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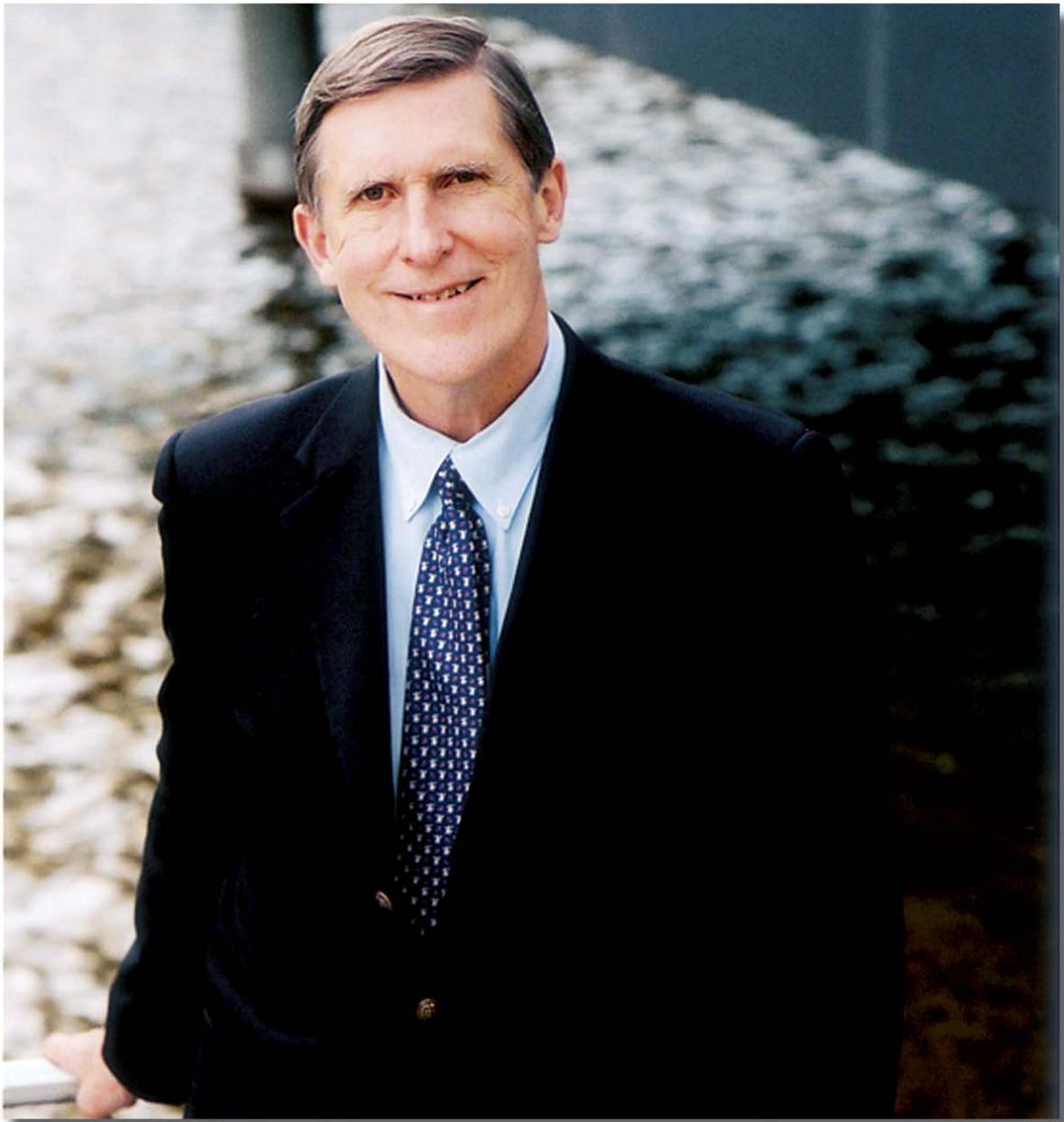
Norm Cates'

THE Club Insider

NEWS

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

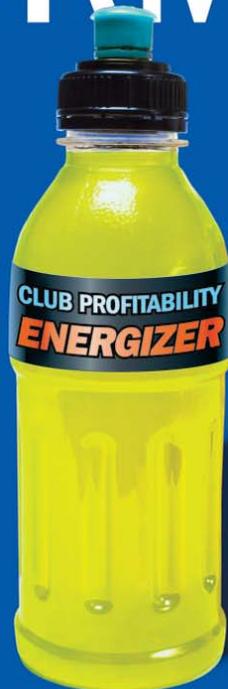
JUNE 2006



**Big John McCarthy
IHRSA's "Alliance Master" Retires**

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Norm Cates'

THE Club Insider

NEWS

Big John McCarthy IHRSA's "Alliance Master" Retires

By Norm Cates, Jr.

John McCarthy will be emblazoned in club industry history as one of the greatest teachers and achievers that ever lived. Many will argue that John is the greatest teacher ever. With respect to being a great achiever...John duly and honestly credits his Boston "Team IHRSA." And, rightfully so.

There are other great and noteworthy teachers and achievers...people, like Rick Caro, IHRSA's Founder, former President, two-time Board Member and now the world's #1 club consultant is amongst them. Beyond Caro is a line-up of greats. Each great one out there has benefited in some way directly or indirectly from John McCarthy's presence for the last 25 years. No one in this great industry has escaped John McCarthy's impact.

In IHRSA's terrific CBI Magazine, June edition, a sample of just a few of the other greats is contained...and each lauds praise on John McCarthy. Those greats in our industry praising John in the June CBI are: Tom Behan, Rick Caro, Joe Cirulli, Jack Dennison, John Doyle, Geoffrey Dyer, Jim Gerber, Jennifer Harding, Jay Kell, Carol Nalevanko, Frank Napolitano, Bob Provost, Stephen Tharrett, Alan Schwartz and Mitch Wald. In return...each of these individuals and many, many more IHRSA members for 25 years...have helped John McCarthy become the great teacher and achiever he has been for all these years.

I too feel blessed because I have been a stu-

dent of this great man, John McCarthy, for 25 years. I have also been a student of those listed above and of hundreds of other great club owners across America and the world. They have taught me...I have "passed it on" to you all over the past 13 years of CLUB INSIDER publication.

All of us who have dedicated our lives to our great club industry have been blessed by John McCarthy's passion, brilliance, dedication, determination and hard work. And, blessed by his teaching.

John will be missed after his retirement date of June 30, 2006. It says here today: Stay tuned!

Pondering this writing challenge today, I questioned my own skills. I asked myself if my writing skills were adequate for this occasion. I pondered how I might rise to this occasion, and produce a cover story report with words nearly so well crafted and eloquently stated as CBI Author, Jon Feld. Before I began writing today, I asked for a little help for success with these keys from my Creator.

Today, I read CBI Magazine's glorious production, a special edition bearing John's image and the cover headline: "Legacy of Excellence". This was truly a work of art. I pondered how I might possibly step up and write words that will further honor John beyond those excellent scribed and published in that really well done June CBI collector's edition. If you do not have a copy...you really should obtain one so you too have a piece of history in this industry. Call IHRSA at: 800.228.4772 to order yours. While you're at it, if you are

not an IHRSA member... please check on membership in this world-leading Association. You will be glad you did.

Saint John McCarthy... someday?

So now...I quote from my writing submitted for John's Retirement Memory Book. John's Memory book was presented to him at his Retirement Party on March 24, 2006, the last day of IHRSA25 in Las Vegas. This beautiful book was produced by Rick Devereux and Steve Tharrett. It contained letters from over 110 of John's long-time IHRSA friends. The photo I took of John with IHRSA Founder, Rick Caro, appears on this page.

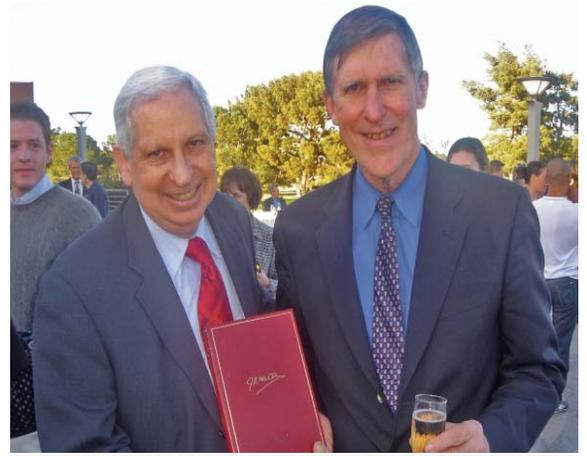
I wrote and I quote:

"Big John, I have had the honor of knowing you for 25 amazing years. During that time, I have observed, admired and respected you for many, many reasons. But, three reasons truly stand out in my mind:

1. Your dedicated focus on teaching and educating people around the world about the "value of regular exercise"
2. Your absolute mastery of alliance building in our industry worldwide
3. Your guts and determination as you've shepherded IHRSA through its first 25 years of existence."

My words continued:

"I also want to thank you Big John "The Alliance Master" McCarthy for your deep down goodness as a human being. Most of all, I want



IHRSA Founder Rick Caro and John McCarthy,
25-Year IHRSA Executive Director with John's Memory Book

to thank you John for your LOVE for all of us. Your love has always shown through. And, you have taught all of us what LOVE for others really does mean. I want you to know that we LOVE you, Big John.

As I have written before John, years and years from now, when you are called to the hereafter, I think you should be honored by the Roman Catholic Church as a Saint.

In Webster's Dictionary, Saint is defined as: "A highly virtuous person. One officially recognized, especially by canonization, as being entitled to public veneration and capable of interceding for people on earth." Big John, if that does not describe you, I don't know what does! Through your dedicated empowerment, leadership and example for our "Team IHRSA" at the "IHRSA Fortress for Health Club Good" in Boston, you have contributed enormously to the lives of millions and millions of people on this good earth. Through your stewardship,

we've seen the health, racquet and sportsclub industry grow exponentially over the last 25 years. You've grown the IHRSA membership to 7,000+ clubs in 72 countries. Those clubs now literally serve and help millions of people live healthier, happier and more productive lives. What an accomplishment!

What more could a man do to deserve Sainthood than to teach, lead and motivate millions and millions of people about the "value of regular exercise" in caring for that God given vessel for their soul while they are on earth; their human body?

"Saint John McCarthy"... Now that has a really nice ring to it doesn't it?!"

An Interview With John McCarthy

John McCarthy was kind to provide us with this cover story interview and I thank him again here.

Please note that while John is a giant in this world...he is also a very humble. (See John McCarthy page 10)

Norm's NOTES

• **JOHN McCARTHY's** retirement, after serving **IHRSA** and the health, racquet and sportsclub industry for 25 great years, will begin with a *transatlantic cruise* with his wife and Mother of their four children, **GAIL**. John will contemplate his *future* over the next three months. I can tell you this folks...the future for this industry is *much brighter* than it was 25 years ago when

John became our **IHRSA Executive Director**. I do hope you enjoy his special retirement cover story/interview here in **CLUB INSIDER**, as it was written "from the heart" by yours truly.

