as strong as ever! **CONGRATULATIONS to you Dr. Cooper, and to your Team on your 50th Anniversary!** The story begins on **Page #3**.

■**Welcome to LOCK AMERICA as they join our Club Insider Advertiser Team!** **ROBERT CHEN** and **DAN WALSH** will be your contacts when you respond to their **New Ad on Page #22**. Lock America provides customized locks for your members that will make it easier for them to find their locker, and if they ever leave their lock by accident, it will be easier for you to return it to them. Lock America is a California-based, 35-year running company that provides all kinds of solutions when it comes to locking anything securely. Check out their **Ad** and brief **Press Release** on **Page #22**.

■This month, I'm very happy to feature a long-time friend, **SANDI GORDON**, in an article on **Page #3**. Here's a terrific story in which Sandi has become certified and involved in **coaching boxing** via the **Rock Steady Boxing Program**, which is helping many people across the land who're fighting **Parkinson's Disease** find relief from the awful symptoms of the disease. **Yes, you read that correctly**. Here, we have a **beautiful woman, Sandi**

Gordon, the wife of my long-time great friend, RAY GORDON, and a Personal Trainer at STEVE VUCOVICH's Apple Athletic Club in Idaho Falls, Idaho, helping people reduce their suffering from Parkinson's by boxing! Please check out Sandi's terrific story starting on **Page #3**, and if you want to reach her for more information on **Rock Steady Boxing**, call (208) 529 - 8600.

■It's *really terrific* to see my friend, **GALE LANDERS, Founder and Owner of 10 Fitness Formula Clubs in Chicago**, on the **Cover of CBI Magazine's April**

Edition! Gale is one of the *true stalwarts in our industry*, and it was my pleasure to do a **special 25th Anniversary Cover Story** on Gale and his **Fitness Formula Clubs** back in **October, 2009**.

■I heard a saying a long time ago and this is it: **"Excess profits breeds ruinous competition."** The author of that comment was referring to the health, racquet and sports club industry at that time, and he was explaining that our industry was entering an overbuilding era in which too many health and fitness facility products (See *Norm's Notes* Page 8)



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Kevin McHugh Honored at the 2018 BASH for Augie's Quest

...Norm's Notes

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(facilities) were being built and coming online. Therefore, he was describing the situation as, "Ruinous competition." Well, the industry that we are in now clearly faces ruinous competition, not only with the studio segment of the industry multiplying like a bunch of Minks (no-one has ever seen before with new exercise studios popping up on every corner now), but with the association segment of the industry seeing two new competitors arriving in the U.S. with FIBO U.S. and the Association

of Fitness Studios (AFS) announcing their new conventions and trade shows coming soon. Now, we will have IHRSA, Club Industry, Athletic Business, FIBO U.S. and AFS' SUCCEED shows all going at it and competing for many of the same faces on both the conference attendance side and the vendor/exhibitor side. The more established shows are going to see their conference attendance diluted, their trade show attendance diluted, and before long, if not sooner than we think, "Excess profit breeds ruinous competition," and a year from now, I welcome you to tell me

then if I was off base with my thoughts and comments here.

■ **Congratulations to RICK BERKS, Founder and CEO of Youfit Health Clubs**, as they're celebrating a full decade of business! *The Deerfield Beach, Florida-based company* now has 113 locations and thousands of members.

■ **Justin and I want to say THANK YOU for reading Club Insider!**

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for two years or \$10 a month by going to www.clubinsideronline.com/subscribe.

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

(Norm Cates, Jr. is a 40+ year veteran of the health, racquet and sportsclub industry. Cates is the Founder and Publisher of Club Insider, now in its 25th year of publication. Cates was IHRSA's First President, and a Co-Founder with Rick Caro and five others, in 1981. In 2001, IHRSA honored Cates with its DALE DIBBLE Distinguished Service Award, one of its highest honors. In 2017, Cates was honored with Club Industry's Lifetime Achievement Award. Cates can be reached by phone at 770-635-7578 or email at Norm@clubinsideronline.com)



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...Dr. Kenneth Cooper

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left their words as words and not have pursued bringing them to life. That was not Dr. Cooper, and in 1970, he founded *The Cooper Institute* to further research and perfect the concepts we know today. He also founded the *Cooper Clinic* to be a proving ground for the research done at the institute. Completing the trifecta at that time was the *Cooper Fitness Center*. Fast forward to today, and the Cooper Aerobics campus now includes a spa, hotel, corporate wellness offerings and a vitamin line. And, there is even more in the works for the future!

This month, it is my true honor to present an in-depth interview with **Dr. Kenneth Cooper**, *Founder and Chairman of Cooper Aerobics*. Additionally, you will hear from **Brad Wilkins**, *SVP of the Cooper Fitness Center, Spa and Wellness Strategies*. I invite you to read on.

An Interview With Dr. Kenneth Cooper, Founder and Chairman, Cooper Aerobics

Club Insider (C.I.) - Dr. Cooper, where were you born and where did you grow up? Did you play any sports?

Dr. Cooper - I was born in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, on March 4, 1931. I'm now 87 years of age. I spent the first 26 years of my life in Oklahoma, including my three years of pre-med at OU Medical School in Norman, Oklahoma and four years of medical school in Oklahoma City. After the 26 years I spent in Oklahoma, I have not really spent much time there since I left. I did participate in athletics. I played football my sophomore year of high school. I also made the high school basketball team in 9th grade and made all-state in basketball. I concentrated more on track than I did basketball and won the state championship in the mile run back in 1949. I ran a 4:31.4, and that was using the old technology

we had and no track shoes like we have today. I missed the state record by only one second, and that was in the top school level. We had A, B and C schools back in those days, and this was an A school. I did go to a rural school, Putnam City Schools, and we had 1st through 12th grades. I graduated second in my class, Salutatorian, in a class of about 150 people.

C.I. - When and where did you attend higher education and what did you study?

Dr. Cooper - I received my B.S. from The University of Oklahoma in three years. I received my MD degree in 1956. Then, I got a Master in Public Health from Harvard's School of Public Health in 1962. I took a second year at Harvard and worked on a Doctorate in Exercise Physiology. Though I never completed the Doctor of Science, because it's impossible to do in one year, and the Air Force didn't give me more than the two years I had at Harvard, those were the two years I ended up running the Boston Marathon. I ran the Boston Marathon in 1961, and I'm happy to say I placed 101st with a time of 3 hours and 54 minutes. But, the reason I placed 101st is because only 150 people ran it. In 1963, I ran 3 hours and 24 minutes, bringing my time down by 30 minutes and coming in 98th. We had 450 runners that year because it was the year before the 1964 Olympics. I ran with some world-class runners, such as Abebe Bikila from Ethiopia. Of course, he beat me by an hour, but I had a chance to run with some very interesting people. I finished medical school and interned in Seattle, Washington. Then, I went into the military after that and spent 13 years there.

The Air Force Aerobic Studies

C.I. - Please take us through the early stages of your career in the Air Force and your focus on Aerobics as a new field.

Dr. Cooper - First of all, let me give you some history. As I mentioned, I was an

athlete in high school, and I left college weighing 168 pounds. Then, going through medical school, an internship and getting married over a period of eight years, there was a lot of stress. Because obesity is the most common manifestation of stress, I gained weight. I did not have time to exercise, and I gained 40 pounds. At age 29, after not water skiing for a period of eight years, I tried to do it again. While doing so, I experienced an arrhythmia; I thought I was having a heart attack. I was out on the skis, my heart started racing and pounding in my chest, and I was nauseous and light-headed. They got me over to the emergency room, but by the time I got there, my heart rate had gone back to normal. An extensive workup found that nothing was wrong; I was just out of shape. That motivated me to lose that weight, which I did in a little more than six months, and I ran my first marathon about a year later.

I kept running regularly until December 29, 2004, when, after 52 years of snow skiing, I fell and sustained a tibial plateau fracture of my right knee. I had two surgeries, which eliminated my running and snow skiing. I was advised not to do those activities, but I did transition to walking. So, I didn't stop exercising; I just stopped jogging. Including marathons and ultra-marathons, I had run 38,000 miles, so I really miss running. But, I was advised that, if I had kept running, I probably would have had to have an immediate total knee replacement surgery or something worse. So, I followed the recommendations and kept up with my walking for the last 14 years.

A very important point that I've relied upon is if you are 80 years of age and can walk a mile in 17 minutes, there is an 84% chance you will live another 10 years. The best predictor of longevity at age 80 is how fast you can walk. I walk at a 15.5 - 16 minute per mile pace and can occasionally bring it down under 15, so I can still easily meet that requirement. I'm not banking on that, but I am still in good health at 87 years of age, and I am still working 40-60 hours a week. Again, that's what happened as far as my being involved in preventive medicine.

What also happened was when I was overweight and out of shape, I was borderline hypertensive, borderline diabetic, I didn't feel well, I was lethargic, and I told my wife I felt I was dying of mental apathy. Once I lost that weight and got back into shape, those things all disappeared. If I hadn't done that and changed my lifestyle, I'm afraid I would have gone the way of my colleagues with whom I graduated medical school in 1956. Of 106 of us, there are only 20 remaining. Many of my colleagues did the same thing I did, as well as many other

Americans have done, unfortunately, and shortened their lifespan. So, I changed my approach to medicine.

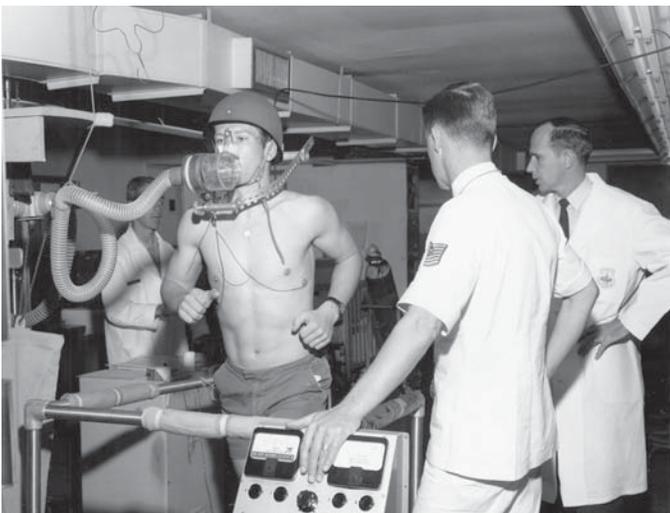
I was deferred from the draft when I was in medical school, but I had to pay back the military after I finished my internship. They sent me to Fort Sill, Oklahoma. One thing I enjoyed there was that I met my wife, **Millie**, and *we will be celebrating our 59th year of marriage this August*. That was one beneficial thing. The second was that I learned how to fly helicopters while I was there. I became enamored with flying in general, so I decided to transfer from the Army to the Air Force in 1960 and enter the Aerospace Medicine Program.

My desire was to become a science astronaut with NASA. As part of the requirement, I had to get a Master in Public Health, and I did that at Harvard School of Public Health. I also completed all the requirements for the Doctorate of Exercise Physiology, including passing two foreign language requirements. All I lacked was a thesis. When my book, *Aerobics*, came out in 1968, they offered me the option of using that as my thesis to get my second doctorate, which I really didn't need, so I didn't pursue it. Today, I have ten honorary doctorates, as well as a Master of Public Health. In retrospect, though, if I had been in some sort of university environment, I probably would have gone ahead and tried to complete the Doctorate of Science.

I learned what I needed, and that made me the Air Force's 'expert' in correlating exercise with medicine. So, the first requirement I had when I finished my training was to work with the Astronaut Program. We had two responsibilities there:

A. Develop an in-flight anti-deconditioning device. When astronauts go into space, it's like going to bed since you're totally inactive because of the weightlessness of space. In a very short period of time, muscles start deteriorating, the cardiovascular system decreases and you become a medical risk. So, we had to develop an in-flight anti-deconditioning device, using both a treadmill with a bungee cord, and more commonly, a bicycle ergometer. That is what has been used in space since the 1960s.

