

# Norm Cates' CLUB INSIDER™

The Pulse of the Health and Fitness Club Industry



Doug Ribley, Senior Vice President of Health and Wellness Services for Akron General

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## Doug Ribley and Akron General Lifestyles

*Health and Wellness Defined By The Medical Fitness Difference*

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**JUNE 2013**

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# Norm Cates' CLUB INSIDER™

## The Pulse of the Health and Fitness Club Industry

### Doug Ribley and Akron General Lifestyles *Health and Wellness Defined By The Medical Fitness Difference*

**By:** Justin Cates

In the day-to-day pursuit of new members and the retention of current members, it is easy to lose sight of a more overarching, and nobler goal, the betterment of the communities we serve. Am I saying that maximizing revenue, minimizing expenses, and thus, growing profit is irrelevant? Absolutely not, but maybe we are thinking about things in the wrong order. For the sake of discussion, let's reverse our thinking for a moment. Instead of growing profit so that we may pursue a noble and worthy goal, what if we pursue a noble and worthy goal so that we may grow profit? If this sounds a lot like Jim Collins' book *Good to Great*, that's because it is, though very simplified.

Despite mission statements here and company objectives there, the goal of many organizations in the health and

fitness club industry today is to make money and maximize profit. Bettering the communities they serve is a secondary objective to that goal, if an objective at all. At the same time, though, let me unequivocally state that there are many organizations whose primary objective is the betterment of the communities they serve. The money they make and the profits they reap prove this is a viable way to do business. The strength of something, though, is always only as great as its weakest part. If just as many organizations have their objectives reversed as those that have them in the potentially correct order I've mentioned, the end result is essentially neutral. That is because of the aggregate of public perception, hard to build, but very easily damaged.

For years, the industry's penetration rate has been the subject of much discussion. Is it really this low after

so many years? Is it correctly figured? What can we do to truly increase it? One would expect that tripling the number of facilities over the past twenty years should have at least doubled the industry's penetration rate. This has not occurred for many reasons, and instead, the growth in quantity of facilities has created a cannibalization effect. Organizations are feasting on the same customers, so overall industry penetration has remained flat. This, however, is because the market is only being thought of as the 15 - 20% of the population attracted year to year. The solution then must be to grow the market by reaching out to the 80 - 85% of the population not yet doing business with our industry or those who have already been burned by our industry in days past.

That's easy enough to say, but how do we accomplish this? If I knew with absolute certainty, I would be preaching

it to all who would listen; that is my job. My educated guess, though, is that it is somewhere between what the best in our industry are doing now, combined with one or even several trends we currently see in this industry and others. This month, we will be discussing one of the solutions currently found in a complementary industry, health and wellness, defined by the *medical fitness difference*. Most have heard about this subject before, but I believe there is still plenty of confusion about what it really is, how it is managed and how our two industries, together, could become the primary solution for the health care crisis currently facing our population.

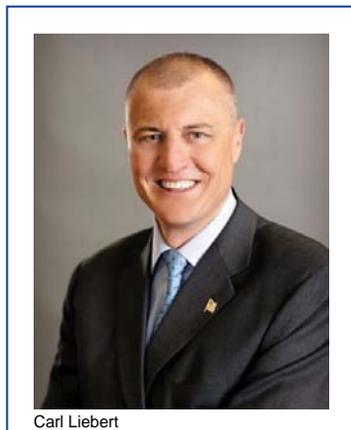
Doug Ribley, Senior Vice President of Health Wellness Services for Akron General, is a man who has walked both sides of the fence that currently separates our two industries. He spent  
*(See Doug Ribley Page 10)*

#### 24 Hour Fitness Announces Resignation of Carl Liebert, and Appointment of New Interim Executive Leaders

**SAN RAMON, CA** - 24 Hour Fitness Worldwide Holdings, Inc. announced Carl Liebert, III has resigned as President and Chief Executive Officer after more than six years of service to the company. Mr. Liebert has accepted a new position as President of USAA Capital Corporation, based in San Antonio, Texas.

In announcing Mr. Liebert's departure, 24 Hour Fitness Chair, Kathleen Broderick stated, "We are all grateful for the dynamic leadership and vision that Carl has provided for our company since November, 2006. We will miss Carl, and we wish him all the best in his new position."

Ms. Broderick also announced  
*(See 24 Hour Fitness Page 6)*



Carl Liebert

#### Club One Announces Leadership Changes and Strategic Shift to Fitness and Wellness Management

**SAN FRANCISCO, CA** - Club One Fitness, known for their fitness and wellness solutions, announced that President and Chief Operating Officer, Bill McBride, will step down from his post effective July 31, 2013. McBride's departure is part of a strategic shift for Club One to expand its fitness and wellness management offerings and portfolio.

Club One and McBride arrived mutually at the decision to allow for organizational cost savings and to continue evolving with a unified leadership focus as part of the company's commitment to quickly adapt to the changing consumer needs, partner opportunities and marketplace. McBride will continue to work with  
*(See Club One Fitness Page 7)*



Bill McBride

#### Inside The Insider

- Four Steps To Communication That Gets Results - **By:** Donna Krech
- Orangetheory Fitness Strikes Deal With David Lloyd Leisure to Launch in the UK
- Service Sells - The Balance Between Sales and Service - **By:** Karen Woodard-Chavez
- Wellbridge Names Michael Meehan Chief Operating Officer
- Driving Profitability Via Your Fitness Department - Part II - **By:** Dr. Kevin Steele
- TLC5 "Coaching for Soldiers" for Optimal Fitness
- Programming For The "Fun Of It!" - Ode To Fitness - **By:** Laurie Cingle
- And of Course, *Norm's Notes*

# Norm's Notes

• **Hello Everybody!** This is your **CLUB INSIDER Publisher** and **Tribal Leader** Since 1993 checking in!

• Our thoughts and prayers are with the folks in the **Oklahoma City, Oklahoma** area as they try to recover from two deadly tornadoes that hit about one week apart and killed over 35 people, not to mention leveling over a billion dollars worth of homes and businesses. **God bless you all!**

• Is **America** a great country or what? **Hmm... Hmm... Hmm!**

• **Happy FATHER'S Day** and a belated **Happy Mother's Day!**

• **WOW!** In our almost 20 years of publishing 234 monthly editions, we've had many very impressive cover stories, but I've just got to tell you that this month's cover story featuring **Akron General's DOUG RIBLEY**, also a nearly 20-year **CLUB INSIDER** subscriber, is one of the most impressive cover stories we've ever published. And, I must also tell you that I'm super proud of the job my son, **JUSTIN CATES**, did with the production of this great piece. That's what **CLUB INSIDER** has always been about... bringing to you, right there in your office or living room, information through our cover stories that you can use to advance your careers by emulating the best operators in the United

States and the world. **Doug Ribley**, being one of the most astute and advanced health and fitness operators in the United States, and most likely the world, certainly gives this piece an advanced status right from the get-go. So, to close this **Norm's Note**, I say this to you all: **Don't miss this month's cover story featuring Doug Ribley!**

• **Thanks** and a hearty "Well done!" to the outgoing **IHRSA Board Members, DR. ART CURTIS** and **KAY YUSPEH**, and a **Warm Welcome** to incoming Members, **BILL BECK**, **MOLLY KEMMER** and **RASMUS INGERSLEV**. Also, "Keep up the great work!" to all of the ongoing **IHRSA Board Members**, which include new **Chairman, BRENT DARDEN**, and **Ex-Officio Chairman, BILL McBRIDE**.

• **Best wishes** to **BILL McBRIDE**, as he announced his planned July 31st departure from **Club One** (See **Press Release on Page #3**). Bill will also finish his term as **IHRSA Chairman on June 30th** and will be continuing his service to the Association as **Ex-Officio Chairman** for one year, a role that will help with a smooth transition to new **Chairman, BRENT DARDEN's** term. Bill, you've done a terrific job during your four years on the **IHRSA Board of Directors**. Thanks for your service to **IHRSA** and the industry at large!

• **CARL LIEBERT, CEO of 24 Hour**

**Fitness**, has accepted a new position as **President of USAA Capital Corporation**, a \$24 billion company based in San Antonio, Texas. Carl served well as **CEO of 24 Hour Fitness for six years**. On May 17th, Carl joined one of the best companies in the United States, **USAA** (United Services Automobile Association), the insurance and financial company I signed on with when I was a 2nd Lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force Pilot Training School at Moody Air Force base in 1968. I still have my auto, home and some business insurance with **USAA**. Glad to see that Carl has joined **USAA**, and I wish him all the best.

• **What better way for Club Industry** to return their always terrific trade show and educational conference back to **CHICAGO** this coming **October 23 - 25th** than to honor **Chicago's own Super Star, DANIEL LEVIN**, as their **2013 Lifetime Achievement Award Winner!** Daniel is the **Founder and Owner** of the way more than amazing **EAST BANK CLUB in Chicago**. **Congratulations to DANIEL LEVINE** and to **Club Industry** on this great choice! One comment I'd add is that one of the **best and smartest things Daniel** ever did was to hire our former **CLUB INSIDER cover story subject, General Manager SIMON MEREDITH**, who's delivered **32 years** of highly successful operations at the **East Bank Club** to **Levine**. If you've never visited this club, I would suggest that you do some day. I would also suggest and urge you to go ahead now and book your hotel and airfare and make plans to be at **Club Industry 2013!** You'll



Norm Cates



Daniel Levin

be glad you did!