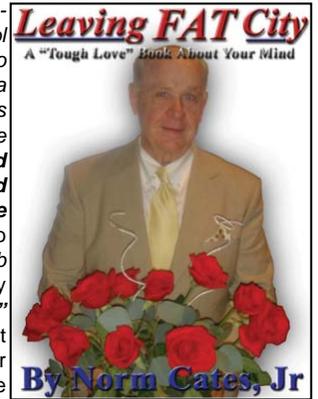
• We all know *disaster* can hit any of our businesses or personal lives at any moment. **TODD PULIS'** amazing **Thoreau Club**, in Concord, Massachusetts, recently had a sauna ignited fire causing heavy damage to both the men and women's locker room. Reportedly, a sauna in one of the locker rooms ignited some old wood beams that had been covered a few years ago when the then 50+ year old Thoreau Club was totally rebuilt to the tune of millions making it brand. The legendary club was fabulous and will be fabulous again. Todd Pulis's daughter, **FAITH PULIS**, said they are expecting to have the women's locker room back in action in two weeks and anticipate 3 to 4 weeks to repairs the men's. In the mean time the members are coming dressed to do their thing or are using other private rooms in the club to change clothes. Good luck, Todd, **BRENDA** and Faith as you deal with the fire damage.

• Folks, because of the recent **Thoreau Club** fire...this is a good time for you all to see the **Association Insurance Group's (AIG)** ad on page #17 and the **Health and Wellness Insurance** ad on page #20 in this edition. **KEN REINIG**, Founder and CEO of **AIG**, says, "Whether it is a hurricane or a fire, most club owners find themselves unsure about their insurance protection at the time of the loss. After the disaster is not the time to be reviewing your insurance policy to determine whether or not you have the proper limits of coverage." Hear- hear Ken! My suggestion is to contact our two insurance company advertisers in this issue and review your coverage carefully now. Be sure you have all your insurance ducks in a row! You will sleep better. Here is the contact info for Reinig's **AIG Group: 800.985.2021 ext. 10** and for **Fitness and Wellness Insurance call 866.557.2842**.

• **PATRICIA LAUS'** **Atlantic Club**, near the shore in Manasquan, New Jersey, is not just one of the top five clubs on earth...it is a happening all the time! **KEVIN MCHUGH**, Vice President of the Atlantic Club, has worked for years with Pat to grow

this 44-acre resort club, tennis academy, private school provider and new spa, to the point where this club is a **Disney World** of the sports club industry. In short, like **RED LERILLE's Health and Racquet Club** and **ED and ZOE VEASEY's Cedardale Club**, you've got to see it to believe it! The Atlantic Club has launched what they call: "**Clubs for the Cure**" program to benefit the fight against breast cancer. 105 or more Atlantic Club Staff have pledged their time and financial support for the **Avon Walk for Breast Cancer**. On May 20th the A.C. initiated an effort to enroll 400 Atlantic Club members to participate. The end result will be over 500 individuals teaming up on October 7th and 8th with the goal of raising over \$1 million to help eliminate breast cancer. But...Laus' and McHugh's plan is much bigger. The Clubs for Cure Program has set the goal of enrolling 100 clubs in 2007 to provide an additional \$100 million of financial support to eliminate the disease. **PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON**, during his amazing **IHRSA25** presentation, challenged all 5,000 people in the room "to take responsibility for changing the world by harnessing the inherent power that is found in clubs and the membership of clubs." If you would like to involve your club, contact **Patricia at: 732.292.4379** or **Kevin McHugh at: 732.292.4362**.

• Speaking of "*harnessing the inherent power that is found in clubs and the membership of clubs*"... please do visit: www.leavingfatcity.com ...read my 105 page book "**Leaving FAT City**." It is about America's health clubs too! Then please tell me what you disagree or agree with. You may be surprised about what I learned as your "**Spy On Obesity**"! With your corrections and feed-back I can fix, add or remove things in the book this Summer during final edits before it goes to print this Fall, three months before **Christmas**. October, 2006 sales will begin at just **\$7 a copy**. I am working on



Norm Cates - Author- Says,
 "Visit And Read
www.leavingfatcity.com."

a group buying deal for all health clubs in America. By the way...my book will make an absolutely excellent gift for new members, "Thank You" gifts for member referrals, plus it will be an excellent educational tool for clubs with a "FAT Friendly" mindset and who seek and serve this huge 196 million American obese and overweight market aggressively. I am taking advance order commitments now. But, I will not be asking for any money from clubs until this Fall. So, when you see the Book Order Form on our website, just complete the Form and write: **To be paid in the Fall of 2006**. Email your comments to me: normcates@leavingfatcity.com or call me at: **770.850.8506... if you want to personally state your comments to me. But, be prepared for a 'dose of PASSION' from me on this huge opportunity ... 'ear to ear'**. "**Leaving FAT City**" will give you keys to your club's future membership growth! 196 million is two-thirds of the U.S. population!

• Speaking of **PASSION**...**TASSO KIRIAKES**, owner of **Bodez** by Tasso in the Daytona Beach, FL, area has his own weekly-one-hour radio show on **WNDB 1150 am**. There he promotes his Bodez by Tasso club and his very successful **Healthy Inspirations** programs. It has been my pleasure to be on the radio show on the past 4 Fridays with Tasso (See Norm's Notes page 6)

Thank You

To The **Club Insider** News 2006 Contributing Author Team Listed Below:

• **Karen Woodard Chavez** - President-Premium Performance Training -(303) 417-0653

• **Michael Scott Scudder** - President - Southwest Club Services - (505) 690-5974

• **Casey Conrad** - Communications Consultants - (800) 725-6147

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

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

• **Bonnie Patrick Mattalian** - Principal - The Club and Spa Synergy Group - (732) 236-2273 or bonnie.patmat@aol.com

• **Rande LaDue** - President - Pace Fitness - 1-888-604-2244

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

• **Richard Ekstrom** - President - Retention Management - (800) 951-8048

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

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

• **Gary Polic** - Communications Consultants - XSPORT Fitness GPolic@communication-consultants.us 866-825-8501

• **Stephen Tharrett**- Consultant &- Author-Fitness Management 1-888-229-5745

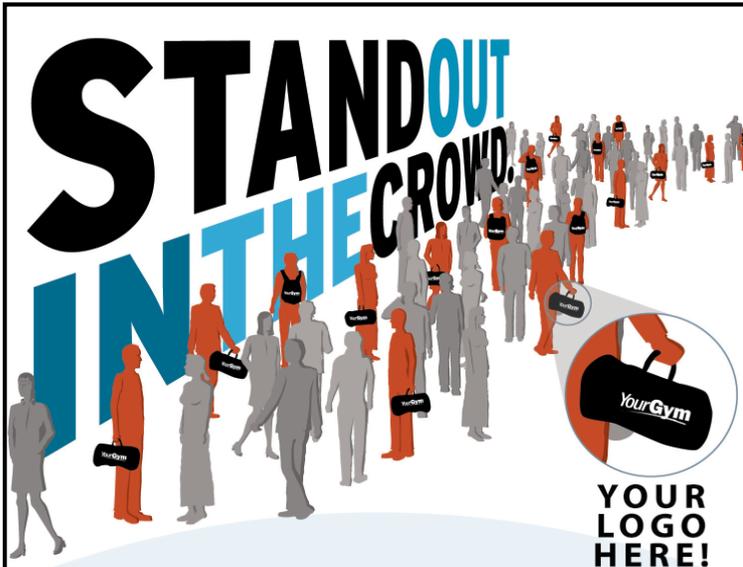


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...Norm's Notes

continued from page 4

as we've been talking about my new book, **Leaving FAT City. Thanks Tasso!** If you want to hear me promoting your health clubs on the radio send an email to me at: normcates@leavingfatcity.com and I will send a digital tape of about 20 minutes from the first radio show. Two of my missions for my book are: 1) **Save lives** and 2) **promote health clubs in America.**

• **DAN BLOCK**, top man at **InTek Strength**, recently had his second back operation. He is doing better, according to InTek's **JIM SPRAGUE**. **Get well Dan... our prayers** are with you for a full recovery!

• **BAHRAM AKRA-**

DI, founder of what I call the '900 pound gorilla of the health club industry', **Life Time Fitness**, is in trouble. Two reports ... one at: www.fitnessbusiness-pro.com and one at: <http://www.twincities.com/mid/twincities/14720204.htm>

• **Greenmaple Wellness Communications** released their readership statistics for their **Online Magazine** for MAY: 300,000 (1.3 million page views)! See **Greenmaple's** ad on our outside back page.

• Mark your calendars now for **September 7-10, 2006**, for the **NFTJ/IHRSA Conference** and **Trade Show** in Las Vegas. Speakers will include **THOMAS PLUMMER**, President of the Thomas Plummer Company; **CASEY CONRAD**, Presi-

dent, **Healthy Inspirations**; **MICHAEL SCOTT SCUDDER**, President/CEO, Ms-SFitBiz Connection; **KAREN WOODARD-CHAVEZ**, President, Premium Performance Training; **WILL PHILLIPS**, CEO / Founder, REX Roundtables for Executives; **PAUL BROWN**, CEO, Face to Face Retention Systems; **ANTHONY BAYNARD**, National Director of Corporate Sales, Gold's Gym Int.; **MIKE KINCAID**, Director of Education, CMS Midwest; **NANCY KOURIS**, Owner / GM, World Gym, Hampton Bays and **ANNETTE LANG**, Owner, Annette Lang Education Systems LLC. For more information visit: ihrsa.org/conference

• For sure...mark your calendar for the always great **Club Industry Show** in Chicago **October 4-7, 2006!** As usual, the one and only, **Howard Ravis** will present a great educational seminar program with speakers that will help you learn new and better 'best-business' practices and **SAM POSA** will be sure you enjoy and find great values in the **super Club Industry Trade Show**. Go to: clubindustryshow.com for more info and registration.

• **TIM RICHARDS**, owner of the **Orchard Hills Athletic Club**, was honored by **Fitchburg State University** with its **President's Award** for "above and beyond" service to the community. In May, at the Commencement Ceremonies for **Mount Wachusett Community College**, my friend Tim was presented with the "**2006 Service Above Self**" Award. Congratulations Tim and **SHEILA!**

• **DONNA KRECH**, Founder and CEO of **THIN and HEALTHY Weight Loss** continues her Saturday morning **TV Broadcasts on Oprah's Oxygen Network**. Thanks for having me on your show Donna!