B. Develop a training and conditioning program for astronauts to use prior to going into space. If they are highly-conditioned prior to going into space, the deconditioning that occurs in space won't have as dramatic an effect as it would if they were poorly conditioned. That resulted in what later became the Aerobics program. We had 27,000 men and women at five Air Force bases involved in a two-year study (See **Dr. Kenneth Cooper** Page 12)



1964 - KHC and Military Treadmill Test



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...Dr. Kenneth Cooper

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from 1964 - 1966. The study answered three basic questions about training for astronauts, and later, training for the Air Force population in general:

1. What type of exercise is most important?
2. How can we compare exercises?
3. How much is enough?

First, we looked at the types of exercise. The important ones were aerobic, anaerobic, isometric and isotonic. All had value, but only one had the potential for prolonging life and delaying decreases in cardiovascular capabilities, and that was aerobic type activity: walking, running, cycling, swimming, etc. The first question was answered.

The second question then was how do you compare these various types of exercise? There are 41 on the list now that meet the qualification of being an aerobic-type activity. The top five are: cross-country skiing, swimming, running/jogging, cycling and walking. Further down the list, you will find competitive sports, but those are the top ones. As many saw during the Winter Olympics, cross-country skiers are highly-conditioned, primarily because of the environment in which they work. Swimming is good because multiple muscles are involved, and there are fewer musculo-skeletal problems. The advantage of jogging or running is you get a great benefit in a very short period of time. Cycling is very good, particularly if you have musculo-skeletal problems. Walking is also good, but it takes longer to get the benefits. So, we classified the various types of activities and awarded them points based on the intensity and duration of the activity. So, if you walk a mile in 18 minutes, that's worth one point. If you a run a mile in eight minutes, that's worth five points. If you run three miles in 24 minutes, that's worth 17

points. So, we developed the point system, and it has stood the test of time except now it has transitioned over the years from using steps to measure response to exercise to using accelerometers. What I did with the points system was try to integrate both intensity and duration, so that's exactly what is being done 50 years later with accelerometers.

Then, the final question we had to answer back in those days was how many points per week were necessary. The original recommendation was 30 points per week because, by encouraging these Air Force men and women to earn 30-35 points a week, the vast majority could easily reach the standard we had for aerobic capacity (VO2 Max), which was 42 milliliters per kilogram of total body weight per minute (ml/kg/min) for people under 30 years of age. That was based upon the Scandinavian studies. They had been doing a lot of studies on aerobic conditioning for their military, so we took that data, transferred it to the Aerobics program at our five Air Force bases, and that research resulted in the publication of *Aerobics* in 1968.

The World Famous Book, *Aerobics*

C.I. - As you mentioned, in 1968, you published the now world-famous book, *Aerobics*. For a moment, can you take us back to that time 50 years ago. First, let me ask: How infant, or in this case, alien, was the concept of Aerobics?

Dr. Cooper - It was April, 1968 when that book was published, so we are now celebrating the 50th anniversary of *Aerobics*. It has stood the test of time. Not just the points system, but particularly, the most popular throughout the world is the Cooper Test. As part of our Air Force work, we had to develop a field test of fitness that correlated with the laboratory test (treadmill stress testing, which was the ideal way to determine aerobic capacity).

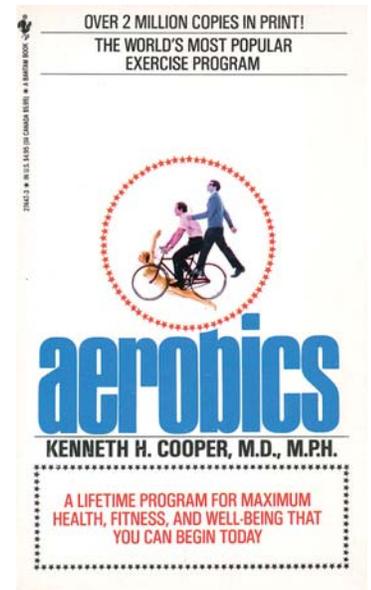
When the book came out in 1968,

I was immediately criticized by medical colleagues who said, 'You're going to have people jogging out there, and they shouldn't be. The streets are going to be full of dead joggers.' To the contrary, from 1968-1990, we had a 48% reduction in cardiovascular heart disease. It wasn't strictly because of exercise because those Baby Boomers, 76 million born between 1946 - 1964, led a health revolution we had never seen before and never seen since. They quit smoking in great numbers, they got better control of their blood pressure, they changed their diets, their cholesterol dropped, they learned the harmful effects of stress, and they exercised. Since 1990, there has only been a further 16-18% decrease. We are down about 64%, so instead of deaths from coronary heart disease increasing, it has steadily decreased since 1968.

Before 1968, heart disease was increasing and had not decreased at all. With the onset of aerobic activity, it did decrease. The number of joggers jumped from 100,000 in 1968 to 34 million by 1984, and now, it is still holding around 25 million joggers in America. It's not just in America, though; it's worldwide. The number of marathons and ultra-marathons is unbelievable, and they have spun off from the original *Aerobics* book. We have been credited with starting more people into a jogging program than any other work in history, some work has been recognized all over the world, and I have spoken in more than 50 countries.

The Cooper Test (the 12-minute running test) has stood the test of time. What we had to do in the Air Force when testing 2,000 - 3,000 men and women at one time was to have a field test that quite accurately correlated with the laboratory test. In our laboratory research at Wilford Hall Hospital in San Antonio, Texas, we studied various tests. We looked at a 20-minute test, a 15-minute test, a 9-minute run and a 1-mile run and found the test that gave us the most accurate results was the 12-minute test. It's correlation with laboratory tests was 0.897, almost perfect. This was the correlation of what you could do in the laboratory on the treadmill, but that wasn't really possible with large groups of people. So, to determine how many miles or percentages of a mile covered in 12 minutes, we substituted the time for a 1.5-mile run where the goal was to run a mile and a half in 12 minutes. Those two tests have been used interchangeably, even to this date, in the Air Force particularly, and even in other military branches.

In Brazil, where I worked with the World Cup soccer team in 1969, we used the 12-minute test to monitor the team's progress, and they did extremely well the year I trained them before they



played in Mexico City in 1970 won the world championship. Now, the reason they won wasn't because I trained them for a year but because they had Pelé playing for them; however, that created such an interest in Brazil. The Portuguese saw it and started calling it, 'doing the Cooper.' It's been that way since 1970. 'Have you done your Cooper (run) today?' And, the Cooper Test has not only been used as a test in Brazil, but it's used as a training program. So, now, people take the 12-minute test, but they also try to run a mile and a half in 12 minutes four times a week, and that's 30 points. So, you can use the 12-minute test as a test or as a training program, and that's been done in Brazil since 1970.

I've lost count, but I've been to Brazil something like 20 times since 1970. I love to visit Brazil. Now, nearly all of South America has become involved in the 12-minute test and even FIFA, in 1994, used it to test their referees and linesmen. Prior to 1994, they were concerned the referees and linesmen couldn't keep up with the players, so they directed that the referees must be able to run 2,800 meters and the linesmen 2,400 meters in 12 minutes. That became a standard for FIFA and all the 119 countries under the FIFA umbrella, even to this day.

C.I. - Why did the book make such a splash?
Dr. Cooper - It was the first scientifically-based exercise program. For example, Tom Brady's training is a one-man program. You can't adapt that to the masses. I wanted an exercise program that was scientifically-based. We did our research, found out the benefits of various types of activity and followed through with that. At Cooper (See **Dr. Kenneth Cooper** Page 14)



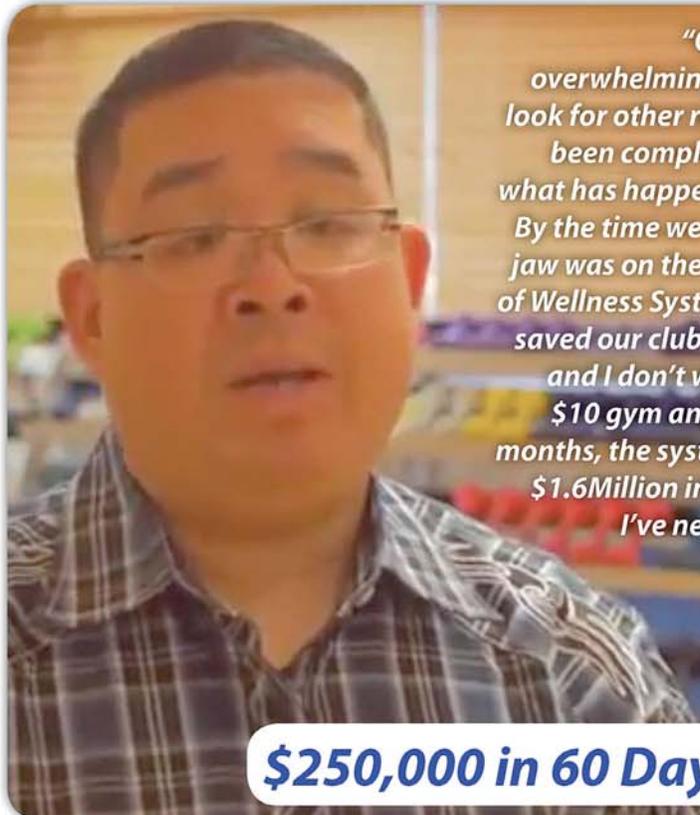
1970s - Cooper Fitness Center Aerobics Class on Gym Floor



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...Dr. Kenneth Cooper

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Clinic, we have 145,000 in our database, and some of them have been followed for as long as 48 years. We're now able to show that, if people follow our concept to 'Get Cooperized™,' we find that they tend to live up to ten years longer than the national average. Here I am at 87, and the average male life expectancy is slightly more than 77. So, I'm already ten years past the national average and am still working 40 - 60 hours a week. So, the fact that the Aerobics program was scientifically-based upon extensive research is the reason it was the first one accepted, and it has stood the test of time. I believe that explains why it made such a splash.

C.I. - Can you give us some insights into your inspiration at the time?

Dr. Cooper - When I was in my second year at the Harvard School of Public Health and ran the Boston Marathon, I saw the benefits. I talked to my colleagues and said: 'You know, exercise can be good. Exercise can be bad and dangerous for some people. We need to quantify exercise like we quantified antibiotics.' We know antibiotics can be very good at fighting infection, but if you have too much, you can have an adverse response and it can kill you. It's the same with exercise. If you exercise too much and have underlying heart disease, you may die of a heart attack. The most common first symptom of heart disease is sudden death. But, I realized that, if the people followed my guidelines, they can exercise safely until their advanced years. We have 800 - 1,000 people who exercise daily here at the Cooper Fitness Center. We are now in our 48th year, our runners have covered close to 20 million miles on these tracks, and we have only had one death that we can attribute to the running. That's remarkable because, at first, it was said, 'you can expect one heart attack for

every 1,000 miles of running and one death for every 10,000 miles of running.' That was the statistic I was fighting when the book came out in 1968. To the contrary, running has proven to be very safe and effective if you follow our recommendations. We strongly recommend that people who join our club take a stress test for men over 40 or women over 50, and preferably, repeat it every four years.

C.I. - How many copies have been sold after all these years

Dr. Cooper - With 41 foreign translations, it's almost impossible to determine the actual number of sales. I have been told by the publishers that, over the last 50 years, it's probably close to 30 million copies. I know the first *Aerobics* book sold 6 million copies and was on the *New York Times Best Seller* list for more than a year. I have also written 18 books since then.

The Cooper Aerobics Campus

C.I. - Please tell us your vision for and what has become the Cooper Aerobics campus.