• **ED WILLIAMS, CEO of Wellbridge,**  
 (See *Norm's Notes Page 6*)

## About Club Insider

# Established in 1993

## 20 Years and Counting!

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

**PRINTING and MAILING SERVICES** - Walton Press  
[www.waltonpress.com](http://www.waltonpress.com)

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**Edition #234**

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### ...Norm's Notes

continued from page 4

has announced the appointment of 30+ year club industry veteran, **MICHAEL MEEHAN**, to be the new **Chief Operating Officer** of Wellbridge. **Congratulations to Michael**, and *best wishes* to Michael and Ed. Check out the **Report on Page #17**.

• **KEN GERMANO** has resigned as **President and CEO** of the **Medical Fitness Association**. The following comments were made by **MFA Chairman of the Board, MICHAEL RICHMOND**, and were posted on the MFA website:

After two and a half years at the helm, Ken Germano has resigned as the President and CEO of the Medical Fitness Association, effective June 1, 2013. Ken has cited the need to care for his family and the pursuit of his PhD in Health Services and Public Policy as the reasons for his departure. During Ken's tenure, the Medical Fitness Association has experienced a rebranding with our new look, website and our expanded presence in the medical fitness community. Additionally, the growth of our Facility Certification program over the past two years has significantly strengthened our organization. Many thanks for all his hard work and dedication. We wish Ken great and continued success in the pursuit of his goals. At this time the Board of Directors is excited to announce the appointment of **Robert (Bob) D. Boone, FACHE, FMFA** as the interim President and CEO of the Medical Fitness Association. Many of our members are already familiar with Bob's

work in our field, and he therefore, may not need an introduction. For those who are not familiar with Bob's experience, you should know that he has worked for the last 26 years, rising through the ranks at FirstHealth of the Carolinas, Inc. to the roles as Vice President of Inpatient Services, Business Health Services and Professional Services, as well as served as President of a private consulting firm to the medically based fitness operations at numerous hospitals and integrated health delivery systems. He holds Master's Degrees in both Health Administration and Business Administration. Bob is one of the very early members of the Medical Fitness Association, having served on the Board of Directors and as a prior administrator of our organization. We are pleased that Bob has agreed to offer his extensive expertise and has agreed to step in to assume the leadership of the Medical Fitness Association on an interim basis until we are able to identify a more long-term successor. We are looking forward to the same upward trajectory under Bob's guidance that we have experienced over the past administration. Information regarding our selection process for a more permanent appointment will be provided in the coming weeks.

Kind regards to all,

**Michael Richmond**  
 Chairman of the Board

Best wishes to a great guy, **KEN GERMANO**, as he moves on in his career.

• If you've not already done so, I urge you to

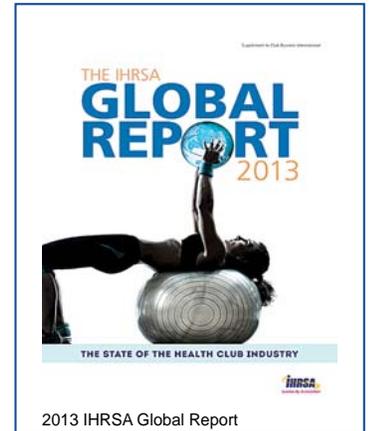
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• Speaking of **MICHAEL RICHMOND, Chairman of the Board of MFA**, here's something amazing! The Medical Fitness Association Board Chairman rappels downtown hotel for lung health! Michael Richmond, the Chairman of the Board of the Medical Fitness Association, was one of 67 daring participants to rappel down 27 stories of the **Wit Hotel** during **Skyline Plunge! Chicago** on May 5, 2013. The biannual event was hosted by **Respiratory Health Association** to raise funds and awareness for local lung disease research and programs. Richmond rappelled in memory of his wife, Marla, who passed away from stage IV lung cancer in 2010.

• **CONGRATULATIONS** to **WARREN WEBB** of **Visual Fitness Planner** as he's celebrating **10 Years with VFP!** Even though Webb's a died-in-the-wool **Oklahoma Football Fan**, my *congrats* go out to him and just for the **FUN of IT**, Webb, here is one more "**Hook Em Horns**" just from me to you!

• I was recently in touch with the one and only, **SANDY COFFMAN**, the **Dean of Club Programming** and my **friend since 1978**. Sandy is enjoying life with her husband, Bud, down in Bradenton, Florida. She's participating in multiple fitness activities, and Bud's involved with water walking exercise. Sandy was very kind to have reached out to **LAURIE CINGLE**, our new programming author to welcome and encourage her. Check out Laurie's writing this month on **Page #26**.

• **USA Today** published a list of the **50 Fittest Communities in America** in their May 29th edition. The winner for the third year in a row was **Minneapolis/St. Paul** in the great State of Minnesota, and #50 on the list was the recently damaged badly with many killed by tornadoes, **Oklahoma**



City. My home town, Atlanta, also known as **The ATL**, placed **#21**, with **no help from yours truly!** The source of the report was the **American Fitness Index from the American College of Sports Medicine**. The annual American Fitness Index is based on a number of health behaviors, including smoking, exercise, obesity rates, chronic health problems and access to health care.

• **JEFF SKEEN's Titan Fitness - Fitness Connection Clubs** are doing the *right thing* and a *smart thing* by providing the local fire departments in Garner, North Carolina with used stationary bikes to augment the equipment they have in their firehouses. The firefighters are required to exercise an hour per day, and the bikes will aid that effort. Such giving is *always great to do because it is the right thing to do*. It also happens to be great for public relations, and sometimes, it might just result in a local newspaper article, such as the one Jeff was kind enough to send. Thanks Jeff, and keep up the giving to your communities!

• **JONATHAN BRADY** was named **Chief Operating Officer (COO)** for **Midtown Athletic Clubs** by **STEVEN SCHWARTZ, President and CEO**. Brady is now responsible for all day-to-day operating activities of Midtown's ten fitness and tennis clubs located in the **United States and Canada**. A native of (See Norm's Notes Page 8)

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### ...24 Hour Fitness

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that, pending selection of a new Chief Executive Officer, 24 Hour Fitness will be managed through the Office of the Chair, which includes:

• **Elizabeth Blair** - Executive Vice President, Chief Strategy Officer and General Counsel;  
 • **Jeff Boyer** - Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer; and  
 • **Patrick Flanagan** - Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer.

David King, a long-time Director

of 24 Hour Fitness and Senior Managing Director of Culpeper Capital Partners, LLC and Winston Hutchins, General Partner of Forstmann Little & Co., will also serve as advisors in the Office of the Chair.

24 Hour Fitness was purchased in June, 2005 by partnerships managed by Forstmann Little & Co. Speaking from New York on behalf of Forstmann Little, Mr. Hutchins added, "We are very excited about the opportunities that we see for growth in 24 Hour Fitness. We look forward to working with our more than 21,000 colleagues to continue to build on the momentum that everyone in the company is feeling these days."

**...Club One Fitness**

continued from page 3

Club One to pilot a recently launched group fitness concept at its Pleasanton, California location.

"This brand has been near and dear to me for the past ten years, and I will miss working daily with the fantastic team of fitness professionals that I have helped develop and bring together over my tenure," says McBride. "I leave knowing that Club One is in good hands with an experienced, innovative and dedicated team who is passionate about serving our members, clients and partners. I look forward to staying involved in the industry and working with Club One to evolve the new group fitness concept we launched

earlier this year."

Robin Klaus, the current Chairman and former CEO of Club One, will retain his role to continue managing the company for rapid growth. Klaus has more than 20 years of executive management experience in the industry. He was formerly Chairman of Planet Fitness, a health and fitness club company in Singapore and served as the President and Chief Operating Officer of fitness manufacturer Star Trac. He is currently on the Board of Directors for SummerSearch, a national mentoring program for teenagers.

"As those in the industry know well, Bill is an exceptional leader with an incredible passion for fitness clubs," says Klaus. "We support this passion. That's why we're excited to continue to work with

Bill to pilot a new group fitness concept launched earlier this year."

Club One does not have immediate plans to hire for the President position at this time. The seasoned management team will remain fully intact to deliver the exceptional service that partners and customers expect from Club One. In addition, Board Members Maigread Eichten, formerly of FRS, Pepsi and Symantec, and Clem Bason, CEO of Hotwire.com join Chairman Robin Klaus to form a new Executive Committee to guide Club One's evolution to deliver customized fitness and wellness support for partners and customers with unique needs.

Club One welcomed 11 new partners last year and five new partners in 2013, including JCCs in Miami Beach, FL; Providence, R.I.; Washington D.C.; Boston, MA; Virginia Beach, VA; and the 92nd Y in New York. The company also added Rockingham Memorial Hospital in Virginia as its third medical fitness partner.

Additional restructuring efforts at the leadership level include the departures of Bonnie Wheatley, Senior Vice President of Finance and Tom Nelson, Vice President of Development. Both positions have been retained by Chief Financial Officer, Skip Smith, and Vice President of Development, Frank Ancharski, respectively.

**Orangetheory Fitness Strikes Deal With David Lloyd Leisure to Launch in the UK**

**FT. LAUDERDALE, FL** - Orangetheory Fitness, the energizing interval fitness franchise and first to use heart-rate-monitored training for scientifically proven results, will expand into the United Kingdom through an exclusive agreement with David Lloyd Leisure, Europe's premier health, sports and leisure group. In a UK health and fitness industry first, David Lloyd Leisure will launch the trailblazing Orangetheory Fitness concept in a new North London studio, which is scheduled to open in August, 2013.

"We are very excited to have reached this deal with Orangetheory Fitness, a company that has been achieving incredible growth in the US, to bring its groundbreaking interval fitness program to the UK market," said Hazel Geary, David Lloyd Leisure's Product Development Director. "David Lloyd Leisure is always seeking new and innovative ways to enable people to achieve their health and fitness goals, and there is a tremendous buzz around Orangetheory, a one-of-a-kind workout that has been proven to offer amazing results. Our studio concept aims to give time-pressed clients of all fitness levels easy access to exercise and nutritional services as part of their daily routine, and Orangetheory fits absolutely perfectly with our core objectives."