• **Congratulations** to **MIKE URETZ** and **World Gym International** as World Gym celebrated its **30th Anniversary!** The **19th Annual World Gym Convention and Awards Banquet** was held in conjunction with the **Arnold Classic** in Columbus, Ohio in March. **THOMAS PLUMMER, BILL PEARL, NEAL SPRUCE, CHRIS-**

TIAN BABINI, DEREK BARTON and JULIA ROSE were all educational and motivational speakers. **TAMMY De'ANTONIO** of World Gym Gilbert, Arizona, presented **MIKE URETZ** with the **World Gym Legend Award**. That's just great to me because I have been fortunate to get to know many of the legends in our industry and Mike sure fits in with them! The **2nd Annual World Gym Hall of Fame Class of 2006** was introduced and they were: long-time employee **ZABO, LEE LABRADA and FRANCO COLUMBO**. Franco's award was accepted by **KEVIN LEVRONE and CLAY WHITTAKER** due to last minute complications. **World Gym's Annual Awards for Excellence** winners were: **JOE GOLD Award - Tertius Broderick; Best World Gym worldwide - WG Tainah, Taiwan - JOHN CARACCIO; Best World Gym - Domestic - Smyrna/Vinings, Georgia - BRENDA CARTER; Outstanding Marketing Program - WG Cool Springs, TN. - MANNY BUTERA; Most Improved Facility - WG Altamonte Springs, FL. - MIKE TURNER, Best Interior Signage - WG Smyrna/Vinings - BRENDA CARTER and Outstanding Community Service - (tie) WG Altamonte Springs - MIKE TURNER and DAN BLOCK - InTek Strength.** I would also like to thank my friends, **MIKE URETZ** and **JIM ENGLISH**, Publisher of **World Gym Magazine**, for publishing my: www.leavingfatcity.com online announcement in their very impressive and colorful **May 2006 edition.**

• Congratulations to **TRACI and DARON "Rock-etman" ALLEN** on their recent marriage. And, congratulations to **CATHERINE and TONY deLEEDE** on their June 10th wedding. May blessings and happiness fill the lives of both of these newlywed couples!

More People and More Happenings

• **Virgin Life Care** hooks up with **Humana Health Care • Gold's Gym International, CEO, GENE LaMOTT** says: "Domestically, we have just over 500 clubs, and by the end of 2010, we're

going to be closer to 1,000."

• Proposed sales tax on health and athletic club services in Pennsylvania defeated - **IHRSA praises victory for club operators and members.**

• **RONALE TUCKER RHODES** writes: **Athletic Business Publications** is pleased to announce it has acquired **Fitness Management magazine** from **Leisure Publications**. Athletic Business Founder and Publisher **PETER BROWN** says: "Fitness Management is a great fit for our company." **CLUB INSIDER** says: "This is a match made in publishing heaven!" • **Bally Total Fitness** has announced that **GAYLE FRANGER**, formerly with **McDonald's**, has been appointed **Vice President of Corporate and Brand Development**. That's good because Bally stock continues to drop after rising to nearly 10 in the past few months.

• **Star Trac and Madd Dog Fitness** announce extension of alliance for 10 more years.

• **CATHY LEWIS of C.S. Lewis and Company Publicists**, asks American consumers: "Is your job making you sick?" • Naked tubing costing companies big money due to liability issues...email to **ED DILBECK** for important press release: ed@stroops.com

• **WebMD** says: "people who exercise routinely have up to a 50% lower risk of having a heart attack or chest pain, and they have a lower risk of other diseases as well." • **FRANK NAPOLITANO** named new **GlobalFit President and CEO**...congrats Frank and **MARY!**

• **IHRSA** announces **IHRSA Institute Scholarship** in **JOHN MCCARTHY's** name. • **2006 USA TODAY Weight-Loss Challenge** kicked off on June 12, 2006.

• **GEOFF HAMPTON** announces: Greater Washington DC, Baltimore, MD area **Shifting the Sales Dynamics Seminar** is set for Friday, July 21st. For info: GEOFFHAMPTON@aol.com • The **Asiafit Convention and Workshops 2006** will take place at the **Hong Kong Exhibition Centre** from **July 12-14, 2006.**

• **LARRY PACIFICO's** son, **JIMMIE**, won the State of

(See Norm's Notes page 8)



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...Norm's Notes
 continued from page 6

Ohio titles in both the **shot put & discus** with a put of 64'-3" and throw of 179'-10". He will lift in the **National Powerlifting Championship** on June 27th. Look for Jimmie Pacifico to be an **Olympian** as he is a rising Senior in high school!

• **TSI** successfully launched its **IPO** and announces deal with **HBO's Entourage Season Two**

to be broadcast in 90 TSI clubs. • **CASEY CONRAD'S HEALTHY INSPIRATIONS** announces their "**Are You Inspired?**" national essay contest winner: **STACY GILLIOM**. • **U. S. Department of Labor (DOL)** has singled out "**personal training**" as one of the nation's 15 largest employment opportunities in the years immediately ahead.

• Sonoma County, CA, judge orders a Santa Rosa women's health club to open its doors to men.

God Bless our troops, airmen and seamen and their families as they fight for our American freedoms in Iraq. Give them all safety and strength as they *finish the tough job they were asked to do for America and the world.* **God Bless** the people of Iraq and their troops as they complete training to defend their country. **God Bless America!**

STAY TUNED!

(Norm Cates, Jr. is the

Founder and is the Publisher Since 1993 of CLUB INSIDER. Cates is a 32-year veteran of the health, racquet and sportsclub industry. In 1981 Cates was the 1st President of the Association with Rick Caro and five others. He was honored by IHRSA in March, 2001. He was presented its DALE DIBBLE Distinguished Service Award ... an honor that was the greatest of his life in March, 2001. Norm Cates may be reached at:

770.850.8506 or at: clubinsidernews@mindspring.com or at: normcates@leavingfatcity.com Look for Norm Cates' new book online for free now and in bookstores for just \$7 a copy by October, 2006. Go to: www.leavingfatcity.com - click on Chapters List, download fast PDF and print all 105 pages. You will be glad you did! And Cates welcomes your criticisms or other suggestions. If provided, they may be included in the printed version of the book.)

• **Inside The Insider** •

- **POWERING UP YOUR BUSINESS**
Powering Up Your Staff
 by Will Phillips
- **A Refreshed Approach to an Old Tool** by Karen Woodard-Chavez
- **"STUCK IN THE MUCK AT EXACTLY THE WRONG TIME"** by Michael Scott Scudder

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 P.O. Box 681241, Marietta GA 30068-0021
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 Email : clubinsidernews@mindspring.com
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...John McCarthy

continued from page 3

ble and modest man.

Therefore, you may see a few question responses from Big John where I have set forth a little of my own home spun commentary after his response. I've embellished on a few of John's responses and shared them with you, because of John's unassuming, humble and modest nature.

Q. - "How old are you and where were you born?"

A. - I am 69 and I was born in Chicago.

Q. - John please tell us about your high school and college years, in particular, your experiences in basketball.

A. - I was always a

strong basketball player. I played at Mt.Carmel High School on the South Side of Chicago. I played forward, center and when needed, guard. Like every high school kid, you do what they ask. Mt. Carmel is the same high school where one very famous NBA player now, Antoine Walker, played.

I was offered a scholarship at the University of Notre Dame. I started there for 2 ½ years and made three different All American teams. I made Academic All American, the New York City Sports Writers All American and the Catholic All American. From there I was drafted by the NY Knicks, but I had already decided I was going to go in a different direction. I played for one short tour with the Harlem Globetrotters. That

was fun

Q. - When and why did you move to Boston?

A. - I had been working in the Twin Cities (Minneapolis/St. Paul), Minnesota, as a teacher and a coach. The President of the college where I worked asked me to get a Ph.D. So, I applied to four schools: Columbia, Harvard, Princeton and Penn. I got into Columbia and Harvard. So, I had to make the decision...to live in New York City or to live in Boston? So, I chose to live in Boston. That's what brought me to Boston. I never completed my Ph.D. But, I had finished all of my exams and had my thesis topic approved. While I was doing this I was always teaching and coaching. Then, I became fully involved in the club industry and stuck with it.

Q. - Tell us about your club experience before you became involved in the club association business?

A. - The interesting thing Norm is I had always worked in clubs going back to my college days. Riding clubs, yacht clubs, golf clubs, tennis clubs, country clubs...all those things. So when I got to Boston I worked in quite a few places around here to support myself. I was also the coach of the Radcliffe Tennis and Basketball Teams. I had an opportunity at a new tennis club that was opening in Walpole, Massachusetts. The new club had a small fitness center in the basement.

I became the manager and a 10% owner. My partners were Bob Nee and John Hughes. I was there from 1975 to 1980. The club is still there now. It is called the Wimbledon 109 Tennis Club and is thriving. My chief competitor there then is a good friend of yours who beat me into the ground...Tim Richards. Tim is tough as nails as a competitor.

It was there that I met some other terrific people: Dick Trant, Dale Dibble, Lloyd Gainsboro, Nick Cotsidas, and Randy Vataha. All of those guys were the bulwarks of the New England club industry. I owe a great debt of gratitude to each and every one of them. I basically sat at their feet ... because they were all major players

in the greater Boston market and had been for some time. I learned a ton from them. They were true pioneers.

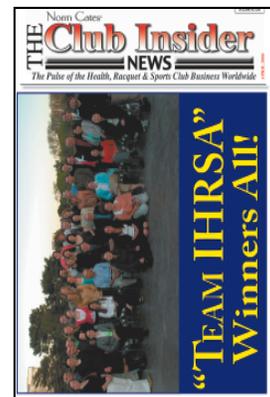
Early Association Days

Q. - You were involved as the Executive Director of the New England Racquet Sports Association prior to stepping into your IRSA (now IHRSA) leadership role. Tell us about that please.

A. - The pioneers I mentioned had a Friday afternoon group they called the "T Group". We used to meet Friday afternoons once a month and talked about everything. Some of us were rookies, but, I was much greener than everybody else. We were all learning. None of us knew anything about fitness. None of us knew anything about group exercise. Or saunas or whirlpools. We were all babes in the woods. In 1978, mainly at Dick Trant's behest, I was asked to take over the "T Group" program. We put together about 250 clubs and started inviting the best known people in the industry at that time to come and speak to us. We invited Alan Schwarz, Curt Beusman and Red Lerille to come up and speak to us. Curt Beusman and Rick Caro were always the closest of friends (and still are), so we invited Rick to come up from New York. Rick Caro must have spoken for us every six months or so. Even then Rick knew more than anybody else about everything. Rick is the best net worker in the world. But, he never discloses a confidence. He sure always knows what is going on. Rick is a man of high integrity. And, he is very, very bright. And, he has never held the year before last against us (Boston Red Sox fans) since he used to work for the New York Yankees.