Dr. Cooper - It has been a dream come true to see what we have established here since the early days. I envisioned having a center that had a combination of a fitness center, a clinic and a research institute. Now, we have that, in addition to a hotel, spa, Cooper Complete supplement line, woodfire grill and Cooper Wellness Strategies on our 30 acres here in Dallas. It's been classified as one of the outstanding fitness centers in the world. We have gone from one office, two employees and considerable debt to now having a staff of more than 500 people and financially stable because we get results for our patients. If you provide a service and get the results your customer wants, it will make you successful in any business. Approximately 54% of our patients are corporate sponsors, and 74% are return patients giving us a database of more than 1.8 million human years of follow-up. About

1/3 of our patients are from Dallas/Fort Worth, 1/3 are regional and 1/3 are global. From that database, we have published more than 700 papers at The Cooper Institute proving *Exercise is Medicine*. So, my dream did come true, and I believe the reasons we have been successful are:

- Divine intervention - Many, many times over the last 48 years when I needed to make a decision, I was going to go one way, but I ended up going the other way. I'm convinced the Lord was guiding me all along the way.

- We have a fantastic staff. Any CEO will be only as successful as his staff makes him.

- We've proven that it's cheaper and more effective to maintain good health than it is to regain it once it's lost.

- If people have a need, you provide a service and they get the results they want, they will make your successful. We get results with our patients. About 76% of diseases we have in America today are the result of our lifestyle. It's well-documented: it's not our heredity; it's our lifestyle. So, we concentrate on lifestyle change, and we are probably as successful as any group in the world at getting the results we want: losing weight, quitting smoking, improving fitness and controlling alcohol; all the things we recommend to 'Get Cooperized™.' The way we do this is a four-step approach:

1. We have one of the most thorough examinations in America. A few years ago, we were ranked number two. Number one was the *Cleveland Clinic*, then us, followed by *Duke*, *John Hopkins* and the *Mayo Clinic*, so we are close to the top as far as examinations. Everything they do in a hospital, we do here at Cooper Clinic.

2. We believe it should be an education-based experience. That's why our physicians see no more than three patients a day. That's unheard of, but they spend up to two hours or as much time is needed with each patient because we want to evaluate and motivate those patients when they come to the clinic.

3. Give them recommendations that are safe and realistic on how to change their lifestyle: losing weight, improving fitness, cutting alcohol down and quitting smoking, all these various things. But, we are realistic. We won't hit with all that at once. If they have major problems, we will take it one at a time with the recommendations.

4. Get them back for follow-up visits.

Those are the keys to our success. More than 65% of our patients reach the goals we establish for them: weight goals, exercise goals, alcohol goals, whatever they need. That's why I think we have pioneered a field of preventive medicine that has been sadly ignored in the past, and it's made us successful. Also, we don't accept insurance and Medicare. People gladly pay for this, and we are happy to be able to do these examinations and not be encumbered by all the restrictions of Medicare, government and insurance. It's a wonderful way to practice medicine, and we now have 24 physicians working in various sub-specialties. So, it's been a very successful clinic operation.

Recently, I had a patient come in for an examination, sent by a physician from the medical school in Galveston, Texas. He's 72 years of age, exercising regularly and thought he was in great health. We put him on the treadmill and stopped him in the first few minutes because he had a very abnormal response to the stress test, even though his resting EKG was completely normal. He went back to Galveston and had an angiogram, and it showed severe cardiovascular disease. It couldn't be taken care of with an angioplasty and stent, so a multi-vessel bypass procedure was performed. The man thought he was healthy, having never had a chest pain in his life. The most common first symptom of severe heart disease is sudden death. If he had kept exercising, it's very likely he would have had a major heart attack within the next six months. That's not uncommon.

We do about 150 examinations per week on patients, and they all get a stress test. We've never had a death from stress testing -- I'm happy to say that -- after 237,000 stress tests. We lead the world as far as the number of stress tests and the safety of stress testing. Our objective here at the Cooper Clinic is two-fold:

1. Prevention of disease is our major goal, and that's why I specialize in preventive medicine.
2. If we can't prevent a disease, we try to diagnose it early. That is done on a daily basis.

For 25 years, we followed 28,000 healthy patients who were seen at the Cooper Clinic at an average age of 50. Their level of fitness was determined by treadmill stress testing. We then obtained their Medicare cost between 65-75 years of age. Those in the top 20% level of fitness had Medicare costs 40% less than those in the bottom 20% category of fitness at age 50. So, we can prove what we have been saying: "It's cheaper and more effective to

(See *Dr. Kenneth Cooper Page 16*)



The Cooper Clinic



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...Dr. Kenneth Cooper

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maintain good health than it is to regain it once it's lost." Aerobic fitness may be the only thing on the horizon that has the potential to reduce the cost of health care in the future.

Getting Cooperized and the Future of Cooper Aerobics

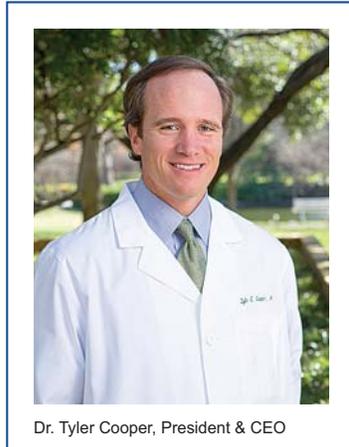
C.I. - I would be remiss if I didn't ask you about the tagline: *Get Cooperized™*. Please tell us about this.

Dr. Cooper - Much goes into getting *Cooperized*. Although it's different for each of us, here are eight healthy steps:

1. Maintain a healthy weight.
2. Make healthy food choices most of the time.
3. Exercise most days of the week.
4. Take the right supplements for you.
5. Do not use tobacco in any form.
6. Control alcohol.
7. Manage your stress.
8. Get a regular, comprehensive physical exam.

C.I. - Please tell us about your son, **Dr. Tyler Cooper**, and his role in the company.

Dr. Cooper - He is now the President and CEO of Cooper Aerobics, while I serve as the Founder and Chairman. He is working on some worldwide initiatives for Cooper Aerobics. He has an app he has developed that will enable a person to go out and take the 12-minute test on their own using GPS. You press a button to start, walk or run for 12 minutes, press another button, and it tells you how far you have gone in 12 minutes, immediately classifying you into one of the six fitness categories, age and sex adjusted. It's the same thing we do during our treadmill stress tests here at Cooper Clinic. He has done some preliminary studies on this test with some corporations. There was a study done with a company here in Texas. He took 169 people and had them determine their level of fitness using



Dr. Tyler Cooper, President & CEO

his app. They discovered comparing the top 30th percentile and the bottom 30th percentile, for the previous three years, the cost of health care was 40% less. He's gone to Dubai, and the United Arab Emirates might be one of the first countries to start using this to evaluate fitness and determine premiums paid for health and life insurance. Just think about that. If a test of this size can be readily available, you can measure your fitness and the health and life insurance companies can adjust rates based upon the test, I think that's going to be a major breakthrough in this field. It's not available yet. He's been working on this for about two and a half years. There has been extensive research, but it's almost to the point of being introduced.

I am very, very proud of my son. Having a son follow in your footsteps is something that is just unbelievable, and I can assure you that the aerobics program of the future is in good hands because Tyler is there to keep the legacy alive.

C.I. - Dr. Cooper, I once again thank you for the honor of this interview as well as the lifetime of service with which you have honored us all.

Dr. Cooper - Thank you very much, and I look forward to the article and reaching generations to come with the message of *Aerobics* and the importance of exercise as medicine.

An Interview With Brad Wilkins, SVP of Operations of Cooper Fitness Center, Spa and Wellness Strategies

Brad Wilkins has been with Cooper Aerobics throughout his career since graduating from *Hardin-Simmons University* with a *BBS in Exercise Science*. Over the years, his roles at the Cooper Fitness Center have included *Personal Trainer, Assistant Fitness Director, Assistant General Manager, and Vice President and General Manager of the business unit*. Along the way, he earned his *MBA from Southern Methodist University's Cox School of Business*. Today, he is the *SVP of Operation of Cooper Fitness Center, Spa and Wellness Strategies*. He is also a current *IHRSA Board Member*.

Club Insider (C.I.) - As SVP of Operations of Cooper Fitness Center, Cooper Spa and Cooper Wellness Strategies, please outline the key components of your role in those entities.

Brad Wilkins (BW) - My main focus and responsibility is developing the strategic plans for Cooper Fitness Center, Cooper Spa and Cooper Wellness Strategies as they relate to our overall organizational goals. I make sure those plans are being executed while maintaining our financial responsibilities to the organization and the Cooper family.

C.I. - Please tell us about Cooper Fitness Center (size, amenities, services, key market differentiators, etc.).

BW - We are a high-end, premier wellness center in Dallas. Our fitness center is part of the 30-acre Cooper Aerobics Center, and the size is about 50,000 square feet in total, including the space that is allocated to the spa. The core program we offer is a comprehensive wellness program for our members called *Cooper Quest*, a personalized wellness program based off of Dr. Cooper's *Eight Steps to Get Cooperized*. The Cooper Quest program measures your results in five key health areas: *cardiovascular fitness, blood work, body composition, functional fitness and stress management*. We help you identify the area where you need the most attention to create an individualized plan incorporating fitness, nutrition and stress management resources for you to make healthy changes. We apply this unique ideology into the products and services we offer our members.



Brad Wilkins, SVP of Operations, Fitness Center, Spa and Wellness Strategies

Our center includes four outdoor tennis courts and an outdoor track with loops ranging from a quarter mile to one mile. We offer more than 110 classes per week to our membership, as well as personal training services. To give you a perspective on personal training, our department is probably one of the best in the country. We average 30,000 personal training sessions a year, so it generates great income for us. We also offer Pilates and yoga, and we have sports pros for boxing, basketball, tennis, swimming and martial arts.

C.I. - You completed a major renovation a few years ago. Please tell us about that.

BW - The original fitness center opened in 1972. On New Year's Eve in 1981, the facility caught fire because of items left in a dryer in the laundry and burned down. The fitness center is connected to the original Nichols mansion that was built in 1931, which is now the administrative building for our fitness center staff, and the entire fitness center burned to the ground except for this original mansion. Dr. Cooper rebuilt in 1982, so we had a 1982 structure and were trying to operate in modern times. It was just very difficult because, with the 1980s look and feel, there was not a lot of open space. We needed to modernize to expand our services and provide a modern-day experience for our consumer base.

The recession hit us as hard as it hit other clubs, but we knew we needed to really take the bull by the horns and establish ourselves as the leaders in the Dallas marketplace. That took us down the path of embarking upon the renovation, and we have since had great success. Through the recession, we lost nearly 700 members because the economy was poor and our value proposition wasn't where it probably needed to be. The renovation has allowed us to re-establish things, and now, (See **Dr. Kenneth Cooper** Page 18)



Dr. Kenneth Cooper and son, Dr. Tyler Cooper at Cooper Aerobics Health & Wellness Center



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- ✓ Utilizes club's existing staff and club retains full control over all financial transactions.
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"We are a small women's only club and we heard about this program before we opened. We wanted a structured program that focused on 1 to 1 training and this program delivered as promised. With a membership of 520 we sold nearly \$425,000 of training in our very first year. The program is affordable, the support incredible and the revenue has exceeded our expectations!"

Max & Kelly Gellert - Owners, Blush Fitness, KS



"Because we are a large multi-purpose club we needed a training program that required buy-in from all departments. We implemented PFP last year and it is all coming together as we generated over \$175,000 in PT sales in just the past 60 days! The performance reporting takes the guess work out of everything and holds everyone accountable. The in-club training and support has also been invaluable!"

Stephanie Bearse - Fitness Director, Latitude Sports Club Salisbury, MA



"The entire team trusts and follows the process because it works. We have been utilizing this program for 17 years and last year surpassed 2.4 million in 1 to 1 sales. It was our best year ever and I highly recommend this program to any membership based club. The program is easy to follow, the margins are great and the entire team makes more money!"