David Long, CEO and Partner at Orangetheory Fitness, said, "We are thrilled to partner with such a high-quality brand, and the industry leader in the UK,

to bring the Orangetheory Fitness concept to their market. We look forward to seeing a new region of the world embrace the Orangetheory workout."

Since starting the concept in 2010, Orangetheory Fitness has awarded 135 franchise locations in the United States and Canada. The company's rapidly escalating growth includes 39 franchises awarded in the past 60 days, putting Orangetheory on pace to exceed estimates to double its locations in 2013. Each unique 60-minute Orangetheory Fitness session combines intervals of cardiovascular and strength training, producing a huge metabolic increase and burning up to an average of 900 calories per session, with extra calorie burn for up to 36 hours after each workout.

David Lloyd Leisure launched David Lloyd Studio in September 2012, the first initiative of its kind by a major health and fitness operator in the UK. Studios provide personal training, group training, David Lloyd Leisure's Lose & Shape Up weight loss program, exercise classes, running clubs and physiotherapy. Two studios have already opened in Putney, Southwest London, and Winchester, Hampshire.

For more information on Orangetheory Fitness, go to [www.OrangeTheoryFitness.com](http://www.OrangeTheoryFitness.com). Learn more about area developer and franchise opportunities at [www.otffranchise.com](http://www.otffranchise.com). For more information on David Lloyd Leisure, go to [www.davidlloyd.co.uk](http://www.davidlloyd.co.uk).



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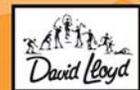
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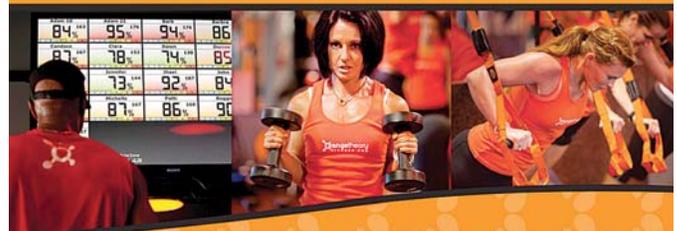
*"We are very excited to partner with Orangetheory Fitness, which has been achieving incredible growth in the US, to bring its groundbreaking interval fitness program to the UK market, in an industry-first agreement. David Lloyd Leisure is always seeking new and innovative ways to enable people to achieve their health and fitness goals, and there is a tremendous buzz around Orangetheory - a one-of-a-kind workout that has been proven to offer amazing results."*

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**...Norm's Notes**

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**Auckland, New Zealand**, Mr. Brady brings to Midtown a diverse and accomplished background in club management, sports team management and teaching. Brady joins Midtown after six years as **Group Operations and Sales Director** at London-based **Aspria Holdings**, which owns and operates award-winning, luxury properties featuring health, fitness, and spa facilities. Brady oversaw operations for Aspria Clubs in **Berlin, Hamburg, Hanover, Brussels and Milan**. "Jon brings a contagious mix of energy, optimism and drive to his extensive industry experience and knowledge," says Schwartz. "Jon shares my goal of building a great and lasting company that improves people's lives and the communities in which they live."

• **PAUL BYRNE** says he's retiring as **President of Precor**, effective September 1. Byrne has been with Precor for 28 years, including 13 as **President**. **ROB BARKER**, Vice President of Precor will assume the presidency in the culmination of a long-developing succession plan. We wish Paul Byrne the best in retirement.

• **Best wishes to DAVID HARDY**,

former **IHRSA Board Member** and all of the folks at **Orangetheory Fitness** as they've made a deal with **DAVID LLOYD Leisure** in the U.K. to grow the now 135-club franchise group. Check out the **Press Release** on the **Opposite Page**.

• *My contact on the ground in New York City near Wall Street* tells me that **JEFF SKEEN**' **Titan Fitness** and **California Family Fitness** folks have put out a **Book** on their club businesses with the goal of cashing out. So, I wish Jeff Skeen, **RANDY KARR** and the **CFF** folks all the best. Other financial news is that **Core Power Yoga** is doing the same. Also, I've learned that **former IHRSA President** (now called **Chairman**), **GENE LAMOTT**'s **Total Women** fitness chain is now offering franchises.

• The **PFP Media and Club Industry 2014 Trainer of the Year Contest** applications are now open, and nominations will be accepted through July 19th. The winner will walk away with over **\$17,000 in prizes!** Last year's winner was **Atlanta's** own lovely lady, **VALERIE NESS**. **This year's prizes include:** A Technogym **ARTIS** bike, \$700 **SPRI** gift certificate, a round-trip flight to Club Industry 2013 in October in Chicago courtesy of **SPRI**,

a **BodyMetrix Professional System - Ultrasound Body Composition** (\$1,895 value), an **Ab Coaster** (\$1,500 value), an **ACE Health Coach Premium Study Bundle** (\$599 value), a **VIP Package** to **Fitness Business Summit 2014** courtesy of **PT Power** (\$1,200 value), a two-night stay at **Club Industry 2012 Show Hotel** courtesy of **PT Power**, a **Catalyst Fitness Mentorship** including 2.5 hours of post mentorship phone/online consulting (\$2,049 value), a **Catalyst Fitness Online Exam Prep Course** (\$299 value), a **Catalyst Fitness Online Practical Skills Course** and **Fundamentals DVD Package** (\$549 value), a **Vicore Core Bench** (\$795 value) and the **2014 PFP Trainer of the Year trophy**. **The winner will be announced on stage at Club Industry 2013, Cover and Journey to Success spotlight in the November - December 2013 issue of PFP**, and there is much more still to be added! To enter, go to **www.fit.pro.com**, and click on the contest entry button.

• *Some folks* may not know that **CLUB INSIDER** is a **Paid Subscription-based Publication**. Are you a **Paid Subscriber**? If the words **PROMOTIONAL COPY** appear above your name and address on the cover of this month's edition, you are *not* a **Paid Subscriber**, and you are

*not enjoying the full benefits of a Paid Subscription to CLUB INSIDER*. So, don't delay! Subscribe today for just **\$89**, which gives you nine years of **CLUB INSIDER** (one year of new editions and eight years of archived editions) by going to **www.clubinsideronline.com/subscribe!**

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

*(Norm Cates, Jr. is a 39-year veteran of the health, racquet and sportsclub industry. Cates is the Founder and Publisher of CLUB INSIDER, now in its 20th Year of publication. Cates was IHRSA's 1st President, and a Co-founder of the Association with Rick Caro and five others, in 1981. In 2001, IHRSA honored Cates with its DALE DIBBLE Distinguished Service Award, one of its highest honors. Cates may be reached by phone at 770 - 635 - 7578 or email at Norm@clubinsideronline.com)*

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## ...Doug Ribley

continued from page 3

almost 15 years on the commercial health and fitness side we are all familiar with, and he has spent the past 18 years in health and wellness, building from scratch the nationally preeminent program that resides at Akron General in Akron, Ohio. To say he is an authority on both sides of this subject is accurate, and I invite you to read the interview that follows with an open mind.

### An Interview With Doug Ribley

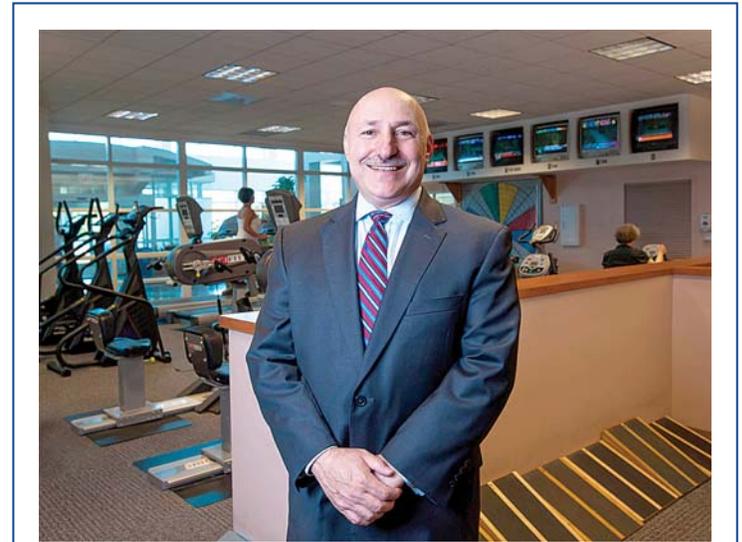
**CLUB INSIDER (C.I.)** - Where were you born and raised? Where did you go to school?  
**Doug Ribley (DR)** - I was born in Albany, New York and was raised in a suburban town just north of Albany called Loudonville. That's where I spent my formative years, and I was very involved in sports throughout that time. I played football, and I was passionate about track and field. I pole-vaulted, indoors and outdoors, all through high school and college. To this day, I still have great family support with most of my family still residing in upstate New York. I have two younger sisters, and outside of my wife, Jill and our three children, Matt, Rebecca and Josh, my parents have always been my biggest fans. In fact, I remember playing football, and the only person I could hear was my dad yelling from the stands. My dad was a scholarship football player, so he was very involved. That was a great period of time and a lot of fun, but I will tell you that the lessons learned through my involvement in sports are something that I have carried with me my entire career. The whole concept of devoting yourself to a goal, working hard and then reaping the rewards is a lesson learned that has stuck with me throughout my life.