Q. - You were recruited for IRSA by some of those same pioneers. Tell us about that please?

A. - Initially I was approached by Trant, Caro and Dibble about moving from NERSA to IRSA. You, Dale Dibble, Todd Pulis, Jennifer Wayt and Peter Donahue had met in Chicago per Rick's request to discuss bringing together the National Tennis Association (NTA) and the



April 2006 Club Insider

National Court Club Association (NCCA was a racquetball club owners association). Per your Chicago meeting recommendation to Rick, IRSA was founded by seven of you in New York City in March of 1981. Those seven IRSA Founders were: you Norm, Rick Caro, Curt Beusman, Dale Dibble, Todd Pulis, Jennifer Wayt and Peter Donahue. Chuck Leve had been appointed in New York City as the acting IRSA Executive Director. You were elected to be the first IRSA President. I later met with Dale Dibble, Todd Pulis, Rick Caro, Curt Beusman and Peter Donahue to discuss my stepping in as Executive Director of IRSA. I was appointed to be the acting Executive Director in June, 1981. They asked me if I could start in September, 1981. We did so in September, 1981.

The World's Greatest Advocate and Teacher of the Values and Benefits of Regular Exercise

Q. - John, along the way, you became in my opinion, the world's greatest advocate and teacher of the value and ultimately, the benefits of regular exercise. First, let me just thank you for what you have done for all of us with regard to this teaching and thank you for your personal influence on me. As you and most others know, later in life, I had strayed away from fitness and my past years as an athlete. You successfully brainwashed me about the great value and benefits of regular exercise over 25 years! At the point in time when I really needed it back in November, 2000, I (See John McCarthy page 12)

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...John McCarthy

continued from page 10

was able to reach back, get it and go back to what I used to do as an athlete. I am happy now that I recaptured my own personal control over my fitness and my own destiny.

John McCarthy – That's great Norm. You and I are the same, as we are both former college jocks who always believed in the values of regular exercise when we were young. We've also learned that those values become so important as we get older

Dr. Steven Blair's

1987 Report:

"Physical Fitness and All Cause Mortality"

Triggers Vision for the Future of the Industry

Q. - John, did you write IHRSA's original "Value of Regular Exercise?" document?

A. - I've had a hand in everyone of these writings because this *value and these benefits have been my #1 passion*. I really believe it's the foundation for the entire industry. It's the ultimate foundation for the growth of the industry, for the political power, the social power and the standing of the industry. It's not the only thing we do, but it's the basis of everything we do.

Club Insider - We, as the Founders of IRSA, now IHRSA, had not articu-

lated or identified "regular exercise" as a key point and focus of our IRSA/IHRSA message back then. But, you did. You brought it forward to the world's attention. How did that happen and what year was that?

John - I'll tell you the thing that woke me up. 1987 was when Steve Blair wrote his earth shaking article in the Journal of the American Medical Association on the relationship between regular exercise and all cause mortality. The results of that study were absolutely mind blowing! *The death rate of people who did not exercise over this 15-year study period was 10 to 15 times that of the death rate of people who exercised regularly!* That woke me up to the *immense power of regular exercise* with respect to heart disease and preventing many other human health issues.

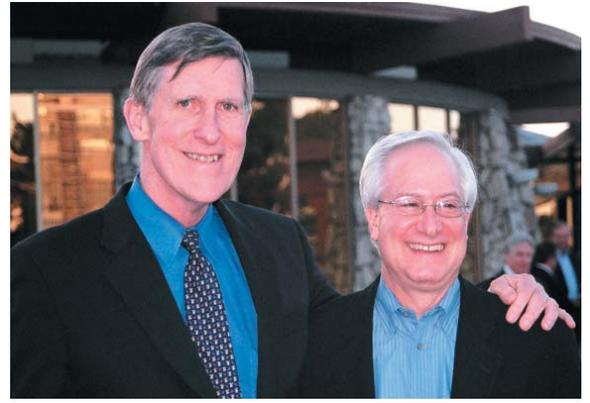
Club Insider - John at IHRSA25, you and I, and 1,500 others attended Dr. Steven Blair's amazing presentation, the last seminar of the Convention. Boy did he lay out an amazing update with that great presentation!

John - Yep...I'll tell you, all of us in this industry owe Steven Blair much more than we will ever realize. I was just talking today with some people about that original study. *That study was the "Mother" of all studies!* Then more and more people started researching. They researched every angle. They researched hypertension. They researched depression. They researched anxiety. They researched sleep disorders. They found they are all linked!

Club Insider - What was the name of that 1987 Dr. Steven Blair study John?

John - I always keep it on my desk. The exact title is: **"Physical Fitness and All Cause Mortality"** by Steven Blair, Ph.D. We can make this report available for IHRSA members.

Q. - John, your identification of Steven Blair's report that triggered your vision for our industry, leads perfectly into my next question. Please recall back in 1994 when the name International Racquet Sports Association (IRSA) was changed by the insertion of the word:



**John McCarthy, Chuck Leve and "Team IHRSA"
Built A Global Force!**

HEALTH, thus changing the name to: International Health Racquet and Sportsclub Association and making the acronym from then on: IHRSA.

A. - I'm sure you remember Norm, because you were involved in this too! We hired a good guy, Brian McBain, to do a name search. He came up with: *Exercere* – a Latin word that means: "to exercise". As you well remember, Norm, this caused you, Cecil Spearman, Tom Lyneis and a whole bunch of guys to go ballistic! I mean... you all argued by saying to that Board "You're going to throw away all of the equity we have in IRSA for a name that nobody knows what it means, nobody can understand it...nobody can even spell it!" (John laughs audibly along with your author).

Club Insider - Now for the record here Big John...I want to go back and reflect on the very first edition of CLUB INSIDER. It was published in November, 1993. That first issue was 12 pages. The now 43+ year veteran club owner, Red Lerville, was depicted with one of his vintage bi-planes on the front headline page, a page with copy, as opposed to today's CLUB INSIDERS.

Toward the back of that first issue ever, I wrote and published a half-page article entitled: **"Exercere Will Work If the IRSA Members Want It To!"** After that issue hit across the country and from that point forward John, I was getting countless faxes that they, the upset IRSA members, had sent to you, copied to me (before cyberspace era) and many phone calls from our friends, other IRSA leaders across Ameri-

ca.

Everybody was raising hell! I said to myself, "Jane Beusman, wife of "Brother" Curt Beusman, articulated the Mission of CLUB INSIDER in Chicago, Illinois in January, 1993 at a Faust Roundtable Meeting. That was when our group first created CLUB INSIDER. Jane said and I quote: "Our industry badly needs a publication that is *outsoken, irreverent* and that *"Tells-It-Like-It-Is"*."

John McCarthy adds: "Norm...then when the people saw that you as the Founding President had this position, they felt entitled to rise enmasse! The next Board meeting lasted 15 hours! Everybody was trying to decide what we would do. This is a true story. Frank Napolitano was on the Board. It was about midnight. We had started at 8 o'clock that morning. Frank said, "Why don't we just drop a silent "H" between the "I" and the "R". It will be pronounced the same way." It was just the simplest thing. They argued it too death, but they voted it in.

John's comment above goes to the end, but I thought to myself the next month, when producing my next issue, after my "Exercere Will Work" article: "Although this is your *second edition ever...you'd better live up to that Mission articulated so well by Jane and promised in writing in your first issue last month.*" And...I did. I really had no choice then but to give a published voice, on the behalf of my many IRSA friends across America and the world, for the feelings virtually all them had about this Board's move. I echoed

(See **John McCarthy** page 14)

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...John McCarthy

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those feelings for our IHRSA leaders for the next three months in CLUB INSIDER. I proposed an IHRSA Open Forum at our March 1994 convention in Reno, Nevada. A large crowd of 200 - 300 attended. 32 people spoke. 31 speakers disagreed with the name change to Exercere.

That resulted in the Board voting to rescind the name change to Exercere and start over. Thus, thank goodness, as at the meeting...the word HEALTH was added to the Association name.

But...I will add here, and I have written these words before, too. Larry Krieger, IRSA President then and Patricia Laus, prominent Atlantic Club owner and that entire Board were and remain very bright, very advanced and very leading edge thinkers.

Thinking back on all this, I honestly think that at that moment in time the name "Exercere" might have worked well when combined with John's vision driven by the thrusts triggered by Steven Blair's report.

But, to vote 9-0 to do it and then to announce to the IRSA members without a tie in to Blair's report caused a lot of IHRSA supporters to be upset. I was the messenger. But, I later teamed with the majority of IRSA members and opposed the measure in print. But, I did not start out opposed to it. I started out neutral and responded to IHRSA member's wishes.

The resounding lesson learned then was that IHRSA Boards should, and I think have, consult much more carefully with the other

IHRSA leaders when making big time decisions such as that name change to "Exercere" was.

Club Insider – Well John after recalling this "Exercere" deal, as it turned out, having that word HEALTH in there changed the focus of the market place for IRSA, did it not?

John - It opened the whole thing up! Until we got that word in there we couldn't even talk to people in Nautilus clubs or Gold's Gyms. They thought we were just a racquet club association. We had drunk the "Curt Beusman cocktail" and everybody in our segment of the industry was high priced. The high prices in those days were \$40, \$50 or \$60 a month. These new fitness clubs that were coming into the market were \$200 a year. So, we had to cross that river and get beyond that, which we were able to do. But, if we didn't have a new name, we couldn't have done anything about it.

Club Insider – John, I think that was a pivotal point or a milestone in IHRSA's history because the number of IHRSA member clubs grew very rapidly from there. And, the Associate side of the Association also exploded as more and more new fitness equipment manufacturers and service providers started up new businesses.

A New Beginning

John - I think it was a new beginning. But, the industry still is continuing to evolve. It continues to change, as you know. There is a whole new breed of clubs coming online. Like Planet Fitness, Anytime Fitness, Curves, Fitness 123. All of these new breed of clubs are writing a new chapter in the history of the industry.

So...the thing keeps changing...the thing keeps evolving. IHRSA's like a rodeo horse. It tries to ride this thing. Sometimes we get bucked off. Sometimes we stay on the horse. But, we always try to get back on this thing when we get bucked off.

Club Insider - Well John, I've gotta tell you, you've ridden this bucking horse well. The end result that you're going to hand

over to Joe Moore at the end of the day on June 30, 2006, is one excellent group of club owners and one great "Team IHRSA".