Jen Poljacik - CEO, River Valley Club, NH



"We are a brand new 34,000 sq ft wellness facility with a focus on healthy lifestyles. We wanted to differentiate ourselves by offering a results based program and we opened last month with 500 pre-opening members. We started performing assessments before we opened and generated \$61,500 in PT in our first 30 days. The onsite training helped in many ways and we are thrilled we went with the Pro Fitness Program!"

Elissa Knolla - Fitness Director, Opti-Life, KS

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...Dr. Kenneth Cooper

continued from page 16

we are at the point where we have not only recaptured the membership that we lost but we have exceeded it to the point where we are pretty much operating at capacity. Obviously, that puts us in an ideal position as a club. We are still concerned about attrition, sales and those kinds of things, but in terms of the facility, it puts us in a nice position.

In order to get it to where it needed to be, we actually bulldozed almost half of the building and rebuilt from the ground up. Some of it had to do with being able to offer modern-day experiences to the consumer. It also had to do with becoming ADA compliant, having sprinkler systems and other things we didn't have to worry about in the 1980s but have to address today. So, it made more sense to knock down a lot of the building, rebuild it and give us something that could be sustainable for the next 30 years or more. We stayed open during the entire process, starting in June 2012, and ultimately culminating in early 2014. This is a testament to our staff's incredible customer service, and our members were extremely supportive going through the long process of rebuilding.

The Membership

C.I. - Let's talk about your membership. First, is there an initiation fee? If so, how much is it? And, what are your membership categories and dues rates, respectively?

BW - For an individual, the initiation fee is **\$675**. The monthly dues for that individual are **\$180 a month**. We have a couple's membership, and the initiation fee is **\$1,000** with dues of **\$290 a month**. We do also offer corporate memberships where we provide some discounting.

We used to have a variety of membership categories, probably 25 different types over the years. It just

depended on who was managing at the time and what they were trying to implement in the marketplace. Now, we've gotten away from that and just try to sell the value proposition. We keep it simple. This is what we offer, this is the price we offer, and we try to stay away from saying: 'Hey if you're part of this group, here's this discount. If you're part of that group, here's that discount.'

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

BW - We have 3,760 members.

C.I. - My guess would be that you experience high retention rates. If so, what are they? And, what explains that level?

BW - Our attrition is at 13.5%, so it is at the better end of the scale when you look at attrition rates in the industry. One reason we experience that is due to Dr. Cooper's mission of wanting to improve the quality and quantity of life and how we use that mission to build relationships with our consumers. Dr. Cooper says, 'People don't care about how much you know until they know how much you care.' We try to bring that into the mix of how we run and operate the facility, applying the Cooper Quest programing and all the other things we do to make this such a special place for them to visit. It's almost like a country club experience for the membership base. We really do things to help foster relationships between the members, which we know is the strongest bond that will keep people here. We also focus on the member-to-staff relationships in ways to make it more about community and to create that experience as much as we can within this type of facility.

C.I. - What offerings are there for non-members, and how are these used to attract them to membership?

BW - We have a handful of programs available to non-members. Most of them fall within our fee-for-service offerings, such as personal training, small group training,

Pilates reformer classes and *Female Focus*, which is female-based group exercise that focuses on specialized issues women deal with. Those have been excellent feeders for us, as we offer them to individuals who might be unsure about where they are with their own fitness level. It is priced at a point higher than the member pricing, but it's a perfect way to get them introduced to who we are and what we are about. Once we get them familiar with the environment we have created, which is a nurturing, safe place to be and not what people anticipate as the typical gym experience, their own experience really sells the membership.

C.I. - Cooper Fitness Center is unique in that it has the incredible *Cooper Institute* and *Cooper Clinic* as neighbors on campus. Please tell us how these entities interlink and utilize each other to learn and improve all offerings.

BW - Cooper Aerobics Center includes *Cooper Clinic*, *The Cooper Institute*, *61-room Cooper Hotel*, *Cooper Complete vitamins and supplements*, *Cooper Wellness Strategies* and *Cooper Fitness Center*, which houses *Cooper Spa*, *Cedars Woodfire Grill* and *The Coop retail boutique*. Cooper Clinic with its approach to preventive medicine welcomes about 5,000 - 6,000 patients a year. Research The Cooper Institute does is just phenomenal. To have something like that in our backyard as neighbors allows us to synchronize to the latest developments of how preventive medicine is practiced, and the science and research that comes out allows us to have valuable conversations about how we apply our ideology to our consumers. Everything we do within the fitness center stems from these two components and the relationships we have with them. There are some limitations on how we can interact with The Cooper Institute being a non-profit organization. That limits what they can do and how they can participate with us, but to be able to consult with them on things that are meaningful to how we view health and wellness is just tremendous and makes an impact on our membership.

C.I. - How do you market the Cooper Aerobics Center, as well as Cooper Fitness Center, to the marketplace?

BW - There are definitely different strategies associated with the different business units. The fitness center is in a very unique place where we don't do a lot of external marketing because most of our new members come from member referrals, which is fantastic. The majority of our marketing with the fitness center is internal, and we communicate effectively and often with our members using a variety of tools, including monthly e-newsletters,

direct mail pieces, blog posts, social media and events. We do some external outreach on social media, and we try to bring awareness through some of our relationships. For example, when a Cooper Clinic patient arrives to campus, they are given access to the facility for the day, and they receive some marketing materials that will pique their interest in joining. So, we try to use the relationships around us to foster memberships with the fitness center.

C.I. - Please tell us about Cooper Wellness Strategies.

BW - Cooper Wellness Strategies was initially established to be the arm that takes everything we do here at Cooper out to the corporate world. It's evolved over time, but what we are currently focusing on fitness facility management where we run and operate corporate fitness facilities and work with residential and retirement communities. We take the things we do here and apply them to those kinds of group settings. We will conduct leadership training because, if the leadership in the company can learn about health and wellness in a meaningful way for them, then they are more likely to apply it to their company. It's an, 'if you want to lead a fitness business, you need to be fit,' mentality. We also offer basic wellness consulting as well, such as feasibility studies and business plan development.

C.I. - Given competition and the changing health care environment, where does Cooper Aerobics fit into the marketplace today? How about in the future?

BW - Our position hasn't really changed regarding how someone should go about staying healthy. What we are seeing now are things Dr. Cooper preached 50 years ago. It's coming full circle in that each individual is responsible for their own health. You have to have this mentality of Exercise is Medicine, and if you really want to have the preventive perspective, you need to take action. We believe we need to help people find out how fit they are. If I were to ask you how fit you are, you might tell me how many days a week you work out or how much you weigh, etc. What we are good at is telling you exactly how fit you are. All of our research and all the things we have done is customized to you, 'This is where you are, and this is what it means to your life. If you get to this level of fitness, you can reduce your risk of dying by this percentage, and on average, live this many more years.'

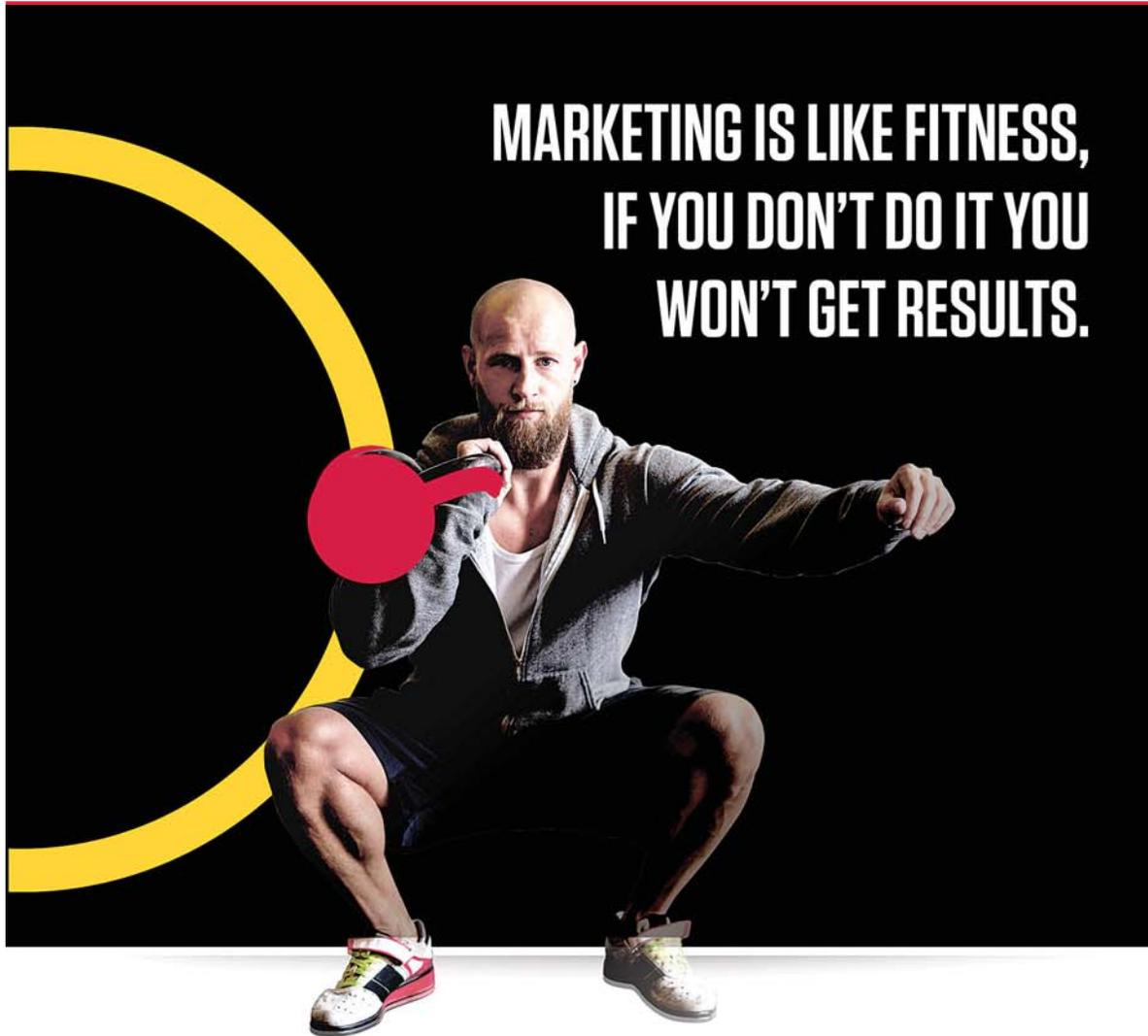
We want people to be proactive, and based on our conversations with everything from government sources to insurance companies and other people (See *Dr. Kenneth Cooper Page 19*)



The Cooper Fitness Center



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**MARKETING IS LIKE FITNESS,
IF YOU DON'T DO IT YOU
WON'T GET RESULTS.**

...Dr. Kenneth Cooper
continued from page 18

in the fitness industry, that is really the key. We are always talking about how to get people to move and be healthier, but it's important to explain to them why it is of *value to them*. That's what Cooper can really provide. We can give you the scientific data of why it is important to move and what it means to your overall health, improving the quality and quantity of your life.

In terms of the future, Cooper is not about owning a clinic, a fitness center, a hotel, etc. What we have done our entire careers is take conceptual ideas, convert it into data, and then, analyze that data in meaningful ways to try to make an impact. So, really, we are this machine meant to create intellectual property so people can then use it to make the best decisions to improve the quality and quantity of their lives. It's not about opening more clinics or fitness facilities; it's about delivering this content in meaningful ways. We are looking at technology to do just that and are in the process of creating a platform that will allow us to put Cooper information in the palm of people's hands so you know how fit you are, what things you can do to improve your fitness level and really be able to have a companion that you can rely on, in terms of technology, to help you on your journey to health and wellness.