My high school was Shaker High School in Latham, New York, and then, I went to Cortland State University, which is in Central New York. I received a Bachelor

of Science there, and after I completed my degree, I remained at Cortland to complete my Graduate Degree. During that time, I was asked to be an assistant to William Tomik, PhD., the Department Head of the Exercise Physiology Department. This is when we were just starting to talk about health and wellness. Doctor Tomik started an adult community wellness program on campus. So, while I was doing my graduate work, he asked me if I would assist him in putting the program together and running it. That's where I really got a passion for wellness and prevention. I was working with adults who either had some kind of chronic condition or some health issue, and they were very motivated to get involved in an exercise and nutrition program. They just needed some guidance, and I found that to be extremely rewarding. That's really what got me connected with this profession.

**C.I.** - When and how did you get started in the health and wellness industry?

**DR** - When I finished my graduate work, I finished my last final and got a phone call from the Houstonian Club in Houston, Texas. There was an Alumnus from Cortland who was at that club, and they were looking for an Exercise Physiologist. With that phone call, I threw everything I owned in the back of my Pinto, and I drove from Central New York to Houston, Texas. I was there for ten years, so I feel very fortunate because, to this day, it is an incredible facility. I was exposed to some of the industry leaders who were really ahead of their time, and in my final few years with the Houstonian, we started a division of the organization called *The Houstonian Institute*. It was a division that was designed to go out and help other organizations through the intellectual property that we had created at the Houstonian. Through that experience, I got the opportunity to travel throughout the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany and Japan to work with a wide range of centers. I saw a



Doug Ribley, Senior Vice President of Health and Wellness Services for Akron General

lot of things done very well, but I also saw a lot of things done not so well. I've now been in the development and administrative oversight of health and wellness centers and programs for thirty years.

**C.I.** - When and how did you arrive at Akron General?

**DR** - After the Houstonian, I did a quick, 3-year stint as General Manager of the Steuben Athletic Club in Albany, New York. I met my wife in Houston, and we made the decision that we wanted to raise our family elsewhere. We thought, 'Let's go some place where we have family,' so I got an opportunity to go home. Steuben is a downtown, city club which was actually recognized by IHRSA as the best corporate fitness program in the country at one point. So, again, that was another very good learning experience. It was a block away from the State Capitol so politicians and lobbyists represented a significant portion of the Steuben Athletic Club's clientele.

One day, I received a phone call, and it was from an administrator at Akron General. They started telling me about their vision as it related to health and wellness, prevention and health care. My first reaction was, 'Akron, Ohio...' The only thing I knew about Akron at the time was the soapbox derby and tires. I think I had been to Cleveland once on business prior to that, so it just didn't add up. I was thinking a cutting edge concept would come from the West Coast, maybe Texas or Florida. At any rate, they convinced me to get on a plane and take a trip out to Akron. So, I did. I was picked up at the airport, and I was driven out to a piece of property in West Akron. It was a field with a barn in

the middle of it. That is where they started to share the vision for this health and wellness concept.

I spent a very nice weekend in Akron, meeting with organizational leaders and learning about the concept. By the end of the weekend, I became convinced that Akron General and its leadership, the Board and administrators, were about to embark on something that was extremely special and had the potential to change health care and the way it is delivered forever. I felt so strongly about this that I went back home, we put our house on the market and moved to Akron, Ohio. We have been in Akron for eighteen years, and at this point, I can tell you that it has been the absolute best decision and most rewarding experience of my career.

**C.I.** - So, you really got to build the entire Akron General Health and Wellness program and facilities from the ground up?

**DR** - For the most part, we were starting from scratch. Like many hospitals and health care organizations, Akron General had a department called *Wellness Services*, where they went out in the community and provided screenings and health education, but they didn't have anything to this scope. Everyone knew change was coming and was imminent, so the way this all started for Akron General was that, in the early '90s, the leadership was trying to figure out what direction health care was headed. They came to the conclusion that health care was moving from a system that is traditionally focused on disease, illness and injury to one that would eventually focus on prevention, early detection and outpatient treatment. At the time, this was not unique to Akron General as many organizations were coming to this same conclusion.

Akron General had a very entrepreneurial CEO, Board and administrative leadership. This combined with the vision and passion of the concept originator, Dr.

(See Doug Ribley Page 12)



Akron General Health and Wellness Center - Green

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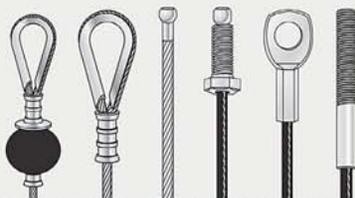
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## ...Doug Ribley

continued from page 10

Thomas "Tim" Stover (current CEO of Akron General Health System), created a unique environment that was not risk adverse. To this day, though, the thing I am still just amazed by is that Akron General believed in this conclusion so strongly that they went into their cash reserves and pulled out \$37 million to build the first Akron General Health and Wellness Center in West Akron. It was a 200,000 square-foot health and wellness outpatient delivery model. The center opened in November of 1996 and was very successful out of the gate, exceeding everyone's expectations. As a result, with that success, we had the opportunity to build a second health and wellness center on the other side of town, in Stow, Ohio. It is a 140,000 square-foot health and wellness center that opened in June of 2007. Most recently, this past July (2012), we opened our third health and wellness center, a 140,000 square-foot facility in Green, Ohio. This center is exceeding projections as well.

We are in the process of developing a fourth center. The foundation is actually being poured to the east of us in a town called Rootstown. There's an organization there called NEOMED, the Northeast Ohio Medical University. It's a medical school where future physicians are trained. We are working with NEOMED to develop a wellness center there to serve that community, the faculty, staff and students. But, it will also become part of the curriculum where we will be training future physicians to be Medical Directors and provide medical oversight for hospital-based health and wellness centers. We see it as another first that is a reflection of the direction health care is headed. What we are seeing is that just about every health care organization in the country right now is coming to the conclusion that, going forward, when medically appropriate, they need to be treating people in an outpatient

setting, as opposed to an inpatient setting. They need to be in the business of prevention and trying to keep people out of beds. This is all about that transition in health care.

### What is a Health and Wellness Center?

**C.I.** - Tell us about the offerings of the three health and wellness centers currently operating; number of enrollees, services offered, facility descriptions, etc.

**DR** - Because we are talking about health and wellness centers, I just want to take a minute to share what that is exactly. A health and wellness center is an outpatient delivery model that brings together a range of clinical outpatient services with retail-oriented health services, all in an effort to improve the health of the community it serves. In a comprehensive health and wellness center, there is a complete outpatient continuum of care, so when I say that our first center was 200,000 square feet, that center is made up of several outpatient clinical services, as well as retail-oriented preventive services.

In a comprehensive health and wellness center, we can diagnose disease, illness and injury; there's a full range of diagnostic testing capabilities. Then, we can treat disease, illness and injury, so that treatment component is usually addressed through one of three things or a combination: outpatient surgery centers, free-standing emergency departments or urgent care facilities and services. We can diagnose. We can treat. We can then rehabilitate patients, so there is a full range of clinical rehab services, which typically consist of physical therapy, sports medicine, sports performance, cardiopulmonary rehab (Phase II and III), occupational therapy, neurotherapy, speech therapy, etc. Those are typically the clinical components: diagnose, treat and rehabilitate.

The next component is *prevention*, and that is the medical fitness part of the



Cardio Floor at Akron General Lifestyles

model. One thing that is unique about this environment is the rehab component of the model is clinically integrated with the prevention piece, so the medical fitness center is a blend of patients, members and the associated staff who provide those services. In this model, it is not unusual to see a physical therapist working with their patient on one treadmill, a cardiopulmonary rehab nurse working with a patient who might have an oxygen tank on the next and an exercise physiologist working with a member on the next. It's a complete blend of patients and members in this environment, and by doing this, what we have found is that it creates better outcomes for the member, for the patient and for the business.

Between our three centers, right now, we have approximately 16,000 members. That equates to roughly 700,000 members visits a year, and that doesn't include patients and guests that come in on a daily basis. New members go through computerized physical assessments and then meet with degreed exercise physiologists, who prescribe *personalized* exercise programs. It's not a cookie cutter approach but rather a very individualized approach. We then encourage reassessment on a regular basis so we can monitor what is working and what is not. The kind of programming that also exists includes a range of chronic disease related programs and risk reduction programs, such as those focusing on obesity, hypertension, diabetes, Multiple Sclerosis, cancer wellness, smoking cessation, health education, nutrition with registered dietitians, arthritis, as well as a wide range of screenings, such as glucose, cholesterol, HDL, bone

density, skin cancer, etc. It's really a focus on prevention. We take a multidisciplinary approach where we utilize the resources of the health system to improve the health of the community. We try not to reinvent the wheel when we don't have to. We work together with other departments and pull other expertise from the system, which is part of the strength of the model.

### Akron General Lifestyles

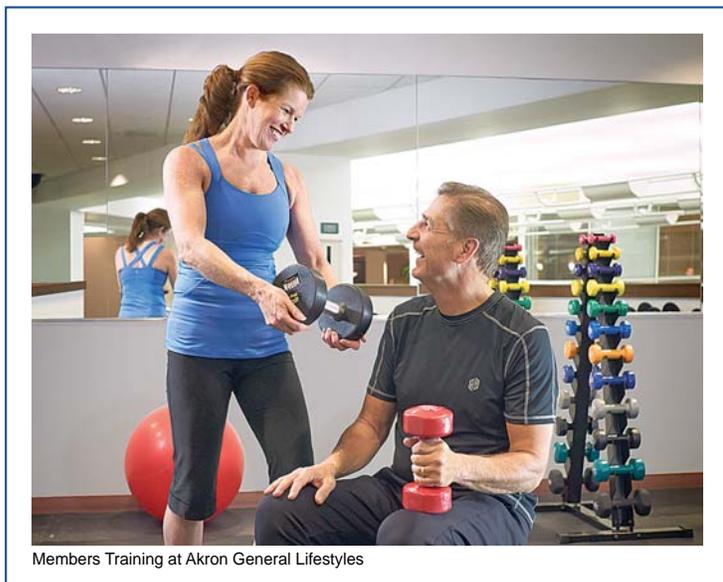
**C.I.** - More specific to the health and fitness club industry, please tell us more about Akron General Lifestyles, the medically supervised exercise and membership program.