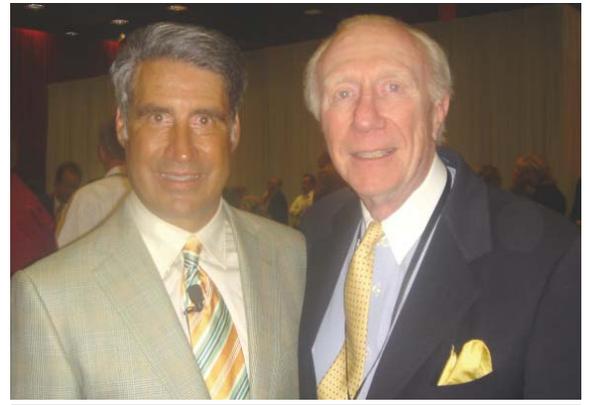
Q. – Big John, you've worked with 24 IRSA/IHRSA Presidents now and some 150 or more Board members during your great 25-year run. (Note here: there have been only 24 Presidents because Geoff Dyer and Tom Behan each had 1 ½ year terms). That's must have been an amazing experience. Especially having to deal with yours truly that very first year and for the past 13 years as the publisher of CLUB INSIDER! You ... Big John, have the patience of Job! Dealing with 150 or more people who were IRSA/IHRSA leaders had to be an amazingly patience trying experience. How did you do that? How hard was it?

John - IHRSA's George Washington, Norm Cates! The main thing for anybody in my position is to be a very careful and good listener. By that, I mean: don't be passive. I mean: be an active listener. The goal of every board meeting is to pick up one or two or three good new ideas. As you always said to me back then when we first started up and you and I would have our weekly telephone talks, "Get it out the door John! The Board wants action. They want us to be a very proactive association!"

That's the goal. The goal is to be a proactive listener, to jump on every good idea that comes along that makes sense and that is mission driven. That's another good thing about IHRSA. We have a good mission: "To Grow, Protect and Promote the industry and give our members benefits that will help them be more successful." We always adhere to that mission. Anything that is consistent with that mission and supports that mission, we'll do. Neither the board or the staff wants to go outside that mission.

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Club Insider - Big John, one of yours and your



Augie Nieto (L) and Dick Trant

IHRSA Team's greatest achievements (in addition to teaching the world about the great value and benefits of regular exercise) is the depth of the long list of the services, support and educational products for IHRSA member club owners and operators.

As you know John, I have written these words before, too. But, I am going to write them here again. Again, I am going to try to get through to the few naysayer IHRSA friends I have spoken to about their IHRSA value issue. One of the most painful comments I've ever heard in 25 years from those few IHRSA members is that they have any difficulty justifying their IHRSA membership dues. That statement always leaves me flabbergasted!

My response to them has always been: "If you, as a veteran club owner/operator, will just take the time and expend the energy to go back and truly make learning about IHRSA's total member benefit package that is available today, then select and use as many of the IHRSA services as much as possible, you will make much more money in your business!"

Even the 25+ year club owner guys should do this! But frankly John, some of those folks, my good friends and yours, are just looking for an excuse to avoid that extra work! In short...some of our good 25 year IHRSA friends are lazy. But folks...times they are a changin'! Many of the lazy in this industry are one day going to fall by the wayside.

Q. - John, please share your thinking about the "High tides float all boats theory"?

A. – I think we all

realize that we've had the winds at our backs all 25 years. Which meant that for the last 25 years for people that are wide awake, and most everybody we know is wide awake, its been a very good business. It has been a remarkable business. I think the proof of it is the number of private equity companies that are involved in our business. Big firms that are investing in our business nationally and internationally.

And, further proof is the number of very successful single or two club owners. People like Red Lerille and Joe Cirulli and Patricia Laus. Even though they own one or two clubs, they are very well admired and respected as much as people who own 100 or 200 clubs. No doubt about it. There are a lot of people who just own one or two clubs but make a fortune because they do it so well.

The "Prophet" Augie

Q. - John, we started IRSA/IHRSA as a small international association. Now, IHRSA is a huge, international power in the fitness industry. Please tell us about the fast growing international market.

A. - The biggest factor in the arena was Augie Nieto, Founder of Life Fitness.

Augie was really the driving force behind the globalization of the industry. Augie was always first. He was a great friend of IRSA/IHRSA. And, he still is now as the Chairman of Octane Fitness. He is also a great inspiration with his Augie's Quest work to defeat the disease that has plagued him for the last year...Lou Gehrig's disease.

(See John McCarthy page 16)



July 2005 Cover

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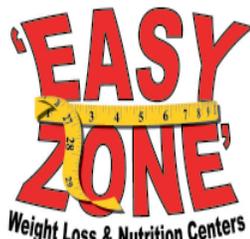
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...John McCarthy

continued from page 14

(Also known as ALS) Augie was always telling Chuck Leve and me, "You've gotta go to Europe, you've gotta go to Latin America, you've gotta go to the Middle-East! The industry is booming out there!" For all of those years we were following **Augie's path**.

Club Insider - The '**Prophet Augie!**

John - Yes...the '**Prophet Augie** indeed!

The irony of the situation right now is that Herman Rutgers was Augie's Life Fitness guy in Europe. He works for IHRSA now. And, John Holsfinger was Augie's Life Fitness guy in Asia. He works for IHRSA now too! They are both *awesome* fellows.

Club Insider - Those guys are *two more winners* you've added to the winners on "**Team IHRSA**". I visited with Herman at IHRSA25. He's a fun and terrific guy. It's great that Herman and John are working for IHRSA now.

(Author's note about Ray Wilson and Augie Nieto launching Lifecycle - Augie worked for Ray Wilson early on as a young man when Ray was launching Lifecycle for the world. Together, Ray and Augie brought Lifecycle and, in turn, cardiovascular exercise, to the masses worldwide. That *single event changed health and fitness clubs forever*. It also triggered a *mass cardiovascular equipment development era since then*. Lifecycle truly super-charged cardiovascular exercise. The legendary Dr. Kenneth H. Cooper, of the famous Cooper Aerobics Center in Dallas, Texas, first defined cardio exercise as crucial for the masses in his 1968 best selling book: "Aerobics". But, many years before Cooper's many writings, Astronaut Jim Lovell had told Ray Wilson that *he should include cardiovascular exercise machines in all of his clubs of the future*. Ray and Bob Delmonte trained NASA Astronauts at Ray's Presidents Club in Houston, Texas, in the 1950's...very early years of our industry.)

IHRSA's Public Policy Thrusts

Q. - Please tell us about IHRSA's fourth and most recent Washington D.C. Legislative Summit. In particular, please inform club owners everywhere about what IHRSA is doing for them, no matter if they are IHRSA members or not.

A. - Helen Durkin, our Public Policy Director and a 16-year IHRSA staff member, has taken us *from nowhere, to where we are today*. By profession Helen is a tax attorney. She has embraced the entire IHRSA

agenda with *unfair competition, tax bills in all the states and tax issues in the Federal government*. She has been ably assisted by Kevin Buckley and other staff members.

We now have both the *Workforce Health Improvement Bill (WHIP)* and the new *Personal Health Investment Today Bill (PHIT)* recently introduced to the legislators.

The *WHIP Bill* will be an *ENORMOUS* benefit to every club selling corporate memberships. It will make corporate health club membership a tax-privileged, tax-exempt purchase by all American corporations.

The new *PHIT Bill* lets individuals who put aside money in tax deferred medical savings vehicles, such as *flexible spending accounts (FSA)* and *health savings accounts (HSA)*, be able to purchase a health club membership with *pre-tax dollars*.

Both of these Bills are *very important* to the industry. We have *77 legislators signed on now* and we're *closing in on 100 for the WHIP Bill*. We now have *five legislators* signed on for the new PHIT Bill.

The WHIP Bill will never fly as a *stand alone bill*. So, we must attach it to a larger tax bill. Dennis Hastert, the Chairman of the House of Representatives, promised us that he will attach the WHIP Bill to another larger tax bill as soon as he can, possibly even by the end of this Summer.

The 50+ Market

Q. - Over the past 10 years IHRSA and Colin Milner's International Council On Active Aging (ICAA) have lead the way in the pursuit of the 50+ market. Tell us the latest news on that front please?

A. The 50+ market for health club memberships is *the fastest growing market in the industry right now by a monster multiple!* The *other* markets are *growing moderately*, but the *50+ market is exploding*. This has been the result of the *fact* that as *we get older*, more and more of us realize that if *we don't exercise*, our *risk* of getting heart disease, cancer, hypertension, stroke or whatever else, is *just escalating*. *The message is getting through. People are believing this right now*. We expect this to continue to be the fastest growing health club market for some time.

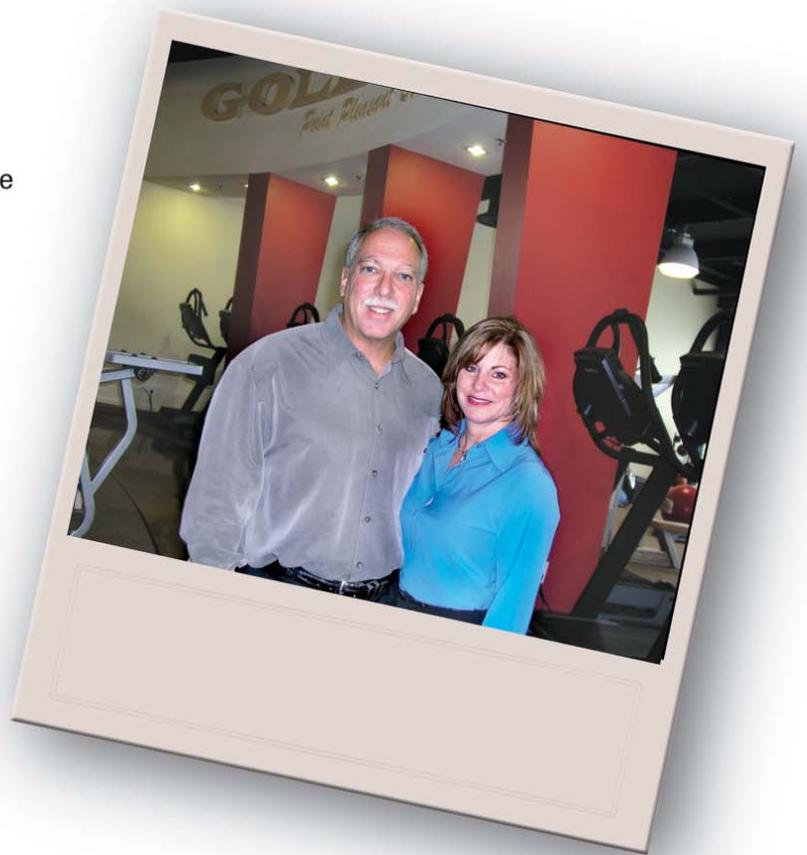
Club Insider - As usual, modest John, did not mention that IHRSA, through his personal and direct focus, has become a daily pipeline for educational information for the worldwide media. The media has taken *IHRSA's constant barrage of information* and *has aided this 50+ thrust* using McCarthy and IHRSA's information. We have also had 78 million "Baby-Boomers" feeding the 50+ market and that
 (See *John McCarthy* page 18)

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Mark and Karen Steinfield

Gold's Gyms of Howell, Point Pleasant, and Long Branch



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Association Insurance Group

...John McCarthy

continued from page 16

will continue for years.