• • •

I want to sincerely thank **Dr. Kenneth Cooper** and **Brad Wilkins** for their time interviewing for this story, *celebrating 50 years of Aerobics and the contributions Dr. Cooper has made to this industry and the world!* Thank you also to **Pam Czerlinsky** for her generous assistance coordinating time with Dr. Cooper and Brad, as well as providing photos and graphics to accompany the story.

(Justin Cates is the Assistant Publisher of Club Insider and grew up in the health and fitness club industry. Justin was born into a club business family in 1985, and from the age of eight, he spent his non-school and sports hours in a home that doubled as Club Insider Headquarters. He has lived and breathed this industry for 33 years, since his own day one. Cates graduated from the Terry College of Business at The University of Georgia in 2007 and then went on to two years at The Art Institute of Atlanta, where he studied Interactive Media Design. Now, he is an integral part of the "Story" of Norm Cates and Club Insider. Justin can be reached by phone at 423-314-4310 or email at Justin@clubinsideronline.com)

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A Formula for Successful Customer Service

By: **Melissa Knowles**

The fitness industry is ALL about service first. While your facilities may boast the latest in advanced technology or the best in equipment, it's your people and their interactions with your members that matter most. This article looks at 12 key ingredients that must be included

when creating your perfect formula for *successful* customer service:

1. Be friendly first. Service starts with a familiar person with a warm smile who offers welcoming words. Make sure the team members manning your front desk are service obsessed. Each member should be greeted (preferably by name) when they

enter your club. This level of interaction should trickle down to every employee. It takes little effort to smile and say, "Hello," and it makes a huge impact.

2. Attitude precedes service. Your team's positive mental attitude is the basis for the way they act and treat members. Your team should carry a member-first mentality into the club every day. "You become what you think."

3. Your team's first words set the tone. All encounters with members are theirs to control. Even a seemingly negative contact, like a service or billing complaint, can be turned positive by the way it's handled. First words can either disarm or aggravate. If your team learns to see each interaction as an opportunity to win a member for life, it shifts the approach dramatically.

4. Know how to service in terms of the member. They don't care what *your* situation is; they only care about *their* situation. Maybe, your billing system made a blunder, and they were billed twice. Or, the new janitor assigned by your cleaning service isn't up to snuff. That's not the member's concern. What can YOU do to ensure they're happy and your day-to-day business hiccups don't impact them?

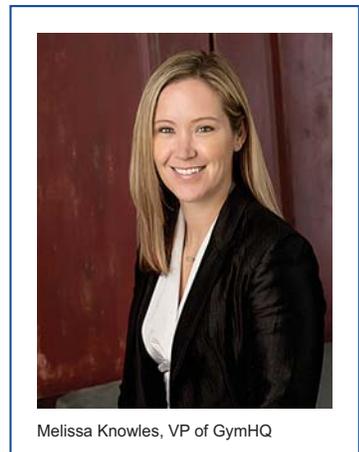
5. The member has lots of problems besides you, and they may just be using you as a frustration vent. Don't take it too personally if a member flies off the handle. Behind every seemingly minor complaint, there is real stress. Your team's job is to serve as a stress reducer. After all, that's why many people come to your club! Offer solutions, not excuses.

6. The member doesn't want to hear why you can't. Don't tell them when or why you *can't*; tell them when and *why you can*, enthusiastically! In every situation, there is something that can be done for the member. Make that your team's focus.

7. Recognize members for what they are, the lifeblood of your business and your team's paycheck! You don't pay your team's salaries, your members do.

8. Don't confuse company policy with customer service. Don't quote policy or hide behind it. Policy is there as a guide, not a prescription for member success. Listen first, and then determine where the request fits into your standard procedure. If you adhere to your contract rules 100% of the time, you miss tremendous opportunities to win with your members. You may win the battle, but you'll lose the war.

9. When a member walks away angry, it's



Melissa Knowles, VP of GymHQ

12-to-1 they'll leave forever or at least be leery. It takes 12 positive impressions to overcome a single negative one. In this day and age of social media, every interaction counts and has the possibility to impact far more than one member's opinion of your business.

10. YOU are responsible, or it won't get done. Individual responsibility leads to a happy member. No one likes to be passed off for help.

11. Take your job seriously, but don't take their complaints personally. If you take it seriously, it's you *with* them. If you take it personally, it's you *against* them.

12. Teams are made up of individuals who work together and get their own jobs done. Never underestimate the impact of a single team member. If each link is strong, your entire chain will be secure.



If you embed these 12 values into your club's culture, how can you lose? Would you be happy supporting a business with this outlook and attitude toward customers? Would you encourage friends and family to join you in your support? **At its core, excellent customer service starts with the golden rule. Treat your members the way you would want to be treated.**

Need help with member services? GYM HQ offers solutions designed specifically for fitness businesses. Contact us to learn more about how we can help with member requests and all of your back-office needs. You can email info@gymhq.club or call (404) 921 - 2269 today!

(Melissa Knowles is Vice President of GymHQ, a ClubReady Company, and she can be reached at mknowles@gymhq.com)



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Defamatory Social Media Reviews

By: **Paul R. Bedard, Esquire**

It takes time and effort for any business to establish and maintain a positive reputation. Whether a health club is creating raving fans or blatantly mistreating their customers, social media review sites allow users to quickly spread the word. Although much of what can be found on these sites tends to genuinely inform consumers and validate those health clubs that provide outstanding products and services, reviewers can easily post distorted or even blatantly false reviews resulting in damaging and unwarranted reputational harm. When an intentionally false and damaging social media review is posted, this may give rise to a defamation claim.

This article is intended for educational purposes only. It is not intended as legal advice. Widely varying laws specific to each jurisdiction prohibit one - size - fits - all recommendations. Please consider these comments as an educational guide to assist you when you consult your own attorney for specific direction.

A New Hampshire health club owner recently sued a former member for posting a negative Yelp review that the club owner contends is false and defamatory. According to the *New Hampshire Union Leader*, the owner of the Gateway Hills Health Club is seeking damages from Michael Abdiinor, a former member, for intentionally posting "false, defamatory and slanderous statements" on Yelp.

The *Union Leader* reports that Mr. Abdiinor purchased a membership at the Gateway Hills Health Club for a monthly fee of \$29.99 to be billed to his credit card each month. A few months into the membership, Mr. Abdiinor's membership fee went unpaid. Mr. Abdiinor alleges that he attempted to resolve the matter at that time only to be instructed by the health club that he owed \$560 for 14 months of membership dues. When Mr. Abdiinor disputed this \$560 total, the club allegedly requested payment of \$360 for four months of dues. After failing to reach an agreement with the health club, the former member was ultimately charged \$150, and his membership was then cancelled by the health club.

Mr. Abdiinor posted a scathing Yelp review following his experience. According to the *Union Leader*, the former member wrote that the health club was "incompetent and disingenuous" and that the credit card that was charged by the club was being cancelled because the health club was "untrustworthy." The owner of the club responded by filing suit, asserting that Mr. Abdiinor acted in bad faith by intentionally posting, "false, defamatory

and slanderous statements." Gateway Hills seeks the removal of the Yelp review and \$750,000 in damages plus costs and legal fees. A judge recently suggested that the parties should attempt to resolve the case through mediation. Both sides have agreed to do so.

The Legal Elements and Defenses of a Defamation Claim

The elements of a defamation claim essentially include a false statement of fact, negligently or intentionally communicated to at least one other person, providing enough information and detail to identify the plaintiff, resulting in harm to the reputation of the plaintiff. In most states, the person making the false statement must have either been aware that their statement was false or must have acted negligently or with reckless disregard of the truth. As with other types of civil lawsuits, the plaintiff has the burden of proving the elements of a defamation claim.

Truth is an absolute defense to a defamation claim. If there is nothing factually false about a blistering social media review, regardless of whether the review results in reputational and financial harm, there is no viable claim for defamation. Additionally, opinions are not legally considered defamatory. Therefore, a statement that can be viewed from the reasonable person standpoint as an opinion, rather than an assertion of fact, may also be defensible.

How to Address Defamatory Social Media Reviews

Providing outstanding products and services is obviously the most effective way to generate positive reviews while reducing the likelihood of damaging commentary. However, if subjected to an intentionally false review, contact the website provider where the review was posted and seek the prompt removal of the review. Prepare by gathering any evidence that will demonstrate to the website provider that an intentionally false review was posted on their site. Although website providers are generally very protective of free speech, they are not in the business of facilitating the posting of intentionally false reviews.

When the identity of the person who submitted the false review is known, gather and preserve any identifying evidence and take direct action towards the reviewer. If the issue cannot be resolved informally, a cease and desist letter should be sent to the reviewer indicating that further legal action will be taken should the defamatory content not be removed and should any additional defamatory statements be made.

If all else fails, consider suing for

defamation. However, this will require a careful cost-benefit analysis. Consult with an attorney and obtain an opinion as to the viability of your claim versus the estimated cost of litigation. In addition to attorneys' fees, litigation can take an emotional toll and involve an opportunity cost due to the time and energy that litigation diverts from business operations. Do not litigate the matter if the collective financial, emotional and opportunity cost outweighs the harm incurred due to defamation.

Conclusion

A health club's reputation is one of its greatest assets. Therefore, defamatory social media reviews are not to be taken lightly. However, truthful assertions and mere opinions do not give rise to a viable defamation claim. If a health club falls victim to defamation on the internet, the website provider should be contacted immediately and direct action should be taken against the person at issue. A thorough cost-benefit analysis should be conducted to determine how the time, money and effort required for litigation equates to the harm suffered as the result of defamation. Should litigation ultimately be necessary, health clubs can mitigate their reputational harm while maximizing the viability of their defamation claim by proactively gathering evidence and responsively addressing the parties involved.

(Paul Bedard has nearly twenty years of



Paul R. Bedard, Esquire

management, leadership and operations experience in the health and fitness industry. As a practicing attorney, Paul's health and fitness industry experience provides him with a unique perspective when advising health clubs regarding employee training, handbooks, policies, contracts, disputes or premises liability claims. When not practicing law or spending quality time with his wife and daughters, Paul strives to be active in his local community. Paul serves as the current Assistant Town Attorney for the Town of Southington, Connecticut and has previously served on the Southington Zoning Board of Appeals and the Board of the Central Connecticut Regional Planning Agency. Paul can be reached at pbedard@smddlaw.com or 860-620-9460, Ext. 109.)

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What's Your Reputation?

By: **Jon Butts**

Without first checking Google, do you know what your club's online reputation and rating are? How do your Facebook, Google and Yelp reviews look? If you are aware of your rating for each, do you know approximately how many reviews you have for each site and what they say? If you don't know this information, your business is not

achieving its maximum online potential.

We live in a world where just about everyone goes online to learn more about a business before deciding whether or not to visit. Even when someone gets a traditional marketing piece, such as direct mail, they will almost always go online to investigate and learn more. The online reputation of your business is either going to lead that prospect into the next step of their journey

(join online, sign up for a guest pass, call or come in), or it will scare them off, ending their journey right there before ever even reaching out to you or seeing your club. For this reason, your online reputation demands attention; yet often, it gets overlooked.

Even if you invested a significant amount of money to build out a nice club or studio and filled it with amazing equipment, if your online reputation is not good, your business will be negatively impacted. A prospect won't care if you have new equipment or an attractive marketing piece with a great offer. If they see an abundance of negative comments about rude staff, hidden fees, impossible cancellation policies, etc., you will most likely lose them right then and there.

Properly managing your online reputation requires constant monitoring, but when done properly, can pay large dividends with increased guest traffic. Here are some dos and don'ts to help make sure online reviews attract more prospects into your facility:

DO:

Register your business. This might seem basic, but make sure you have profiles set up on all the main sites. However, just having a profile isn't enough, you need to take the time to properly fill each out with relevant information and populate them with quality content and pictures.