**DR** - The name we have given our medical fitness center at Akron General is Lifestyles. It's a medical fitness facility which is defined as a medically supervised health and fitness center that focuses on the prevention and treatment of lifestyle-related disease, illness and injury through regular participation in medically supervised physical activity, nutrition and health education. Really, the short definition is that it's a department of the sponsoring health care organization, just like any other clinical department, with the only difference being that *the medicine is physical activity, nutrition and health education*.

A lot of people ask, "What is the medical fitness difference?" That's something our national association, the Medical Fitness Association, has defined over time. There are a number of discussion points, but the top three that really differentiate these centers in a marketplace are:

**1. Medical Oversight** - There is a Medical Director, just like there would be for any other clinical department, like a cancer center or orthopedics. This component has a Medical Director, and he typically serves as the Chairman of Medical Advisory Council. With every decision that is made

(See Doug Ribley Page 14)



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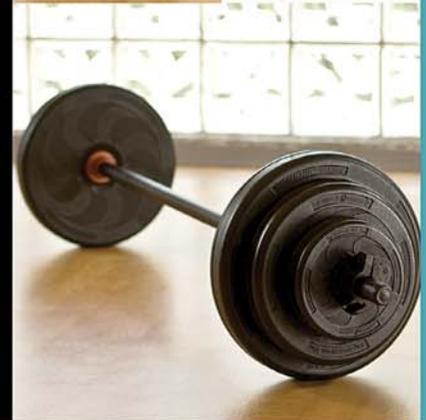
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**...Doug Ribley**

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within the center, whether it's introducing a new risk reduction program or a new piece of exercise equipment, there is physician oversight and input into the decision-making process. So, there is true medical oversight as it relates to the development and operation of these centers.

**2. Qualified Staff** - Everyone in this environment has the appropriate qualifications and credentials to adequately and safely address any particular member's health-related questions or concerns. This is no different from what you would expect to find in a hospital. In a medical fitness center, you can be assured that the staff have gone through the appropriate training and have the right credentials to be giving the direction and advice that is expected from the membership.

**3. Clinical Integration** - We talked about that briefly already, where you bring the clinical component of health together with the preventive retail component of health, all in an effort to improve outcomes for the member, patient and business.

In the medical fitness industry, when we talk about this, it's not really a 'health club,' it's 'health care,' and it's treated that way. A medical fitness center really functions just like any other department of the sponsoring health care organization.

**C.I.** - Do you collect the % of those who were never a member of any club previously, or those who were not a member within the past 12 months? If so, what are those figures?

**DR** - Depending on the center, 50 - 60% of our membership has never been a member of a health and fitness center before. Their medical fitness center experience is their first.

**C.I.** - What is the age distribution of your membership?  
**DR** - The average member age is 49 years old.

**C.I.** - What is the average length of membership?  
**DR** - Average length of membership is four years.

**C.I.** - What is the price point?  
**DR - Enrollment Fee:** Individual - \$275, Couple - \$325, Family - \$350.

**Monthly Dues:** Individual - \$55, Couple - \$85, Family - \$111.

**C.I.** - What is the range for a typical EBITDA margin of a health and wellness center?  
**DR** - With Akron General LifeStyles, it is 20 - 25%.

**C.I.** - Does the model work if owned by a medical practice, or other organization, and not a hospital?  
**DR** - Yes, there are examples of varied approaches and ownership groups that have adopted the medical fitness center model and experienced success similar to what successful health care organizations are experiencing.

**DR** - Yes, there are examples of varied approaches and ownership groups that have adopted the medical fitness center model and experienced success similar to what successful health care organizations are experiencing.

**C.I.** - What are some lessons learned from visiting other health and wellness centers?  
**DR** - Centers that are not meeting expectation are often:

1. Built and programmed in a way that is not aligned with the market that is targeted to support the center.
2. Lacking the discipline and focus to adopt, implement and maintain operating practices, policies and tactics that contribute to sound business performance.
3. Not aligned with the physician community or are lacking physician oversight.

**C.I.** - What are some new trends developing



Aquatics at Akron General LifeStyles

in this segment?

- DR - 1.** The addition of integrative medicine offerings.
- 2.** Creative center design that allows for broader clinical integration options.

**C.I.** - You mentioned Akron General originally took \$37 million out of cash reserves to begin funding these facilities and programs. What would the total capital cost (land, building, start-up costs, working capital, etc) be for the average health and wellness center to get off the ground?  
**DR** - It depends. The first step is to analyze the market to determine what the projected capture rate will be and better understand what the market will support. Through this process, it should become clear what the size of the center should be. Depending on the market, I have seen construction costs range from \$190 - \$250 per square foot. This does not include property, architect fees and contingency allowance.

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**Cross-Industry Lessons**

**C.I.** - In your opinion, what lessons could the health and fitness club industry learn from the programs at Akron General?  
**DR** - The thing that comes to mind for me is that, when I started in this business 30 years ago, I would attend conferences and we would talk about the fact that health clubs, YMCAs and recreation centers were attracting, serving and taking care of 15% of the population. Let's fast-forward 30 years. I think you and I would both say that we are doing pretty much the same. So, in every market, there is 80% - 85% of the population that is underserved or not served at all by the commercial health club

**DR** - The thing that comes to mind for me is that, when I started in this business 30 years ago, I would attend conferences and we would talk about the fact that health clubs, YMCAs and recreation centers were attracting, serving and taking care of 15% of the population. Let's fast-forward 30 years. I think you and I would both say that we are doing pretty much the same. So, in every market, there is 80% - 85% of the population that is underserved or not served at all by the commercial health club

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sector. It used to be that we had to educate these people. We don't have to do that anymore; they've been watching Dr. Oz and Oprah, reading magazines and they get it. They know exercise is good for them, they know they should be doing it, but they just haven't made that decision yet. Where do they start? What we have found is that this group of people is comfortable going to their hospital. Whereas they might not be comfortable in another environment, there's a level of *trust* with the health care organization they are familiar with. They went there when they had their kids, and they went there when they were sick. Now, when the light goes off, and it's time for them to do something about their health or manage a chronic health condition, they are comfortable going to their hospital.

So, a lesson that can be learned is that this model is attracting the more mature, deconditioned, high-risk population, which for the most part, we have been unsuccessful attracting thus far. Again, these people exist in every market. They are out there, and they are looking to do something. Another lesson that can be learned is that there is opportunity by adopting some of the components of the medical fitness model; it will position an organization or center to do a better job of serving this population. It helps us impact the health of a broader population, so it helps everyone. There's a final lesson that can be learned. For years, I sat in conferences and I heard people talk about the *'fact'* that you could not blend patients with members, and people wouldn't be comfortable in a blended environment. From our experience, *we've absolutely debunked that myth.* By bringing patients and members together in the same environment, you have people who are working to get well right next to people who are well, so they aspire to improve their health to a new level. The people who are well see the people who are working to get well, so they appreciate where they are

(See Doug Ribley Page 16)



Walking Track Overlooking Basketball Court at Akron General LifeStyles



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*-Kevin Buck, Owner, Newport Athletic Club*

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## ...Doug Ribley

continued from page 14

in their health cycle. As a result, they are very appreciative and helpful. *People work together to get well and stay well. It's a different environment. It feels different, and it produces remarkable outcomes.*

**C.I.** - Please share some things you've learned from the health and fitness club industry, for example from IHRSA and its member clubs, which you've implemented at Akron General.

**DR** - For years, commercial health clubs have had great experience with introducing programs and perfecting the business model. I would say one of the important things I learned through my early club experience is the importance of the margin. No margin, no mission. If you want to ensure you are going to be around for a long time to provide the programs and services you offer and really make a positive impact on the health of the community, you need to figure out a way to do it so that you are not requiring subsidization from an owner or a sponsoring health care organization. With the first wave of hospital-based fitness back in the '80s, the mistake there was that they didn't look at it that way. They had hospital administrators trying to run a retail business. These centers typically broke even or lost money, and the health care organizations were okay with that because they felt this was a way to serve the community. That went on for a while. At some point, it's not okay anymore.

I think with this *second wave*, we are taking all the strengths of a health care organization, combining them with successes from the commercial side of the industry and have come up with a model that really makes a difference, from a clinical standpoint, in the health of the communities these centers serve. But, it does it in a way that makes smart business sense. Another thought from a

commercial health club standpoint is that there is a huge opportunity here. There are many health care organizations that are going to go out and develop these types of facilities. It will become part of their fabric as a health care organization, but there are many that will look to partner with an organization that is already successful in the business. That opportunity exists, but they are not just going to partner with anyone. They are going to partner with organizations that are adopting and practicing, or operationalizing, the medical fitness difference.

**C.I.** - With the Affordable Care Act now law, and in stages of implementation, it seems like the health and fitness industry and the health care industry are on a joint course. What do you think the landscape could look like ten to fifteen years from now once the markets have adapted to these new conditions?

**DR** - That's a great question, and that's often a question we normally start with because of the changing landscape. What's driving all of this? Clearly, we've known for years about the benefits of exercise and nutrition, but there are some very dynamic changes occurring within health care right now. It's being driven by the Affordable Care Act, population health, patient-centered medical homes, accountable care organizations, etc. All these approaches are putting health care organizations in a situation where they are going to get paid based on outcomes and value, as opposed to volume. It is a big change. When it comes right down to it, as I said earlier, the real solution is that health care organizations, when medically appropriate, need to be treating people in an outpatient setting, as opposed to an inpatient setting, and they need to be in the business of prevention, working hard to keep people out of beds.