I am real happy to be a *surviving member of the first month of the "Baby-Boomer Generation"* - January, 1946. Jill Kinney, Founder of *Club One*, and Larry Pacifico, my Rome, New York, high school weight lifting buddy, who went on world power lifting fame, are leading edge "Baby-Boomers" too. All three of us were born on January 17, 1946! (I saw the lovely Jill Kinney at IHRSA25 and I still think they got Jill's birth-certificate mixed up, as she does not look a day over 39!)

The 196 Million Obese and Overweight Americans!

Q. - John, let's talk about another *potentially huge, yet right now, virtually untapped by America's health clubs, market for new health club members...* the **196 million obese/overweight Americans.** (IHRSA has been working on reaching the overweight and obese for a long time. Many IHRSA thrusts have been made and the most recent new thrust is IHRSA's "I Lost It At the Club!" The second year - IHRSA "I Lost It At the Club" program and promotion was recently completed with great results).

John - My sense is that *all the research shows that nobody can take weight off (properly) and more importantly, they can't keep it off permanently for life, unless they are involved in regular exercise.* As that lesson permeates American society, the American 196 million obese and overweight population is another enormous opportunity for the club industry. The evidence for the *opportunity* is: *conclusive*, it's *definitive* and it's *not debatable.* As that message gets through, the number of people working out in health clubs is just going to increase.

Club Insider - Well John...I now am compelled to get in a *shameless plug* for my new book: "**Leaving FAT City**". www.leavingfatcity.com

I don't know if you've had time to read my book yet. But, I do think that when you and thousands of others

in our industry do take the 3 or so hours it takes to read it, you and all in our industry will then realize that I've put 105 pages together that are intended to **unite two parties.**

Party #1 being *29,000 American commercial health clubs* and **Party #2** being *196 million overweight or obese Americans.* We now have a *major gap between these two parties.* A gap caused by the fear of embarrassment in a health club that is held by the obese and overweight.

And John...recent news about the 2005 U.S. health club membership staying flat at 41.3 million for a second year, provides everybody in this industry with proof of Michael Scott Scudder and my admonitions for years now that our industry should really begin to focus on and tap into other new markets big time.

John, your latest, but just one, amongst many, of your great writings, your June CBI "Memo from McCarthy", entitled: "**U.S. Industry's Growth Stalls at 41.3 Million. But Is It Bad News? Not Entirely --8 Reasons Why!**" is terrific. Bravo... John...you are the consummate positive man. And, you've kept on swinging *positively* right down to the wire at the end of your career! I admire you greatly for your writings and thank you for all of us!

Joe "the Gladiator" Moore Steps Up and Into Big Shoes

Q. - John, let's discuss your successor, Joe "the Gladiator" Moore, ...our industry's great friend.

A. - I think Joe has all the qualities IHRSA is looking for. First of all, *he was a successful club owner for over 30 years.* He is great with people. He reaches out. Joe is a proactive guy. A common sense guy. Everybody trusts Joe...everybody on the Board and everybody on the Staff trusts Joe 100%. He is a top notch person.

Club Insider - We reached out to new incoming and first ever IHRSA CEO/President - Joe "the Gladiator" Moore, for a comment on John McCarthy, before he steps up and into John's big

shoes on July 1, 2006. Joe Moore did not go to "IHRSA's Fortress for Health Club Good" at 263 Summer Street in Boston unprepared. In addition to being a 30+ year club owner/operator, Joe served IHRSA for four years on the Board of Directors and as IHRSA's last ever Board President for 2005/06.

Joe Moore comments on John

"John McCarthy is absolutely passionate about the industry. His ability to form coalitions with people who have competing interests is remarkable. He has spent a great deal of time teaching me the about the relationships and values he holds dear. I'm honored to call him my friend."

Michael S. Levy IHRSA Board Chairman

The new leader's title is: "Chairman of the Board".

Michael S. Levy, CEO of Casaral, Inc., Toronto, Canada, has been elected to be IHRSA's first-ever Chairman. Michael will step into those Chairman shoes on July 1, 2006.

That means, in addition to Michael Levy being IHRSA's first ever Chairman of the Board, Big John McCarthy will be IHRSA's first and only Executive Director ever. And, Joe Moore will be IHRSA's first ever CEO/President How cool is that?!

"Team IHRSA"

Q. - "Team IHRSA", the name I use for the staff you've assembled over 25 years John, are just terrific. Please share your feelings about your 60 IHRSA full-timers.

John - They are invaluable to IHRSA and have been invaluable to me. They are self-starting people that are very easy to work with. They are very highly motivated people. Very adaptable and flexible people. In my opinion, they are all high-achievers.

Q. - If you could state one thing that *might have been your secret to success* in getting all the things you've gotten done through

your IHRSA staff, what would that be? By the way, congratulations once again as *IHRSA25* was nothing short of *spectacular!* What a great team effort that was!

A. - Thanks Norm. I think the *secret* is that *I have been very fortunate.* To a person, they are all low maintenance. They are self-starters and hard chargers. I think really giving them room to do their thing was all I needed to do.

The End of the Line... or Is It?

Q. - June 30, 2006, will be your last day with IHRSA, after 25-years. You will truly leave a "legacy of excellence", as IHRSA's 25-Year Executive Director Emeritus. What are your plans for the future John?

In particular, quoting terrific CBI Editor In Chief Craig Waters comments in the June CBI Magazine about you, "**Believe me, we have not seen the last of - we have not heard the last from - John McCarthy**", I ask now...can our industry count on your experience, wisdom and leadership, even in your retirement years? I do hope so.

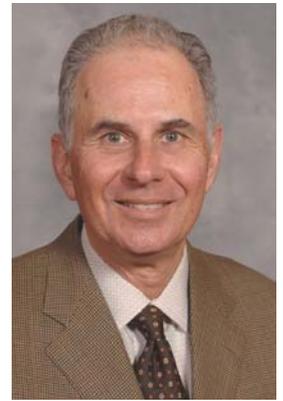
A. - That's just a few days from today Norm. I am going to take this Summer to think through what the next option is. I'm not sure right now what the next step is.

Club Insider - Well John, I do hope that after your three-month sabbatical, that begins, according to Jon Feld's CBI article, with a transAtlantic cruise with your wonderful wife, Gail, you will consider becoming a *Club Insider Contributing Author* from time to time?

John McCarthy - Norm, if I do it for anybody, I will do it for you.

Q. - Thanks very much John. I'd like to close this terrific interview with this one last question: What is in your *heart* right now Big John?

A. - I feel enormously grateful and fortunate to have worked in such a great industry, with such great people within the industry and with such magnificent fellow staff members here at IHRSA. I feel just enormously



*Michael S. Levy,
IHRSA's 1st Chairman
Of The Board*

grateful and lucky.

Club Insider - That's a wonderful statement John. I think all of us out here feel enormously grateful to you and lucky to have had you leading IHRSA for 25 great years. But, you know what? I believe that you *made most of your luck* Big John ... with *hard work.*

I wish you, your wife Gail and your children, the very best of health, happiness and continued great success in life. God Bless you all.

Why I Call John - "Big John" McCarthy

I've really enjoyed this interview with Big John the "Alliance Master" McCarthy.

And, I hope you all have enjoyed reading this in-depth interview and report. With respect to the tape recorded interview with John...I am going to save it and take great care of it... for club industry history. That is because someday, I intend to do what I wrote about a year ago. That is to lead our industry in the development of a Health Club Industry Hall of Fame and Museum.

My prediction is that someday we will have a wing of that building dedicated to Big John the "Alliance Master" McCarthy.

Be sure to read Jon Feld's excellent CBI Magazine's retirement article. But...as always...you should also study it because it contains several articles that will help your clubs get better. The **June CBI Magazine is a classic piece...a true** (See John McCarthy page 20)



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...John McCarthy

continued from page 18

collector's item. In addition to congratulating IHRSA writer, Jon Feld, I want to congratulate CBI Editor-In Chief, Craig Waters and Publisher, Jay Ablondi and the entire CBI Team on a job very well done.

My hope is that my work here on this report and this edition will also become a collector's item for all John McCarthy fans after he retires.

Before I close let me explain why I have called John McCarthy "Big John" for years now.

I call him "Big John", not because he is 6'3" inches tall and weighs 210 pounds.

I call him "Big John" because he is a true giant of a man amongst many industry giants I know.

I like knowing giants. I like learning from giants. I like to sharing what I learn from giants with you in our industry. I have done that, in one way or the other, a cover story or some other form of report or tribute, every month for 152 months now.

John McCarthy, this giant of a man, is a one of a kind. This giant has the patience of Job. This giant has the people skills of Dale Carnegie, such as his uncanny ability to remember thousands of people's names. This giant has wisdom and leadership skills honed by fire over 25 years, but rooted in his younger years, when he was a Priest in the Roman Catholic Church. This giant has been respected and honored by his peers all of his life.

This giant has been honored by IHRSA with its Person of the Year Award, its Visionary Award and by Club Insider's "Health Club Pioneer of the Year Award" in March, 2006. (Along with IHRSA Founder, Rick Caro). IHRSA's Visionary Award name has been changed now to honor John in perpetuity. It is now called the John McCarthy Entrepreneur of the Year Award. The first recipient of the John McCarthy Entrepreneur of the Year Award honored at IHRSA25, was Pete Kight, the Founder and Chairman of the now giant CheckFree Corporation.

IHRSA also announced that it has established a merit scholarship in John McCarthy's name to its annual Institute for Professional Club Management. IHRSA is accepting applications for the 2007 scholarship.

"It is with great pleasure that we introduce this scholarship," said Joe Moore. "Under John's tutelage, the IHRSA Institute has become a tremendous educational resource for health club professionals and it seems fitting that we honor John in this special and lasting way."

Through all of his work and all of his honors over 25 years, this

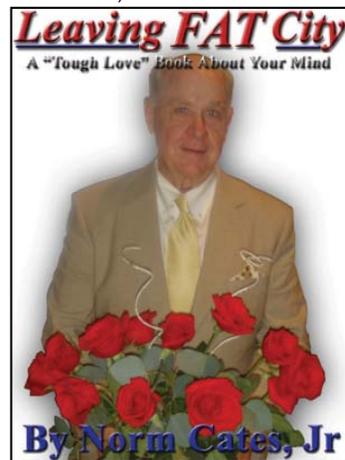
giant has remained a humble, ardously gentle man. John McCarthy has kept on giving right down to the wire. His ongoing work and research on regular exercise, health and wellness reports, often delivered online 3, 4 or 5 times per day, will carry power for people on this Mother Earth for eternity. His three books, "Member Retention", "Competition" and "Investors & Lenders Guide" ...will keep on giving forever to our industry pros.

Most importantly to me...Big John McCarthy, for far more than 25 years, has given this industry and this world his mind, his soul, his spirit and his great big heart.