Immediately respond to any negative review. The longer you wait to respond, the higher the likelihood of that person damaging your reputation in other ways, as well. Respond with an apology so everyone else can see it. In the apology, request them to contact you directly to discuss more in depth to try and resolve the situation. It's always best to take these situations offline as quickly as possible to resolve them.

Respond to all positive reviews, too. While responding to positive reviews isn't as time sensitive, it is important to respond to them, as well. These people took time out of their day to leave a good comment about your business and help you out; the least you can do is say thanks.

Automate your review requests. Sitting back and hoping members will give your business a good review online is not a strategy. No member is more excited about your club than the day they join, so that is the time to ask for the review. It's important to automate this, so they receive an email the day they join, immediately following a smooth signup and a great first workout. It is labor intensive and tedious to manually email everyone after they sign up. Extremely cost-effective automation



Jon Butts

solutions exist, so this is something you may want to ask your marketing company about.

Use technology to your advantage. We recommend asking them in the email to rate their experience 0 - 10, which will in turn let you know your net promoter score (NPS). Based on the number they click, route them accordingly. If someone clicks a 9 or 10, they clearly had a great experience, so route them to a landing page that has the links to your review sites and asks them to leave a quick review. If someone clicks on a low number, meaning they didn't have a good experience, take them to a different landing page, where they will receive an apology message and can submit feedback directly to the owner/manager through a comment box. This helps intercept negative reviews before they get posted.

Make the member aware. Let the new member know right after signup that they will be getting a one question survey about their experience and how important their feedback is to you and your business. Doing this significantly increases the likelihood someone will respond.

Emphasize your positive reviews. Incorporate some top reviews into your website and/or marketing collateral. Testimonials are extremely powerful and not used often enough. You worked hard to give them a great experience, so why not share that with others?

DON'T:

Pay someone or have friends leave fake reviews. Nothing looks more suspicious to prospects (and the review sites) than seeing a ton of great reviews all in the course of a short period of time, after having only a handful of reviews in a long period of time preceding it. Slow and steady wins the

(See **Jon Butts** Page 23)

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...Jon Butts

continued from page 22

race, and continually getting reviews over a long period of time is the best way to do this.

Freak out if you get a negative review.

While we all strive for perfection, the reality is someone will eventually have a less than perfect experience and leave negative feedback. Know that, if you have enough positive reviews and respond sincerely to your negative reviews, most people will look past a couple of negative ones.

Solicit reviews on Yelp. This violates their

policy, and they are very strict on this. If you get caught, you will be penalized by being buried in the results, and possibly, even have your listing removed from their site. Let Yelp reviews happen organically.

Ignore feedback. Right or wrong, take negative feedback to heart and ask yourself if you have heard that same complaint from anyone else, and if so, what can you do to prevent it from happening again in the future. Look at a negative review as an opportunity to uncover a weakness in your business and then strengthen it. Disregarding negative feedback and simply telling yourself the person that wrote it is wrong will inevitably

lead to someone else having a similar negative experience down the road. Don't let history repeat itself.

Start an argument online. Even if you don't agree with someone who leaves a negative review, be professional in your response and take the conversation offline. Getting defensive or angry is a bad look and could negatively impact others' view of your business. Not to mention, this will just make the person who is already unhappy that much angrier, and it might lead them to take other actions trying to damage your reputation.

Always remember, your club's

reputation isn't necessarily how you perceive it; it is how everyone else perceives it. Start incorporating these **Dos** and **Don'ts** at your club today, and you will quickly be on your way to a better reputation and more members.

(Jon Butts is the Founder & CEO of Muscle Up Marketing. He has over a decade of fitness marketing experience, helping nearly 1,500 clubs and studios across the United States and Canada increase their membership through innovative omnichannel campaigns. To learn more about Muscle Up Marketing, visit www.muscleupmarketing.com or call 800-516-4480.)



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"We would recommend Bill McBride/BMC3 to any organization that is looking at improving sales, customer service and team engagement."

- Large Non-Profit Community Center Client, Northeast, U.S.

"His approach was thorough and the implementation plan resulted in a dramatic increase in performance including, membership, personal training, member experience (NPS of 58.4%), retention, operations and net income. The team responded well to Bill's collaborative leadership approach and delivered. The result was a ten-fold increase in net income. Under his leadership, we surpassed our budget and were extremely pleased with the results he and our club teams accomplished. I highly recommend Bill as a consultant and operator."

- Private Health Club Owner Client of Two Sites in the Midwest, U.S.

"I highly recommend Bill McBride/BMC3 on all challenges club operators face with their business. He relates well with the on-site team, ownership and is collaborative in delivering best practices. His expertise, authenticity, integrity and follow-through are beyond reproach. I trust him greatly."

- Private Health Club Owner Large Commercial Club in the Pacific Northwest, U.S.

Never Stop Learning

By: **Derek Barton**

Everything I Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten - The title of a thought-filled book on life lessons. Maybe you've read it.

I was thinking about that title recently as I'm coming down the home stretch of remodeling my house. If I wrote a book like that, my title would be:

Everything I Need to Know I Learned From Building a House.

This experience has reinforced what I always believed to be true; you cannot build something great unless you have a great team! No matter your vision or goal, you have to find the best people who will embrace your vision and help you achieve that goal.

I'm reminded of Walt Disney,

who asked Bob Hope to take a 45-minute drive with him from Los Angeles to Orange County. Walt knew that Bob loved investing in real estate and wanted him to invest in land where he wanted to build a theme park. They stood on acres of nothing but orange groves as Walt described to Bob his vision for building *Disneyland*, which in his mind's eye would be, "The Happiest Place on Earth."

Bob couldn't see Walt's vision and politely declined to invest in his dream. Walt eventually found people who could see his vision. The rest is history as they say, and Disneyland and Walt Disney World are still the most popular and successful theme parks on Earth. And, yes, when you experience those parks, it does feel like, "The Happiest Place on Earth." By the way, decades later, when Bob Hope was asked if there was anything he regretted in his life, he smiled and replied, "Not investing in Walt Disney's orange grove."

No matter your dream or vision, you can't let anyone or anything stop you. From my 20 years of marketing at Gold's Gym and 13 additional years of helping my clients realize *their dreams*, it's fulfilling when dreams become a reality. It will always be hard to find people who can see what you see. My wife and I went through a lot of architects over the years until we found the right one for our "Dream House." We also found the right Project Manager who brought us the right sub-contractors.

At our home construction site, as in the business world, there are always a few people on every team who aren't rowing in the same direction as the others. Some don't even have their oars in the water. They are just cruising along, letting others do all the hard work. You have to dismiss



Derek Barton

those people sooner rather than later and find others who can turn your dream into a reality.

In over three decades of marketing, I have always said to my graphics team, "Show me my idea first, then, if you have a better way of doing it, show me those versions, too." I have shared this direction with the team who is building our new house. Just like my marketing team over the years, some of these construction teams have suggested better ideas than what I had in mind or what was on the original plans. You have to then learn to shift gears in order to make your project better.

What started as a remodel has turned into a whole new house. We took it right down to the foundation and even built a stronger foundation. And, yes, we're way beyond that "20% overrun" on the budget and passed that a while back. We do all the hard work. You have to dismiss

(See **Derek Barton** Page 25)

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CORONA, CA - Lock America of Corona, California enters the health club security market with its private label cam lock and deadbolt locks. The private label model, available in virtually any color with the club's logo and artwork, ensures a uniform, attractive level of security at a gym or club, plus the reminder to "get back" to the gym, your gym, when the customer takes it home.

The high-end cam lock and deadbolt locks offer virtually pick and drill proof keyways to match the look and security of high-end gyms, health clubs, spas and country clubs. These locks are available with retrofit kits that easily replace the standard low-end cam or deadbolt used in most lockers.

Frank Minnella, CEO of Lock America, is excited about entering a new market. "We have developed and marketed security locks for over 30 years, for many industries, including amusement, gaming, self-storage and information management. Our private label program allows our customer to give its customers a lock with its logo and phone number, in virtually any color combination. For those facilities with a higher security need, or designer interiors, we can provide cam locks and deadbolt locks with high security keys and a master key option. Either way, we can meet any facility's security needs."

For more information, go to www.laigroup.com, and see the **Lock America Ad on This Page**.

What is Your Conflict Communication Style?

By: Karen Woodard-Chavez

In my previous article for **Club Insider**, the focus was on inviting difficult conversation with colleagues, members or loved ones. When we invite difficult conversation, there is an opportunity for it to go smoothly, or sometimes not so smoothly, initially. When the latter occurs, some of us may look at that as a very difficult situation with a feeling of dread. In reality, that becomes our second chance to improve and strengthen the relationship even further. The purpose of this article is fourfold: (1) to examine what happens with our communication style when we are in conflict, (2) recognize what we do and what we need to do differently, (3) recognizing conflict communication styles in others and how to best work with their style, and (4) what communication style is best for a specific situation.

Each of us has preferences in communication. These are referred to as communication or conflict styles. There are generally five recognized communication/conflict styles that surface. These include *Avoidance*, *Competition*, *Accommodation*, *Cooperation* and *Yielding*. When two people in conflict have opposite preferences, misunderstandings are likely to occur. Becoming more aware of the effects of your differing communication styles can go a long way toward preventing misunderstandings. As you read through the styles below, identify which style you lean toward as well as the styles your colleagues lean toward.

5 Recognized Communication/Conflict Styles

Avoidance: The reaction to conflict is to avoid directly confronting the issue at hand. Methods of doing this can include changing the subject, putting off a discussion until later or simply not bringing up the subject of contention. Other behaviors that indicate avoidance include:

- Saying the issue isn't important enough to spend time on;
- Saying there isn't enough time to do the topic justice;
- Gunny-sacking or not discussing thoughts or feelings related to the issue;
- Being overly polite;
- Defining any emotion as discord and calling for objectivity when discussing differences;
- Smoothing over discord whenever a difference arises, so differences are never discussed;
- Focusing on details to the exclusion of the real issues;
- Demanding rationality whenever emotions arise;

- Attacking the other person verbally;
- Shifting the topic away from the conflict;
- Avoiding topics where conflict may occur;
- Making noncommittal statements that sound like, but are not really, agreement; and,
- Joking to distract from the real issues in a conflict.

Competition: The reactions in a competitive style are to maximize reaching one's own goals or getting the problem solved at the cost of the other party's goals or feelings.

Competition can have negative repercussions for relationships, businesses and cultures but can occasionally be the right style to choose if the other party is firmly fixed in a competitive style or there are genuinely scarce resources. Competition can easily slide into a destructive scenario as it becomes a win or lose scenario. Behaviors that show up with the Competition style can include:

- Lying or making up one's own facts;
- Concealing one's own goals;
- Concealing one's own interests;
- Attacking or criticizing the other person verbally;
- Becoming positional, and then, incrementally compromising toward a middle ground;
- Elevating one's own arguments;
- Denigrating or rejecting other's arguments;
- Threatening and bluffing;
- Denying responsibility; and,
- Pretending to be or actually being hostile.

Accommodation: Involves giving in to the other's wishes to smooth the choppy waves of conflict. Accommodation sacrifices one's own goals for the sake of the other person. Accommodators often use phrases such as: "Whatever you want is fine with me" or "I really do not care one way or another." When one party in conflict genuinely *does not care* about the outcome of the conflict, accommodation may be the right choice for *that* situation. If an individual genuinely *does care* about the outcome of a scenario, and accommodation is the *only* style that person utilizes, he or she is advised to learn more skills as always accommodating will breed a very strong feeling of resentment and further brewing future conflict.

Yielding: This style involves a give and take of resources as in a compromise. The classic compromise in negotiating is to "split the difference" between two positions. While there is no "victor" from yielding, this style can move a situation forward by agreeing to compromise on resources or behaviors.

Cooperative: This style is epitomized

by collaboration. It occurs when parties cooperatively work together until a mutually agreeable solution is found. The behaviors of the cooperative still include: Truly listening, hearing and understanding of each other's position and working for the best possible outcome for the organization or the relationship.