I'll give you the Akron General example. In northeast Ohio, there are many health care organizations, and some

of them have chosen to, when possible over the past five years, acquire other smaller community hospitals that may be struggling. When they acquire those hospitals, they acquire more beds. When they acquire more beds, what do they have to do with those beds? They've got to fill them, so the health care organizations that take that approach are really operating from a *Sick Care* standpoint. Every one of those hospitals that were for sale over the past several years approached Akron General as well, and we opted not to do that. We have a wonderful 511-bed teaching medical center in downtown Akron with great doctors, great nurses, great technology, and it always will be our hub. With our capital, instead of adding beds to our system, we've chosen to develop health and wellness centers that are designed to treat people in an outpatient setting and prevent disease, illness and injury through the comprehensive programs and services offered. This represents the future of health care and is the essence of the transition that is taking place as we speak.

It's interesting. For whatever reason, Akron General predicted this years ago. They not only saw that change was coming, but they were willing to take, in my opinion, what was a huge risk. Now, when health care organizations are thinking about developing health and wellness programs and facilities, Akron General is viewed as a national leader in this space. We've created a division of our organization that is helping other health care organizations plan, design, build, operate and finance health and wellness center projects.

**C.I.** - You mentioned organizations, even in your state, which are still using the old model. What is the tipping point where that really will be seen as the old way of doing things, and the new way is the model we have been discussing?

**DR** - I find it to be regional. Some regions are a little bit ahead of the curve. Other ones are still having success under the traditional fee-for-service type of approach, but ultimately, the wave of change will impact everyone. Every day, more and more health care organizations are starting to realize that health care is changing and they have to move in this direction. We get visits just about every week from hospital administrators, Board members and physicians from all over the country, and I believe that, based on what we are seeing, over the next ten to fifteen years, every health care organization in the country will have this kind of facility and program. It's what we've wanted to do through this industry all along, improve the health and lives of the communities we serve.

**C.I.** - What are you most proud of during your time working in this industry?

**DR** - I'm most proud of the role our organization has played in reshaping

the way health care organizations view prevention and wellness. I believe that every community in the country should have access to the medical fitness model, and our efforts have advanced this vision to a point where this goal can be realized and ultimately improve the health, and reduce health risk, of the people and communities these centers serve.

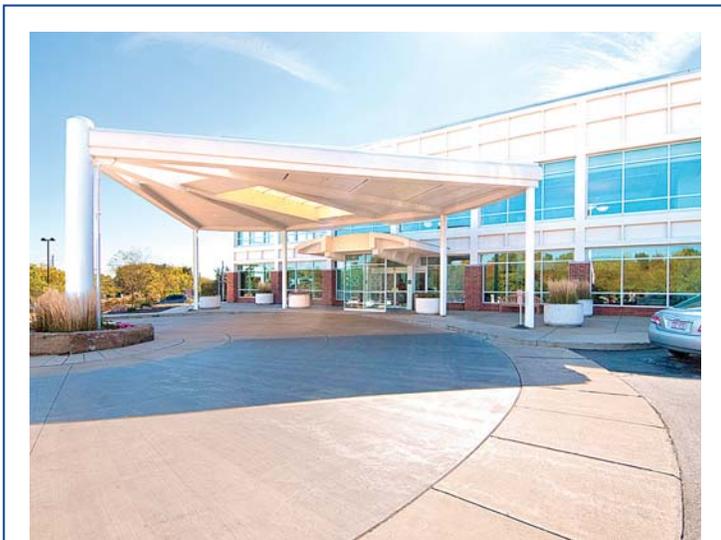
**C.I.** - We have covered a lot today. Is there anything else you would like to mention that you feel our readers should know about?

**DR** - One topic that might be of some interest is employee wellness. I would suggest that, for years, we have been working with third-party payers and large employers, but it has always been a hit or miss proposition. With the change that has been discussed, not only is the timing right, as health insurance costs continue to increase for employers, but when we opened our third wellness center, we essentially covered our entire county. In other words, we created access points for people no matter where they live or work within our county. As soon as we opened that third center, and there was access throughout the entire region, our phone started to ring from third-party payers and large employers. Why? Because they are always very concerned that, if they offer a benefit that only some of their subscribers or employees can take advantage of, it will be inequitable and problematic. As we expanded access through the model, we began to become more attractive to the third-party payers and the large employers. The difference here is that, to truly serve and get the attention of third-party payers and large employers, not only does the program and service need to be sound, but it also needs to consist of broad access points.

...

Let me extend a sincere Thanks and Appreciation to Doug Ribley for his time helping me bring this story to you, as well as his tremendous service to our industry and medical fitness. Thanks also to Jim Armstrong and Kim Conrad for their help with photos and graphics, and an additional thank you to Dr. Cary Wing for her consultation.

*(Justin Cates is the President and Assistant Publisher of CLUB INSIDER and grew up in the health, racquet and sports club industry. Justin was born into a club business family in 1985, and from the age of eight, he spent his non-school and sports hours in a home which doubled as CLUB INSIDER Headquarters. He has lived and breathed this industry for 28 years, since his own day one. Now, he is an integral part of the "Story" of Norm Cates and CLUB INSIDER. Justin may be reached by phone at 770-595-6086 or email at Justin@clubinsideronline.com)*



Akron General Health and Wellness Center - West

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### Wellbridge Names Michael Meehan Chief Operating Officer

DENVER, CO - Wellbridge, the owner and operator of 19 premier athletic clubs, spas and fitness centers nationwide, announced that it has welcomed Michael Meehan as Chief Operating Officer. With more than 30 years of experience in all facets of fitness center operations, sales and management, Meehan will oversee national operations for all Wellbridge facilities beginning June 17, 2013.

Meehan currently serves as Wellbridge's East Regional Director, in which he's provided exceptional leadership while strategically placing strong managers throughout the region.

"We have worked closely with Mike for almost a year and are thrilled to have him on board as COO," said Ed Williams, CEO of Wellbridge. "He is well-respected throughout the industry, and his talents, leadership, energy and proven ability to achieve results make him perfectly suited for this role."

Prior to Wellbridge, Meehan was President of PACCO, LLC, where he consulted with international organizations in the areas of fitness, business development, sales and management. He held the role of Senior Vice President of Sales and Operations for Sport & Heath, Inc., the 10th largest health club company in the United States serving 93,000 members across 28 locations. Meehan has also been a guest presenter on Leadership, Sales, Personal Training and Customer Service for Club Industry, the IHRSA Convention and IHRSA Institute as well as the Discovery Vitality Fitness in South Africa.

"I'm delighted and honored to be offered the position of COO and look forward to being able to sharpen my focus on leading Wellbridge's overall, long-term company vision, strategy and performance," Meehan said.

At Wellbridge, Meehan will be in charge of all areas of the company's owned and managed clubs' operations, including sales and profit centers. Meehan will work directly with Ed Williams.

# Four Steps To Communication That Gets Results

By: Donna Krech

Ever feel like when you speak, no one hears you? You say the same thing over and over again, yet people just don't respond the way you need them to or expect? Communication is such a vital part of our everyday lives, be it in business, or with friends and family, yet many of us struggle to get the results we want. Well, my friend, that's all about to change. In this article, I'm going to show you how to say what you really mean to get what you really want.

Are your personal or business relationships as good as they could be, or as good as you'd like them to be? Ever feel like communication is nearly non-existent between you and the other person? Maybe your thoughts are, "They don't listen," or, "They won't hear me." You might find yourself thinking, "How can they *not* know what I said? I said it!" Yet, the outcome isn't what you agreed it would be, or what you believed you agreed to.

I've been at the game of business and the game of life for a long time now. I've lived through the absolute frustration of not understanding where the other person was coming from. I've lived through the stress of someone else not getting where I was coming from. It's tough but totally fixable!

Let's be honest, we're all managing. Whether we're managing a team, a marriage or a friendship... If we're succeeding at it, we've come to the realization that we're all managing each other. While some things are a whole lot more challenging to manage, management in and of itself can be a huge pain in the you know what.

*Unless...* you have the system that gets results. When I started using it, everything changed. I mean *everything*. My companies started working like a well-oiled machine! We had fun! We made more money! We touched more lives and grew our business!

I've seen this occur in the many businesses I've coached, too. The common frustration I've observed is that people don't know how to communicate when they see a need for improving something. Instead, most often, complaining ensues, arguments occur, resentment sets in and poison begins to infiltrate the marriage, friendship, family, church, department, club or business where the issue is occurring.

It doesn't have to be this way folks. Solutions can occur and very simplistically. God made life simple... We, humans, have acquired a knack for complicating everything. Seriously, solutions can come simplistically. There is hope; there are solutions. You can be happy

and productive.

Again, this can be used in your personal life or in your club, with your team. I personally think it's all life, and a great communication system will work in all areas. This is a great communication system for all situations, but for the sake of this article, I'll share this system with a slant toward a team of people that work together. Below is wisdom for getting an idea heard or seeing a change take place.

**Step 1:** Share what you *like* about the present way what's bothering you is being done. We can always find positives if we look for them. Starting a conversation with what's good is what true leaders do. This is typically an innate character trait or one you acquired from your environment as you grew up, but it can be learned. Remember, people listen, and minds/hearts are opened when we say what's working first. You'll start the conversation on a note that will allow communication to occur and concerns to be heard.