We, in this new-age, 21st century health club industry, should be eternally thankful to Big John.

"Saint John McCarthy" ... that still has a nice ring to it doesn't it?

(Norm Cates, Jr. is the Founder of CLUB INSIDER News and Publisher Since 1993. Cates is a 32-year veteran of the health, racquet and sportsclub industry. In 1981 Cates was the 1st President of IHRSA and a co-founder of the Association with Rick Caro and five others. He was honored by IHRSA in March, 2001. He was presented its DALE DIBBLE Distinguished Service Award ... an honor that was the greatest of his life. Norm Cates may be reached at: 770.850.8506 or at: clubinsidernews@mindspring.com or at: normcates@leavingfatcity.com Look for Norm Cates' new book online for free now and in bookstores for \$7 a copy by October, 2006. Go to: www.leavingfatcity.com - click on Chapters List, download fast PDF and print all 105 pages. You will be glad you did! And Cates welcomes your criticisms or other suggestions. If provided, they may be included in the printed version of the book.)



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POWERING UP YOUR BUSINESS

Part III of a White Paper...

By Will Phillips

Powering Up Your Staff

The next set of books to give your whole staff power have been written by Marcus Buckingham as the lead author. What's important to know about Buckingham is that he was a real hit when he gave a major presentation at a recent IHRSA convention. REX Roundtable members have been using his material since it first came out in 1999 and many now use his simple assessment as a Key Performance Indicator. Buckingham worked with the Gallup organization, which in addition to conducting polls and surveys, has had a 25-year project of researching what good management is. In this particular research, they have interviews with over 80,000 managers in 400 businesses over 25 years, including many side-by-side comparisons in chains and franchisees where the work was identical from one operation to the next. Yet, some were extraordinarily productive and some extraordinarily unproductive. They researched the difference.

Most clubs don't have a proven method to improve staff productivity. Buckingham provides one.

By doing detailed interviews, observation of productivity and careful analysis, Buckingham was able to focus in on 12 core issues that distinguished the highly productive businesses from those that are not. Those 12 core issues are captured in a series of 12 questions. Here are the first 6. They are the ones most highly linked with organization results or productivity:

1. Do I know what is expected of me at work?
2. Do I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work correctly?
3. Do I have the opportunity

to do what I do best every day?

4. In the last seven days, have I received recognition of praise for good work?

5. Does my supervisor or someone at work seem to care about me as person?

6. Is there someone at work who encourages my development?

In looking at these questions, you may wonder why there are none dealing with pay, benefits, senior management, organizational structure, etc. They were included in the initial research, but were eliminated as not being able to distinguish between productive and non-productive businesses. In other words, it's equally important to every employee, whether their business is productive or not, to be well paid. These 6 focus on the issues about productivity. The next 6 address key elements driving high morale. So if you ever asked *how can I improve morale*, buy the book and learn. This is the best researched data on morale with specific actions for moving it the highest levels. In my continuing contact year after year with Club Roundtable members who have taken this approach in their clubs, the success is stunning.

The Over Arching Insight

In their extensive research the managers of the highest performing units all said the same thing in their own worlds:

"People don't change that much. Don't waste time trying to put in what was left out. Try to draw out what was left in. That is hard enough."

The Rules You Should BREAK!

Buckingham's research and the title of his book talk about First, Break the Rules.

What rules is he talk-

ing about? The basic assumptions which lead us to the standard, approved approach to hiring people, managing people, promoting people, developing people and reviewing their performance. The research shows these are ALL WRONG! Break them and you can begin using the 6 key insights listed above to increase productivity. Keep them and follow the herd. The mediocrity herd! Here are the rules to break:

1-EVERY EMPLOYEE SHOULD BE TREATED SIMILARLY

2-EVERY EMPLOYEE NEEDS TO WORK ON SHORING UP HIS WEAKNESSES

3-USE YOUR STRONGEST MANAGERS TO "CLEAN UP" YOUR WEAKEST DEPARTMENTS

4-PROMOTE YOUR STRONGEST EMPLOYEES TO NEW POSITIONS WHICH PROVIDE THEM WITH MORE RESPONSIBILITY AND COMPENSATION

5-PEOPLE CAN BE "FIXED."

Remember these are all wrong and they all contribute to mediocre performance. Replace them with the 6 items above and the other 6 in the book. If you start now it will still take you 1-2 years to make the transition.

How Do You Make Use Of This?

Once your management team has begun to function more effectively (Described in Part I-Powering Up Your Management Team), it is now time to take a look at how everybody on that team manages the staff in your club. This can be done by asking your staff members to regularly assess the 12 questions on a scale of 1 to 5, from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Five means they

strongly agree.

As the CEO give the questions to your direct reports. (Do not give this survey to all employees now). Have them fill it out, encourage absolute honesty. The data is more valuable if people sign their responses. This enables you to explore responses from the person who made them. This allows you as a manager to learn and grow. Your direct reports may not feel comfortable being honest. If this seems prevalent among your reports, you may want to have everyone fill the survey out anonymously the first time they use it. Your responses to the survey can build their trust so that eventually they will sign their responses. You build this trust as detailed in Part I of this article by making it safe for them to be honest and by being vulnerable (i.e. permeable) yourself.

Ultimately, someone should compile all the reports and produce an average response for each question.

Interpreting The Data

Scores below 3.0 are weak. Scores from 3.1 to 3.9 are mediocre. You don't begin to get good management until you are in the 4.0 to 4.5. Above 4.5 you are starting to manage for high productivity and you also get high morale. They go together - especially in the service business. To manage better start at the top. Focus on #1. Spell out the desired results you expect. Be specific. Use numbers and dates. And remember just because it's clear to you does not mean it's clear to others. Test! Your willingness to be vulnerable to enable productive conflict is critical at this point. Without conflict, you cannot build staff commitment!

When #1 is 4.5 or ideally 5.0, start focusing on #2. Then work your way down the list. You may only get through a handful of these questions in a year! This is not a quick fix approach to business im-



Will Phillips

provement.

Meeting With Direct Reports

Once you have the Summary Report it is time to have conversations between the manager and those who completed the survey. This is probably best done in a meeting of all respondents. Meeting one-to-one may easily destroy the sense of anonymity that participants may value.

Now, it can be extraordinarily dangerous to ask the question of your staff, 'do I know what's expected of me?' There will be a tendency for people to say 'yes' because it requires them to be vulnerable - remember, how hard that was when you worked in eliminating the dysfunctions in your senior management team? - nobody likes to appear dumb or incompetent. So, when the question is asked, 'do I know what is expected of me?' there is a tendency for people to score higher than they truly believe. Thus, it is critical for you to create an atmosphere of trust when this question is asked. One of the ways to confirm high staff scores is to ask them, "Well, what is expected of you?" And then, you sit back and listen and simply say, "Tell me more; tell me more." And, you compare that with your internal expectation of that particular staff member. In fact, whenever you achieve a score below 5 on

(See Will Phillips page26)

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In Their Own Words...

-Every club owner, no matter how long they have been in the industry, needs to attend a Thomas Plummer seminar.

Jason West
North Columbus Athletic Club

-Thomas Plummer is very fun and inspirational, the information is top notch, and I just enjoy being around other gym owners for 2 days.

Ken Laurie
World Gym Express

-I look forward to attending and sending my staff to a Plummer seminar every year. I take something back each time that will help take my business to the next level.

Mike Shirley
Double Diamond Athletic Club

A Refreshed Approach to an Old Tool

By Karen Woodard-Chavez

The Point of Sale Referral

How you have been trained to present it and your success with it will determine whether you just cringed.

If you did cringe, stick with me here. If you are tempted to skip this article... don't do it! I have something good for you here.

Or, if you are interested in *learning how to dust it off* and *graciously present it* to reap the *rewards* of referrals, then just stick with me and read on!

I realize that some of us are very good at point-of-sale referrals. And, I realize some of us are uncomfortable with this tool because we think it is cheesy.

I have a proven method for you that will give you impressive results. It will allow you to come from the genuine perspective that you are *giving* a gift rather than *asking* for names. The following steps will ensure

your success.

1. Do **NOT** call this the "Buddy Referral Program" or "Point of Sale Referral Program" or "Friends Helping Friends", etc. Instead, refer to it as "The New Member Guest Privilege".
2. To maximize the results of the *New Member Guest Privilege* at the point of membership sale, I encourage you to plant seeds during the tour. It is similar to how we prepare the prospective member for pricing information by presenting a range of prices before the tour then going into detail on the tour about prices so at the end of the tour they have already heard the pricing information, digested the information and are able to make a

decision right there instead of having to think about it if the *only time we have told them pricing information is at the end -- not good*. The way it is similar is that if we *prepare the prospective member* on the tour, then they will be more prepared to give you the information you want at the end. Here is what I mean:

While you are touring, you will be asking trial close questions such as "Sally, does the club have a good *feel to you?*"

Sally will more than likely respond positively. At that time, you would say something along the lines of:

"Good, I am glad to hear that. I want you to know that everything you have seen is included with your membership dues. There are only four services that are additional to membership

– those include our café, our spa, personal training and our guest fees. Our guest fees are \$20 per day and we are very clear about charging them as we want to protect the club for the privilege of our Members, which, I am sure, makes sense to you. I will tell you that if you choose to join, we do have a *New Member Guest Privilege* that is *good for the first 30 days* of your membership that allows you to bring guests in at *no charge*. I will tell you more about that later."

Can you see how this *creates value* for *guest fees*, the *New Member Guest Privilege* and also *plants seeds* for the Member to think about whom they would like to invite?

3. When you are doing the membership paperwork for the new Member – you will explain that there are some documents that you will take care of for them and there are some documents that they will need to complete. Based on your club requirements, you



Karen Woodard-Chavez

may have 2 - 4 documents for them to complete. When they are finished with them, you explain to them that you now have a thank you gift for them for joining. You will place the *invitation* form before them and explain the following: "Sally, as a new Member we would like to thank you for joining the club with our *New Member Guest Privilege*. As I referred to while you were seeing the club, this is an

(See Karen Woodard page 26)

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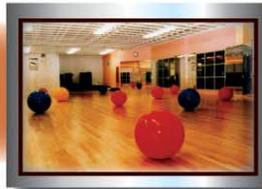
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...Karen Woodard

continued from page 24

invitation that we will extend to three of your friends, family Members or colleagues – whomever you would like – to enjoy the club for three days each, courtesy of you. We will host them and there will be no guest fee during the first 30 days of your membership so while I am finishing up your paperwork, go ahead and jot down the names of the people you would like us to send an invitation to, and we will either get them in the post or e-mail them today whichever you would like us to do”.

The Member may respond with: Can't I just take these and give them to people when I see them?