As you reviewed the five conflict styles of *Avoidance*, *Competition*, *Accommodation*, *Yielding* and *Cooperative*, I encourage you to recognize what style you utilize the most and if it is the most productive style to be utilized. The reality is that ineffective communicators tend to predominately use one style, and effective communicators use differing styles based on the specifics of the situation. To understand which situations require the most appropriate style will allow you as a leader, colleague or partner to be more effective in your conversations and conflicts rather than reverting to a style that you have always used in the past or are most comfortable with. To help you move forward on this, answer the following questions:

- Which is your predominate style?
- Why?
- What situations are my predominate style most effective in?
- In what situations are my predominate style ineffective?
- In those situations that my predominate style have been ineffective, which style would have served better?

Match each style with a situation that you will be facing or have faced recently that would be more effective.

The final purpose of this article is to help you customize your communication to be more effective. I speak with many managers each month who tend to

...Derek Barton

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honestly are okay with it because, like my business heroes, you shouldn't cut corners when your aim is for something different and great.

What I have learned from people like Walt Disney, Steve Jobs, Richard Branson and Elon Musk is that building something great or better and will stand the test of time takes unique vision and commitment. These visionaries also know the importance of surrounding themselves with team players.

All the creative ideas I have given to everyone in my business career have one thing in mind, to improve upon the product, service and team. I now find myself heeding my own advice as I build a better house. Bottom line; do it right! Measure twice, cut once. Be different. Look



Karen Woodard-Chavez

communicate in a fixed manner, the style that they are most comfortable with. The key in any communication, whether conflict exists or not, is to do so in a way that the person you are communicating with fully hears and understands what is being communicated. The style in which you communicate will either make that happen or allow the conversation to fall off the cliff.

If you would like to have me provide a customized webinar for your organization on more effective communication, please call (303) 417 - 0653 or email karen@karenwoodard.com.

(Karen is President of Premium Performance Training in Boulder, Colorado and Ixtapa, Mexico. Karen has owned 11 different businesses, successfully sold nine of them and continues to operate two. Karen consults with and trains staff throughout the world on sales, complete communication, management and leadership. These services are offered on-site, online and through her books, manuals and DVDs.)

at the project from every angle. Research. If money were no object, what would you do? Surround yourself with people who will understand and embrace your vision and who will work hard to make it happen. Get rid of those people on your team who stop rowing towards your destination and go off in their own direction. But, keep an open mind to those who can steer you in a better direction. There's often a better way.

Whether you learned everything you needed to know from kindergarten, or from building a business or your dream house, the most important thing is to never stop learning. With that in mind, keep reading **Club Insider**.

(Derek Barton is Founder and President of Barton Productions, LLC., and he can be reached at derek@bartonproductions.com. And, check out www.bartonproductions.com)

Communication 101 and Then Some

By: **Angie Pattengale**

Communication. We probably all could use a little assistance or some encouragement in this department. It's usually the first thing that comes up in a marital spat, a heavy debate or any counseling appointment. It definitely plays a major role in business, in our case the club or a personal training business. Poor communication, or lack of it, can put a business out of business. So, let's look at the 4 Rules of Communication and how we can apply those to our business.

How, when and why we communicate are underlying make or break components of any conversation or conflict. You've probably heard that "timing is everything" or "it's all about your approach." I find this to be true on many levels and in many personal and professional examples. Think of some yourself. Has there been a time when you communicated a bit of bad news and then realized that you could have delivered it differently and received a much better result? Think of this in the context of being a club employer, for example,

and being disappointed in the work ethic or conduct of an employee. How do you handle it? First, think about:

How you communicate the news. Do you call them out in front of others? Do you tell them in private? Do you make a vague and general statement about overall performance in a group meeting?

When you communicate the news. Do you tell someone how you feel at the exact moment that it happens? Do you wait until there is a cooling off period? Do you not communicate it at all and hope it gets better on its own?

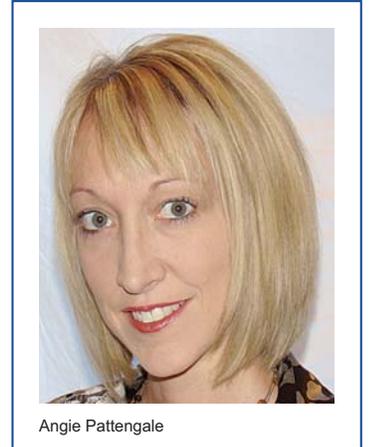
Why you communicate the news. Are you communicating information or expressing a viewpoint that is nonconsequential? What is your intention when communicating? Are you communicating news or information with intent to harm or to help?

The answers to these questions can depend on the news itself and the circumstance. Of course, there's no hard

and fast, right or wrong answer. Whether you are speaking to your teenager, your spouse, your employee, employer or your client, there will always be various reasons and various needs for communication, and you'll have to think about timing and approach for each situation differently. Also, there will always be differences that should be observed before communicating. Differences in personality, life perspective and experiences, religious or political beliefs, will all be present in the foundation of each individual who is communicating. *Therefore, if we work to use the principles of the 4 Rules of Communication in our speech to one another, we shall find that our communications are more effective and can be surprisingly pleasant even when the subject matter is hard.*

4 Rules of Communication

1. Be Honest. It's not enough to just not lie. There is a "truth in love" approach that makes honesty easier to communicate. If your intention is to help a person or a situation, or to offer encouragement to



Angie Pattengale

an employee or a personal training client, then your honest intent will shine through in the "why" you are communicating the information. If you distort honesty, or hide it altogether, then conflict will ultimately follow.

(See *Angie Pattengale* Page 27)

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...Angie Pattengale

continued from page 26

2. Keep Current. Continuing to rehash old conflict does nothing to forward the mission of resolution. First things first, be sure to always have your facts straight before you communicate, even if it takes some time to collect these facts (you might be stewing on the inside, but the waiting period is worth the wait). Collect the facts and get the information before you find yourself communicating based on false insight, off-topic issues or old information that isn't relevant to the current situation.

3. Attack the Problem, Not the Person. Maybe we've all done it... taken cheap shots at someone completely unrelated to the issue at hand, but anger overcomes and your tongue becomes the weapon within easy reach. Ultimately, we know it doesn't work. It's not an effective approach to communicating a concern, but it is in our nature to do what is easiest... lashing out with words. Work to communicate using the "how" of a calm demeanor, solution-driven speech and tone and a focus on the problem at hand (not the person who you wish to lash out at). Complaints and allegations build walls, but questions and open minds build bridges.

4. Act, Don't React. Emotions can be messy things. They can get in the way of meaningful progress. Sometimes, some people have a hard time letting go, are quickly reminded of negative past events, are quick to anger or are just unwilling to forgive. You can't control that someone. You can't control another's emotions, reactions, thinking process or heart and soul condition, but you can control you. Take a moment to ask yourself, "when should I approach this?" and "XYZ" statement the way, the thing and the timing that's going to create and encourage positive change. You can better reach someone and settle conflict if you are refraining from lashing out and if you work with a purpose to act on the issue at hand.

• • •

Maybe you are familiar with these four rules already, maybe you work to implement them in your life and relationships, both personal and professional. As for me, my grandmother wrote them in beautiful cursive on a notecard the day I got married, and it's been clipped to a magnet on our refrigerator ever since. But note, I use the word "work" throughout, and it is used for good reason. Communication is hard work, but it gets better the more that we work at it.

Jim Worthington, Owner of Newtown Athletic Club, Elected Chairman of IHRSA

NEWTOWN, PA - Jim Worthington, Owner of the Newtown Athletic Club (NAC), was elected Chairman of the Board of Directors of IHRSA on Friday, March 24, 2018 in San Diego, CA. The election took place at the 2018 IHRSA International Conference where education, networking and the largest fitness equipment trade show in the world are provided for 10,000 clubs representing 90 countries.

During his tenure as Chairman of the Board, Mr. Worthington will be responsible for leading the largest fitness trade association in the world to become the solution for the global obesity crisis as well as to protect, promote and grow the fitness industry. His vision and leadership will help to shape the direction of fitness
 (See **Jim Worthington** Page 30)



Jim Worthington

(Angie Pattengale has been with National Federation of Professional Trainers, NFPT, since 1994, currently serving as the Director of Certification. She is a graduate of Purdue University's Krannert School of Management, currently directing the growth initiatives and quality assurances of the NFPT certification program. She leads efforts that assure the skill set competency of

NFPT-CPTs through legally defensible, job-specific, knowledge-based assessments which serve to promote the credentialing value of the NFPT-CPT credential. Angie works to support and advance the NFPT Certification mission as it relates to health, public safety and industry authority. Find out more about NFPT at www.nfpt.com.)

Iron Grip and EXOS Team Up

ORANGE COUNTY, CA - Iron Grip Barbell Company, the industry-leading manufacturer of innovative and heavy-duty American-made free weight equipment, is pleased to announce a partnership with EXOS, a leader in human performance. EXOS is dedicated to developing personalized plans that motivate and support individual progress across the four pillars of human performance: mindset, nutrition, movement and recovery. Through their methodology, EXOS provides clients with customized tools and strategies to help them achieve optimal wellbeing and performance.

"EXOS is recognized as an innovator in human performance training, with solutions that appeal to athletes from all disciplines, from professional and college athletes, to corporate wellness clients, to the U.S. military and health clubs," said **Michael Rojas**, *President and Co-CEO of*

Iron Grip. "The services they provide are universally engaging and effective across a wide spectrum of elite-level customers, as well as aspirational customers. The markets they serve overlap nearly seamlessly with our existing client base, so we feel confident that our collaboration will be mutually beneficial for us and our shared customers."

With the common goal of helping athletes at all levels achieve optimal performance, EXOS and Iron Grip have teamed up to offer EXOS clients and partners access to Iron Grip's state-of-the-art free weight equipment and expertise. As part of the partnership, EXOS has chosen to outfit their world-class performance facility in Phoenix, Arizona with Iron Grip's heavy-duty, American-made equipment. This elite training destination is EXOS' headquarters and offers an on-site cafe, recovery amenities, turf, batting cages

and a multi-sport training area with cutting edge, industry-leading equipment. All training is directly by highly skilled and credentialed professionals in every athletic, tactical, physical and occupational therapy discipline.

Featuring Iron Grip equipment in its flagship training facility will allow EXOS to integrate Iron Grip equipment into its training and educational programs. Iron Grip and EXOS will also collaborate on educational content for their athletic, tactical, and corporate wellness customers, and explore new strategic initiatives.

"Movement is an integral component of our four-part philosophy of human performance," said **John Stemmerman**, *Vice President of Performance at EXOS*. "Being able to provide our athletes with cutting-edge free weight equipment that is designed with safety, optimal ergonomics and peak



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performance in mind is important to us. But, we also value the long-lasting durability and reliability of Iron Grip products and the peace of mind that Iron Grip provides to our facilities team. Iron Grip products and people have an outstanding reputation in the industry, and we are excited to share all they have to offer with our clients and partners."

The Atlantic Club in Manasquan and Red Bank Earn Prestigious Medical Fitness Certification; Becomes Safest Place to Exercise in New Jersey

MANASQUAN and RED BANK N.J. - The Atlantic Club is proud to announce that it has earned the medical fitness facility certification from the Medical Fitness Association, a global leader in medical fitness standards. The prestigious certification applies to both The Atlantic Club's Manasquan and Red Bank locations.

To earn this certification, the Atlantic Club underwent a year of compliance testing and evaluation and a rigorous two-day, 209-point inspection. Under scrutiny were the club's programming, facility cleanliness and accessibility, emergency response protocols, child care safety standards, staffing credentials and more.