**Step 2:** Share your *concerns* based on facts. Being specific about facts holds merit, plus it shows you're not acting out of emotion. An opinion of value is based on more than just your opinion. Be certain to base your concerns on facts. It's important to realize that your goal is not to point out flaws but to share concerns about how the current behavior, system or issue could result in something other than what anybody wants to see happen. Think of *how* you are presenting your concern. Choose words based on facts instead of feelings and show the relevance to the goals of the company and individuals.

**Step 3:** Share what you could have done differently to get a better outcome. *Take ownership.* Personal responsibility will move mountains. Blaming words and behaviors will build barriers. Most of us have no idea that, when we blame someone else, we are taking the position of a victim. When you share what behaviors you could improve on, you will get heard, and your information will be received.

**Step 4:** Share the *solution* for improving you and for improving the outcome. Be specific. Give a potential plan of action with measurable outcomes and a date by which the plan will produce results.

This works, my friends. It pulls down walls of defensiveness and builds unity. It destroys the manufactured myths we have in our heads about reality and addresses problems dead on. It's fair, it's easy and it works. Be blessed by it. I'd love to hear how it works for you. Let me know...

Thanks for sharing this article with friends, family and co-workers if it served you. Be encouraged to use it as a training tool. I'd ask you to simply give credit to the author if you use it. Those who use this approach are leaders with character of integrity. Unfortunately, there are people with leadership skills who don't own their own behavior but blame others. Those folks never know the success they could have known if they'd have applied this system. Experience has taught me to look for and celebrate people who display this kind of character. I trust them completely because they are transparent.

If you're a business owner or manager, and you're looking for these folks, rest easy, they will reveal themselves. For those on your team who want to grow into leadership, and they're not displaying this behavior, they need to be trained on this crucial communication system. Once they know it, it's up to them to display it. You simply need to watch and listen.

Because of the personal responsibility aspect of this system, and the required positive presentation, anyone attempting to "fake it" can't do so for very long. Conversely, those who live it will get noticed by everyone as a leader worth following. Watch for LiCOS (Like, Concerns, Ownership, Solution) words and behaviors, and offer that person growth in your company! This is behavior worth investing in!

**A Note To Leaders:** If you intend to use this system as a tool for presenting new ideas, you need to set a time and place for when this system is to be used. Otherwise, for "business as usual," it should be used anytime and every time a team member has a concern to share.



Donna Krech

To get the companion worksheet to this article, contact my office at the number below. On our team, if you don't bring a *like* and a *solution* with a concern, you don't have the right to be heard. I love this rule! It creates great leaders, makes business growth easier and keeps stress and negativity at a nearly non-existent level! Woohoo!

There are also times that, as the leader, you need to just state the facts directly. In an upcoming article, I'll speak about doing that. Want more training for your team like this? We provide a free Success Coaching call on creating the business of your dreams. Simply dial toll free, (866) 260 - 8446, ask for Beth, and tell her you'd like to enroll for the free training on creating the business you've always dreamt of having.

(Donna Krech is the Founder and owner of *Thin&Healthy Total Solutions* and a long-time **CLUB INSIDER** Contributing Author.)

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## This Really Did Triple My Dues!

*I can't believe how easy it was for me to get started with Thin&Healthy's Total Solution. The initial investment was unbelievably small.*

**- ROBERT MIRTH**

**A**s a club owner, I'm always looking for new income streams. It was several years ago when I first heard Donna Krech speak during a session at one of the industry shows about how to bring more revenue into a club. At the same time, our club was going through some major changes, so I had to put the thought of weight-loss income on the back burner. But as time passed, it was never far from my mind, and the more I learned about the Thin&Healthy's Total Solution systems, the more I wanted to get my club to the place where I could put in the Thin&Healthy's Total Solution program. Every club owner I talked to that was using the systems all said the same thing, "Just follow what they give you and it will work".

Now more than ever, it is time to tap into the weight-loss market, and I haven't found anyone who seems to do it as well as Thin&Healthy's Total

Solution. People are spending so much money on other weight-loss programs that may or may not work. I wanted something I could offer my members that was a long-term solution for them and revenue producing for us.

The program and business systems are all very well-thought-out and planned. The training and certification was pretty intense, but they covered everything, and I really felt that there just couldn't be another, more complete program out there. Everyone on the Home Office training team is knowledgeable, and the way they train on how to implement every single piece of the program is so thorough. The on-going training is amazing as well. There is such great follow up and support. They really have thought of everything! It really is a turn-key operation.

Thin&Healthy's Total Solution is a money-maker for sure. Right now, my basic club membership EFT draft is \$25 month; but with Thin&Healthy's Total Solution, I'm getting

\$79.99 a month for a 24-month commitment and \$99 month for a 12-month commitment, plus an enrollment fee. Talk about tripling your dues! Our first 10 members were all put on two-year agreements, and with a modest enrollment fee of only \$99, those 10 folks are worth nearly \$21,000... versus two years of club dues, which would only bring in \$6000! The EFT residual is so much better than just selling fitness, and then there is product income as well.

All of our members love the program too. They are finding it easy-to-follow and they are seeing results. We are excited to expand our market and pull the overweight population into the club like never before. We are very happy about not having to come up with the campaigns or ad content ourselves. It is great how truly turn-key this system really is. Also, by applying the Thin&Healthy Total Solution systems across the board in my club, I can see how other areas will improve, especially in the personal training department.

It is a no-brainer...a results-oriented program that the members can easily follow to see guaranteed results, complete training and great support for your business, increased revenue with triple the normal club dues, and systems that can be applied to the whole club to see more revenue everywhere else. Not only are the systems totally complete, I can't believe how easy it was for me to get started with Thin&Healthy's Total Solution. The initial investment was unbelievably low.

What's not to love? The results are amazing and the claims are correct. They are not exaggerated. Thin&Healthy's Total Solution is the answer to increasing member results and profit.

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# Service Sells

## *The Balance Between Sales and Service*

**By:** Karen Woodard-Chavez

This article will provide seven tools for your organization to be able to create a deeper, richer and differentiating service experience for all who pass through your doors. But first, a few important points from outside of our industry:

•Some of my clients in the Active Adult Retirement Communities markets are not as interested in sales training as the health, fitness and wellness industry, but that they are *ravenous* for service training for *all* staff (not simply front line staff) that creates a deep culture of welcome for their staff and management. This results in a differentiating experience.

•Additionally, they are not selling facility (they do not even use words such as "facility"). They are selling *community*, where people want to feel comfortable and stay for years.

We, in the health, wellness and fitness industry are essentially selling the same thing, but we do not sell it that way. Instead, what we sell is facility, equipment and programs. You might think your facility is not, and perhaps that is true, but I have worked with enough clubs to know that this is how they have trained their sales staff on sales technique; to sell features with a lack of emphasis on engagement, nurturing and community. Perfect point: how many sales managers track revenue everyday *but do not track service experiences everyday with staff?* What is compelling about this is that, if we tracked the balance of both revenue and service experiences, we would create higher member loyalty and higher profitability.

Now, back to engagement, nurturing and community. You may say, "Yes, Karen, but the average age for someone purchasing into an Active Adult Retirement Community is much older than our members. Do *our* members really need to feel engaged, nurtured and a sense of community? Perhaps some do not but the concept of engaging, nurturing and community are pretty attractive to many of the people who are and who are not yet your members. On some level, we know this, but we do not always do this. Instead, we try to create loyalty somehow with low prices; that does not create loyalty. Case in point: "*Companies with highly satisfied customers generate superior returns because customer satisfaction is critical for repeat business, and that type of business is usually very profitable,*" said ACSI founder, Claus Fornell. "*That is,*

*loyal customers tend to be highly profitable as long as their loyalty comes from their satisfaction and not because prices are low.*"

Consider the following seven tips to assess and create that balance in your organization. If you want your staff to connect with members, you as management/leadership need to connect with them. Use **FORD**, which is an acronym for Family, Occupation, Recreation and Dreams. It is a card that each staff member (and club member) would complete so we may know more about him. For members, this can be done in an assessment. For staff, this can be done in a new employee orientation. For both, it is completely voluntary, and for those who do choose to complete the card, it gives us a depth of information to engage in conversation, offer relevant services, better understand behaviors and create a stronger connection and sense of belonging.

**Step 1:** Create a **CXO** position - **Chief Experience Officer**. The purpose of this position is to make sure that someone is in charge of the member experience. We make the assumption that every staff person is in charge, which is good and bad, if every staff member is truly in charge then they take ownership with members. That is good. I am dubious that this happens consistently, though. That is bad. We all know we have a few superstars, and we have a few dimmer stars that, frankly, pull the experience down. The point of having a CXO is to make sure someone is managing, coordinating and creating accountability for all the efforts of all the staff so it is not a fragmented approach. I know what you are thinking, "Oh no, more payroll for something that is hard to prove a return on!" I would respond to you with the following two points:

•Jim Kramer of CNBC's Mad Money recently did an episode on the "hospitality index," which is a portfolio of 17 companies which have mastered the hospitality experience. They outperformed the S&P by 256%. Impressive... If you would like that link, please email me at [karen@karenwoodard.com](mailto:karen@karenwoodard.com), and I will send it to you.

•NO, you do not have to hire a full-time person for this. It would not be a bad idea, but you could hire the right person who is already within your organization and wants more. They would collaborate with your HR person (if you have one) on training, creating member experiences, Ready Acts of Kindness, etc. to create your club's brand or signature of service. **Member service is**

**not common sense nor should it be left to personal interpretation.** The "*Golden Rule*" is the worst thing you can use as your compass for your member service. Do you want your 18-year-old, frontline employees to be treating all our members like they want to be treated? They are very different people with very different sets of expectations.