Membership Representative (MR): "Sally, we have done that in the past and have chosen not to continue with that because Members have taken them with them, forgotten about them, then 30 days has come and gone and the privilege has expired. We want to make sure that you have the opportunity to enjoy this. If you would like to participate, I will be happy to take care of it for you. However, please do not feel that you have to invite anyone."

The Member may respond with: I don't have anyone's information with me.

MR: Not a problem – why don't we set up a time in the next few days when we can speak again -- you can have the information ready and I can get the invitations out that day. That way, your friends will have more time to enjoy the club.

Or MR: Not a problem – would you like to use my terminal to go to the phone directory online while I am finishing your application?

The Member may respond with: I can't think of anyone right now.

MR: I understand. Let's do this – because this is only good for the first 30 days of your membership and I want you to be able to enjoy this, take a look at this reminder list and see if anyone comes to mind. If they do, jot down who it is and I will get the invitation to them. I will just finish your agreement while you take a look.

(See reminder list side bar at end of this article.)

4. When you have someone coming back in to join that you have already toured, prepare them and yourself to be more successful with the New Member Guest Privilege by utilizing the following on the phone:

"OK Sally, I have you scheduled to come in tomorrow to take care of your

membership. I am delighted that you will be joining. We will take 20 minutes or so to take care of your agreement, do your health history questionnaire and get your New Member Guest Privilege set up for you. With regard to that – think about the three people you would like us to give an invitation to the club to on your behalf and if you have their contact information, we can get the invitations out for you tomorrow. Other than that, I will look forward to seeing you at 2pm tomorrow."

Ensure the success of this program with these additional points:

- 5. Come from a gift perspective. A gift means you give something with nothing expected in return. Therefore, you do NOT say "give me three names and if they join you get _____". Doing so implies conditions – that is not a gift.
6. The New Member Guest Privilege must be different from your everyday guest pass policy.
7. Have a tight guest pass policy – in other words, charge an appropriately priced guest fee consistently.
8. The New Member Guest Privilege is only offered for the first 30 days of the membership.

- 9. The invitation form does not go home with the Member for them to "think about it" and get back to you.

There are more than likely some subtle or maybe obvious differences between how you may be currently doing this and what I have outlined for you. This tool is a no-brainer for increased referrals if done correctly and done every time you start a new membership. Think about this – if you are personally selling 30 – 60 memberships per month and you present this to every one of those Members, perhaps only 50% will have you send the invitations to three colleagues – that would be 15 – 30 x 3 or 45 – 90 potential leads. Let's say only 50% of those actually used the

invitation – that would be 22 – 45 prospects and let's say that only 50% of those joined – that would be 11 – 22 new Members every month that you would be generating. That would be a 30%+ increase in your membership sales. Why would you not do it?

(Karen is President of Premium Performance Training in Boulder, Colorado. She has owned and operated clubs since 1985. Karen now consults with and trains club staff throughout the world. She provides her services on-site, online, by phone and through books, CDs, DVDs and manuals. She can be contacted at 303.417.0653 or karen@karenwoodard.com The aforementioned sidebar appears below):

Who Would You Like to Have as Your Guest?
Partner
Children
Sister
Brother
Parent
Other family members
Best friend(s)
Co-worker
Neighbor
Hair dresser
Nail tech
Massage therapist
Child's teacher
Golf buddies
Tennis buddies
Dog walker

...Will Phillips

continued from page 22

this question, it is worthwhile to sit down with your employees, all personal trainers, or all sales people, or doing it individually – your choice – and ask them, "Well, what is expected of you? Please tell me." And, see how they say it, what they give emphasis to, whether they're complete. In every single case, if they don't know what's expected of them, it is because management has done an inadequate job, not because they have. Be excruciatingly cautious of not blaming your staff when asking this question.

As you begin to see progress on knowing what's expected of them, now we

can worry about question #2, "Do I have the right materials and equipment I need to do my work right?" Whenever a staff member answers in the negative, meaning that they don't have the right materials and equipment, there are two possible avenues for you to pursue. First, as you define the equipment and materials they think they need, you supply them. Second, it may turn out that you think that their list of materials and equipment is unrealistic. In this case, you must help them understand why their view is unrealistic and your view is realistic. Remember they think your view is unrealistic and theirs is real. We are now back to the same issue around the beach ball discussed earlier

in Part I of this article where two different people see things in two different ways. The only resolution will be to engage in conflict, to engage in a dialogue that looks at the materials and equipment needed or not, and why and why not. And, what are the implications if we get them or don't get them. If you and the staff member do not engage in this conflict, you will never shrink the beach ball and they will come to work every day believing that you are not giving them the right materials or equipment.

If you deeply engage in this exploration of the issue, it is very likely that in some cases, the outcome will look something like this: "As an employee, I really do

wish and would like to have this very new and sophisticated equipment on the floor. It would certainly make my life easier and more fun (a little bit of vulnerability here!). However, having talked with my department head, I now understand how much more business we would have to do to generate enough profit to pay for this new equipment. And, I understand why we are not going to get the new equipment, and I am committed to doing my job without it."

That statement is an example of what we consultants technically call operational consensus. It doesn't mean that everybody is in 100% agreement. It does mean that everybody feels

that they have had a fair chance to fully present their concerns to the others and that the listeners have truly understood their perspective and concerns. But, in light of other considerations in the business, the ultimate choice is not to respond to the employee's request. When the dialogue or conflict has been constructive and sufficiently deep, you will know because the employee will now be committed to doing his or her work without the extra materials and equipment.

The above example gives you the method of working down through the questions on the survey. Each one becomes easier as you move down.

(See Will Phillips page 27)

... Will Phillips
continued from page 26

Next month in our *Final Part IV* of this White Paper on "Powering Up Your Business" we will cover the following topics:

Hire People With The Right Strengths

The Animal School

Remember, Ducks Duck and Squirrels Squirrel

Discover Your Strengths

How to Power Up the Management of Your Business

(Will Phillips the author is the founder and CEO of REX Roundtables for Executives which operates 24 industry roundtables including 10 for club owners and GMs in the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. A downloadable copy of this article will be on www.REXonline.org under Management Briefings.)



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“STUCK IN THE MUCK AT EXACTLY THE WRONG TIME”

An exclusive column featured only in “Norm Cates’ Club Insider News”

By **Michael Scott Scudder**

Two months ago in this column, I said that I was “...delighted to report to you that Consumer Confidence, as measured by the *Conference Board*” (an agency which works as a global, independent membership organization in the public interest, conducting research, convening conferences, making forecasts, assessing trends and publishing predictive information and analysis) was then “...at a 4-year high” and that “...new membership sales, as reported to me by over 100 private club clients, were up substantially in the first quarter of 2006.” These were the first rays of hope that I had seen in several months, and I was encouraged that it might continue.

This turned out *not to be the case*.

The same *Conference Board*, on May 30th, quietly predicted several economic factors that spell very bearish times ahead for the U.S. economy and will likely result in spending pullbacks by consumers just when our industry needs their money most! The three dynamics that I think are most alarming are:

1. Real Gross Domestic Product is predicted to decrease in the last

half of this year to a level below 2005! *That likely indicates a substantial economic slowdown from July – December.*

2. Real Consumer Spending is predicted to come to a screeching halt in the third and fourth quarters. *That means that consumers are going to pull in the reins on discretionary purchases!*
3. Predictions for the yield rate on short-term money eclipsing the rate on longer-term money show an *inverted yield curve* by as early as August. An inverted yield curve has, in nearly every era where it has happened, been the forerunner of a recession. *I believe what the Conference Board is warning us is that we are headed for tight times unseen since the early 1980’s.*

Combining the information above with the fact that apparently *there was no growth in memberships nationally* in nearly 18 months (*Club Industry’s Fitness Business Pro’s* May issue stated

that “...membership in 2005 remained constant at 41.3 million members”) with the statistic that club growth catapulted another 8.3% in 2005 to over 29,000 health clubs... and you have a formula for real, immediate adversity!

Now...combine all of what has just been said with the present state of *health club delivery systems* (way too much same-old-same-old)...and the astute reader realizes that the stage is set for a real shake-out in our business! (The fact that I think it started years ago with the introduction of *Curves* and continued with the more-recent debut of the value-priced *Planet Fitness* model and other value-priced models, seems to go unnoticed by all but *absolutely-willing-to-look-at-the-other-side* club owners.)

I have been re-reading *Blue Ocean Strategy*, the brilliant modern marketing book by W. Chan Kim and Renee Mauborgne. They summarize the obvious malaise in our industry better than I can...and perhaps you will listen more to “outside experts” than to me: “While supply is on the rise...as competition intensifies, there is no clear evidence of increase in demand...and statistics even point to declining populations in many developed markets.”

Kim and Mauborgne go on to say that “...the result has been accelerated commoditization of products and services, increasing price wars, and shrinking profit margins. Studies reveal that...brands are generally becoming more similar, and as they are becoming more similar people increasingly select based on price.”

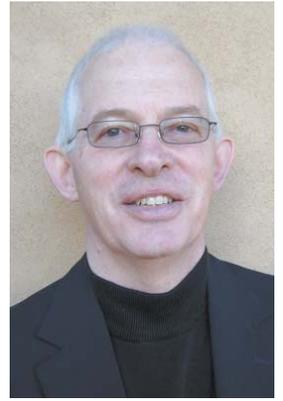
In other words, folks, most of you are *stuck in the muck* of a shrinking available membership population at the same time that outside forces like the economy are dictating that people pull back on all but necessary spending! To me, this is evidenced by the fact that, in the last 10 years or so, most clubs have:

- Defined their businesses in the same ways, within the narrow confines of

the generally-accepted concepts of what they believe the industry to be.

- Tried to be the best within their market segment.
- Focused on the same buyer groups, which have been shrinking per-unit because of increased competition.
- Accepted the industry’s orientation and developed the same products and services as everybody else within their market scope.
- Tried to do the same thing that everybody else is doing...only better!

Said another way – there’s been *no innovation* – and *that* is beginning to poison most of your businesses. (It hasn’t killed you off yet...it will...but it has already infected your systems. The worst of it is that your customers understand it and most of them are prepared to jump ship! You don’t believe that last statement, because most of you don’t understand a darn thing about the “tiering of customers” and don’t realize that, in a crowded marketplace, the first tier of customers – your biggest constituency – are *generally not loyal*



Michael Scott Scudder

to you. The reality is they are ready to leave at a moment’s notice – usually price.)

So...you’re in an industry that’s principally mired in its own methodology. What do you do? Ahhh...that’s the subject of my next column. But the first thing to think about...is thinking.

‘Til next time - MICHAEL

(Michael Scott Scudder, a long-time Contributing Author for “Club Insider News,” owns and operates “MSS FitBiz Connection” – an online-based club consulting and training service. He offers several online training workshops that deal with solutions to the subjects above. Michael can be contacted at 505-751-4248 or by email at mss@michaelscottscudder.com.)

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