"We want people, especially those

with health concerns or physical limitations, to have the utmost confidence and peace of mind when they visit the club," says *Atlantic Club Founder and President, Pat Laus*. "While The Atlantic Club has always been a leader in medical fitness, we now hold the most prestigious stamp of approval for medical fitness and safety. Every inch of our campuses, from the individual cardio machines to the tennis courts and spa, has been certified."

Kevin McHugh, *Chief Operating Officer of The Atlantic Club* says members can trust that programs and fitness classes are in line with the latest medical research, and if requested by a member, the club's staff will communicate directly and regularly

with the member's physician. Staff are also trained in screening members for health risks and developing smart, safe fitness plans.

Bob Boone, *President and CEO of the Medical Fitness Association* says that his Association's Medical Fitness Certification is not easily attained. "There are only 52 medically-certified health clubs in the world, and most facilities do not pass the first time around," he explains. "The Atlantic Club is now in the top 2-3% of clubs in the United States, so members ought to feel comfortable going to their club."

Staffing, for example, is one area the Medical Fitness Association looks at very closely. A staff member must hold at



THE ATLANTIC CLUB

least a bachelor's degree in a field related to the program he or she runs, as well as related certifications. "It's miles above what you'd find at your regular commercial fitness center," Boone says.

The Atlantic Club must be re-certify every three years.

Join the Augie's Quest MYZONE Challenge Today

MANASQUAN, N.J. - The *Augie's Quest MYZONE Challenge*, to be held May 1 - June 17, has just reached 100 clubs. But, the initiative needs more as we raise the funds to get AT-1501 into Human trials for all those living with ALS! The Challenge is simple, and there is no charge to your clubs. Here is a step-by-step guide to join today:

1. All you need to do is click this link: myzone.org/1501-club. Fill out your name, email, city, state, club name and your facility code. Hit submit! This will register your club.

2. Shortly after you have registered, you will receive a link with the marketing packet (next day or so). In that packet will be an assortment of tools you can choose to use, but most importantly in that packet is an email. The next step is to email your members from your portal in whatever email platform you use (MailChimp, Constant Contact, etc). You will send this provided email to them (your member base). By doing this, you will expose more people than just current MYZONE belt users to the challenge, and hopefully, they will buy a belt and join too! MYZONE will also send an email to all belt users at your club.

3. These emails (sent by you or MYZONE) directs your members to the landing page that has been created for the challenge, and it has a place where someone can join the challenge and make their \$15.01 donation. Once they do this, they are IN! There is nothing else the MYZONE user needs to do.

For more information, see the **Ad** on the **Opposite Page**, and please contact **Kevin McHugh** at KevinM@theatlanticclub.com.





Augie's Quest And Myzone Invites All Your Members To Participate In The Augie's Quest Myzone Challenge.

May 1st- June 17th

As We Raise The Funds To Introduce AT-1501 To Those Suffering From ALS.

This Spring Club Owners, Operators, and Members have the opportunity to come together and help raise the funds to bring AT-1501 to the marketplace.

ALS/TDI; officially known as The ALS Therapy Development Institute has been working with their passionate research team developing AT-1501 since 2013. Currently, it is being evaluated for safety towards humans. To move AT-1501 through a Phase 2 clinical trial, we will need to raise \$30,000,000.

We as ONE Industry, ONE Club at a time, with ONE Member at a time, can help raise these funds along with other major outstanding ALS Fund-raising efforts .

AT-1501 has produced the most exciting outcomes since the inception of ALS/TDI .

According to Steve Perrin, Ph.D, CEO/CSO, AT-1501 is the most effective potential treatment tested for ALS. It has shown in lab tests to achieve the following outcomes:

- Extended Life Span Significantly
- Delayed Disease onset
- Improved Body Weight, signaling that muscle is healthier
- Improved the percentage of neuro-muscular junctions allowing muscles to remain functional
- Decreased indications of inflammation in nerves and spinal cord

AT-1501 is an antibody with therapeutic and promising preclinical data. It blocks specific immune cell activation and may protect nerves against the progression of ALS.

Our INDUSTRY efforts will provide HOPE to all those impacted by ALS when we are able to obtain all the funding required to bring AT-1501 into clinical trial and beyond.

HOW CAN WE ALL COME TOGETHER AND FUND THE RESEARCH TO CHANGE THE WORLD FOR ALL WITH ALS?

Join the Augie's Quest Myzone Challenge!

When:
May 1st- June 17th

What:

- The Augie's Quest Myzone Challenge is a National Challenge that allows anyone with a Myzone Belt to participate by donating \$15.01 on the Myzone Challenge portal. There is no collecting of funds at the Club - it is seamless.
- All funds donated go directly to the ALS/TDI Research Center in Cambridge, Massachusetts

How:

- Club Owners accept the Challenge
- Participants accept the Challenge and make a \$15.01 donation
- To qualify for the Raffle, you must earn 1501 MEPS from May 1st through June 17th.
- Myzone participants can also earn an additional raffle entry for each 100 MEPS over 1501. 5,000 MEP max.

Why:

- It is the perfect timing for "Getting Ready for Summer Programming and Member Challenges.
- Over \$50,000 in prizes

The Real WHY:

- Be a Difference Maker for those impacted with ALS
- Help in securing the funds to complete the job on getting AT-1501 into the important Clinical trials with people suffering with ALS
- Provide HOPE for those with ALS who are looking to us to help them in their fight against ALS

All you have to do as a Club Owner or Operator is accept the May Augie's Quest Myzone Challenge. Upon accepting the Challenge, your members and staff can join the Challenge by donating \$15.01 on the Myzone portal. There is no financial involvement by the Clubs, it is all done online upon registering for the Challenge.

Once you earn 1501 MEPS, you will automatically be entered into the Augie's Quest Myzone Challenge Winner's Circle and have the opportunity to win prizes that are valued at over \$50,000.

Here are a few Industry Leaders that will be involved in the Augie's Quest Myzone Challenge.



Paula Neubert

"Greenwood Athletic and Tennis Club Members can't wait to get started. This challenge is going to be fun, motivating and inspiring. Each day we take another step, we know we will be helping a friend or stranger have the opportunity to do the same. The money we raise will put AT-1501; a drug that may protect nerves against the progression of ALS, into clinical trials. Join us and make a difference!"



Aaron Moore

"VIDA Fitness is getting involved for two reasons. First, we believe we share an obligation as an industry partner to support the honorable work of Augie's Quest and its many partner clubs around the country. Our industry is

based on the fundamental concepts of activity and movement. ALS is an aggressive disease that takes away that very activity and movement we all enjoy. Second, the Augie's Quest Myzone Challenge is a fun and effective way to engage our members. We find that our members are a competitive bunch, so activities like this challenge are a great way to achieve our purpose of making lives better."



Jen Poljacik

"Who can resist a Myzone challenge, especially one that can make an impact on finding a cure for ALS. This Spring our members at River Valley Club, will be working to get in shape for summer but more importantly we will be working hard to raise awareness and funding for AT-1501 and Augie's Quest!"



Ralph Rajs

"Running the first Augie's Quest Myzone Challenge gave me a great opportunity to engage with members & staff at Leisure Sports while making a difference finding a cure for ALS. This is truly a win-win program."

"The Augie's Quest Challenge is a great way for our members at Hockessin Athletic Club and the community to leverage the Myzone technology to raise money to cure ALS as well as get into shape for summer."



Bob Carpenter



Larry Connor

Down here in New Orleans, we need a good challenge to get us going after Mardi Gras. Myzone challenges everyone to do more than they would normally do. Challenge for a great cause - Augie's Quest. Funding is needed to bring AT-1501 to people who need it, so let's get moving. Accept the challenge and join Stone Creek Club & Spa in May!



Kristi Redl

"All Sport Health & Fitness has a passion for supporting & giving back to our community. Our facility supports & gives back to our community and its causes on both local & national levels. To us, strength in numbers takes on a whole new meaning as we gear up to be a part of the Myzone Challenge supporting vital ALS efforts to make AT-1501 available."



Eddie Tock

"Augie has inspired many of us to look beyond our challenges and make a real difference in this world. The Augie's Quest MYZONE Challenge is a great opportunity for all clubs to really make a difference both in their own community and for a wonderful cause to help find a cure for ALS!"



Kevin McHugh

"The Atlantic Club is excited to work as ONE INDUSTRY and support all of the efforts that will bring AT-1501 to all those with ALS. Our goal is to have over 1,000 Clubs join the effort utilizing the power of The Augie's Quest Myzone Challenge and be part of this effort that can change the world with individuals and families that have been impacted by ALS."

For more information, follow the Myzone Facebook page:
www.facebook.com/myzonenmoves

...Jim Worthington

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and wellness worldwide during a time when the world is beginning to recognize that "Exercise IS Medicine" is having a positive effect on almost every disease state as well as preventing many diseases from ever developing.

Mr. Worthington comments, "I am honored and humbled to have the privilege to serve the industry that I have been passionate about for 40 years in this way. There comes a time in every man's life when his actions are driven more by legacy than ambition. I will do my best to make a mark in the industry that has lasting effects to propel us towards the ultimate goal of making fitness and wellness more available to everyone in the world."

This honor coincides with the



40th Anniversary of the Newtown Athletic Club (1978 - 2018). This milestone will be celebrated all year long with many events and acknowledgements of long-term members and employees. Established as a 15,000 square-foot racquetball club on 3 acres in 1978, the NAC has grown into a globally recognized 250,000 square foot lifestyle club on 25 acres. A pioneer in many facets of fitness and wellness, Mr. Worthington's vision and the dedication of the entire NAC Team have brought the NAC to this pinnacle of international recognition.



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Thanks and Appreciation

At Club Insider, we are excited to be in our 25th Year of this home-based health and fitness club trade publication! The thought that this publication was *founded to serve an industry I truly love*, and so that *I could become a Mister Mom for my son, Justin*, is still *intriguing and amazing* to us. I wish to extend our most sincere **Thanks and Appreciation** to everyone that's made this amazing 25-year run possible.

A very sincere **Thanks and Appreciation** go to **Rick Caro, Dr. Gerry Faust** and the **Faust Executive Roundtable #1** for helping me decide in 1993 what my home-based business would be. **Thanks and Appreciation** to my long-time friends, **Ron Hudspeth** and **Cathy Miller** of **Atlanta's Hudspeth Report** for the tremendous assistance they provided us during *our first eight years of publication*. **Thanks and Appreciation** to all of the folks at **Walton Press** in Monroe, Georgia. They've done an absolutely excellent job for us all these years and have printed every one of our **292** monthly editions! **Thanks and Appreciation** to all of our **READERS**. Sincere **Thanks and Appreciation** to our **Club Insider Advertisers**, past and present, for their kind and dedicated support of this publication. It's amazing to know that we have several advertisers with over 15 years of continuous advertising with us. We also want to say sincere **Thanks and Appreciation** to all of our **Club Insider Contributing Authors**, past and present, who've contributed *thousands* of excellent articles to help our readers with their Best Business Practices. **Thanks and Appreciation** to **IHRSA** for all it does.

Sincere **Thanks and Appreciation** to my son, Justin, who started working part-time for **Club Insider** when he was just 8 years old (helping with mailings). This young man, pretty much behind the scenes for 25 years now, has truly been a fantastic partner for his Dad in **Club Insider**. Justin does our editing, publication layouts, all of our website design and maintenance, all of our bookkeeping and subscription processing work, as well as archive management and anything else that needs doing, including writing a majority of our cover stories each year.

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

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

Norm Cates, Jr.

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Mike's Story...

"I was a Regional Supervisor of a big box brand and decided it was time to make a move. After considering many franchise concepts, I landed on the Workout Anytime brand. The brand was appealing to me because of the simple and proven business model, low cost of entry, and exceptional franchisor support. I love being part of this fast-growing brand, being in business for myself, yet never feel like I must do it all by myself. I have opened my first club and am looking forward to a second. The sky is the limit."

Mike King, Owner
Marion, North Carolina

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