**Step 2:** Make it easy to do business with you. Take a weekend and review all of your less-than-friendly policies. Start with your frontline staff and ask them what policies are difficult to explain, hard to stand behind or about issues that constantly come up that we have to say "No" to. Revise or remove these policies. **Be naive, never paranoid.** Don't punish 98% of the members for what you are afraid 2% will get away with. We need to stop threatening and punishing the member. The result is that you win the argument but lose the member.

**Step 3:** Take away negative cues. Instead of having signs in the club such as, "Using cell phones in the locker room will result in membership suspension," consider "We support our Member's and Guest's privacy, solitude and club experience. Cell phone use is permitted exclusively in the lobby, cafe or offices." Then, if you have to action against offenders, you can do so.

**Step 4:** Increase opportunities for staff to say, "Yes," and decrease opportunities for staff to say, "No." This relates to Step 3; what are the policies you have that your staff must always say "No" to? Additionally, train the staff to say, "Here is what we *can* do," rather than, "We can't do that." Most importantly, train the staff to understand what is grey and what is black and white, where good judgment needs to be used and reward them for using it.

**Step 5:** Guard against Bad Bosses. Do you have a manager that focuses only on the bottom line, does not treat members or staff well or just wants to do the task of their job without the spirit of delivery that you expect? That person should not be a manager. Managers should be exemplars, not wedges in the wheel. Coach that person *up* or *out*; otherwise, you will have quiet anarchy.

**Step 6:** Implement and execute consistent **Management By Walking Around (MBWA)** daily for accountability. Very simply, MBWA is for all managers in the club to get out into the club to observe and engage the following: Observe how the staff is delivering the mission regularly;



Karen Woodard-Chavez

the satisfaction level of the members; how the staff is engaging with members; the physical appearance of the club for cleanliness, orderliness, safety, as well as engage with staff to let them know what they are doing well; engage with staff when they need assistance, direction or correction; and engage with members simply to connect, create and deepen relationships. A few tips to successfully implement MBWA are: All management staff is required to perform MBWA twice daily (non-negotiable) for 15 minutes each time; make MBWA a designated/stated element of job description; be clear that it's not simply to socialize but to also insure that all staff are contributing 100% while on duty to the club and member experience (not to be confused with micromanaging). Meaningful MBWA takes preparation, conversation and a willingness to put yourself out there to hear the good, the bad and the ugly. Then, do something about it.

**Step 7:** Before you utilize any of these tools, assess your organization for service excellence *now*; waiting only makes it worse and increases opportunity costs. Procrastination is one of the most expensive invisible costs of business. Then, continually assess whether or not you are getting to where you want to be, or what needs to change. These tools will be valuable ones in your efforts to create a deeper, richer and differentiating experience for members and staff.

(Karen is President of Premium Performance Training in Boulder, Colorado and Ixtapa, Mexico. She has owned and operated clubs since 1985 and now consults with and trains club staff throughout the world. She provides her services on-site, online, by phone and through her books, CDs and DVDs. Contact Karen at 303-417-0653 or [karen@karenwoodard.com](mailto:karen@karenwoodard.com))

# O2 Fitness Opens New Clubs Just in Time for Summer!

**RALEIGH, N.C.** - The largest locally owned fitness company in North Carolina will be doing some heavy lifting this summer as it prepares for expansion. O2 Fitness is continuing its recent growth by announcing it has acquired three new clubs in Chapel Hill, Carrboro and Wake Forest. This announcement comes on the heels of news earlier that the company will open a brand new location in Wilmington later this year, bringing the total number of O2 Fitness clubs across the state to twelve.

“We’re excited to announce the addition of our newest clubs to the O2 Fitness family,” said Michael Olander, CEO of O2 Fitness. “We believe the Chapel Hill, Carrboro and Wake Forest clubs will be an asset to residents of the Research Triangle (Raleigh, Durham and Chapel Hill). We look forward to helping new members reach their health and fitness goals and to providing current members with the updated facilities and amenities they want.”

O2 Fitness took over the two new Chapel Hill clubs, which are located at 257 S. Elliott Road in Chapel Hill and at 503 W. Main Street in Carrboro, on June 1. Both clubs occupy approximately 20,000 square feet of space perfect for shaping up and slimming down. From young professionals to students to adults, the group fitness schedules and customized personal training sessions are suited to fit the needs of the Chapel Hill and Carrboro communities. Current amenities include equipment with personal entertainment screens and a full line of strength equipment, as well as a full roster of group fitness classes. The Elliott Road location also features an indoor cycling studio, while Carrboro offers CrossFit classes.

O2 Fitness has plans to tone up the appearance of the new Chapel Hill locations within the next several months as well. Members can expect to find new paint and flooring throughout the clubs, a

functional training area, indoor turf and improved locker room amenities. They can push their limits at boot camp, enjoy more group fitness classes and will be able to relax and unwind post-workout in a new member lobby lounges with free WiFi. The Elliot Road club will soon offer a women’s-only area and brand new plasma televisions. Fitness enthusiasts who frequent the Carrboro club can take advantage of the new cycle studio and try out new and improved equipment.

The O2 Fitness Express at Wake Forest is conveniently located for those people living or working in northern Wake County. Located just off U.S. Highway 1 at 2109 S. Main Street, the newly acquired club’s vaulted ceilings and natural lighting make for a cool, comfortable workout space featuring high-quality cardio machines, strength-training equipment, functional fitness gear and more. In addition to state-of-the-art equipment and machines, the

new location will also feature group fitness classes and personal training sessions by appointment. New members of O2 Fitness receive two complimentary personal training sessions when they join. The facility is open 24 hours a day to allow busy members to fit in a workout any time that suits their schedule. O2 Fitness Express at Wake Forest opened for business in May.

O2 Fitness has strong ties to nonprofit organizations in the communities in which it operates and hosts special events such as Shape Up Downtown to benefit the Research Triangle community. O2 Fitness has donated more than \$40,000 in memberships to date in 2013 and is a proud sponsor of Children’s Flight of Hope, Band Together, Frankie Lemmon, and Miracle League of the Triangle. O2 Fitness plans to continue to entrench itself in the communities it serves, and to expand its presence across North Carolina and beyond.

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# Driving Profitability Via Your Fitness Department

By: Dr. Kevin Steele

## Part II

In Part I of this article, I mentioned three industry trends: the tough economic climate, the competitive landscape in most markets and flat consumer growth. Many in our industry feel that these will continue throughout this year; however, there are others who believe the worst is behind us and the climate is changing. Regardless of what the external variables are, your success is predicated upon how solid your business plan is and how well your team executes each day. If you have clear, concise objectives in place and are consistent in reinforcing them, this will make for an effective and efficient operating environment.

We know that people don't join a health club just to become members; they join for a specific reason or goal, or they are referred to help them improve a health-related concern or condition that they currently have. In the Part I of this article, I discussed personal training and weight loss; I will now address the other two "Pillars of Profitability" that are driven by a strong fitness team. They are: *a medical/health care referral program and a corporate/B2B wellness program*. These are all quantifiable, results-driven and nicely profitable if they are well designed and managed effectively.

### A Medical/Healthcare Referral Program

A medical referral program is comprised of local doctors, chiropractors, physical therapists and other community healthcare providers who have established a reciprocal referral relationship with a health club. Of the Four Pillars, this program, if designed and managed effectively, has the potential to be a "game changer" due to its scope, financial resiliency and impact upon retention. So what do I mean? First, depending upon how comprehensive this program is, the scope addresses your competitive landscape. A well-designed medical referral program is a major differentiator in your local market, especially against a large chain or a low price-point competitor due to the high levels of expertise, experience and service necessary for a successful model. Next is the financial resiliency and eventual growth that these programs provide. I have seen well-designed medical referral programs take the economy out of the equation. I realize that this sounds a bit unrealistic, but imagine if you have five to ten MDs, three to five chiropractors and three to five physical therapists referring patients to your facility each month. The front end of these numbers are nice, but the ancillary

fitness revenue streams and family/friends referral numbers have the ability to take the pressure off of a traditional membership sales model. Finally, there is retention, typically if a "patient" is referred in and the personal trainer does a good job educating and positively impacting this person's medical reason for joining. He becomes a member for life and refers all of his family and friends.

Approximately 86 - 89% of people referred by their healthcare provider will join the club that they have been advised to visit. The ability to increase our penetration outside of the fitness enthusiasts significantly reduces the effects of the economy and greatly increases retention. These factors are really what make a healthcare referral program a "game changer."

Fundamental to impacting the new member acquisition aspect of this program, here are some examples of components integrated directly into their design:

- Having a preferred provider partnership network of local healthcare practitioners and clinicians;
- Offering short-term "medical memberships;"
- Printing and providing attractive patient passes;
- Provide specialty "disease management" programs and classes that are offered on a drop-in basis;
- Have a team of well-educated trainers with deep experience.

Now that I have framed this program and you understand how and where these new members will join a facility, here are some keys to larger purchases once they have started their personal training programs. First, have a menu of program options available based upon specific disease states, orthopedic impairments or post-rehabilitative needs, such as 30, 60, 90, or 120 days. Next, include nutritional supplements and/or other products and services into each program to support and facilitate specific outcomes. Offer additional small group "support classes" for people who have similar needs. Finally, provide out-of-club services, such as telephone consults, daily/weekly e-mails, supermarket visits and cooking classes.

Once the culture has been successfully established to market and sell a healthcare referral program, it's longevity and financial success is dependent upon a few keys to renewals/re-signs and client/patient referrals. Here are a few of the "keys" to longevity:

1. Regular follow-up with the client/patient's physician or healthcare provider via phone or e-mail for their chart and

future discussions on their progress;

2. Scheduled "objective" assessments;
3. Trainers getting their client's families involved in supporting their program;
4. Providing educational workshops/seminars for members and non-members.

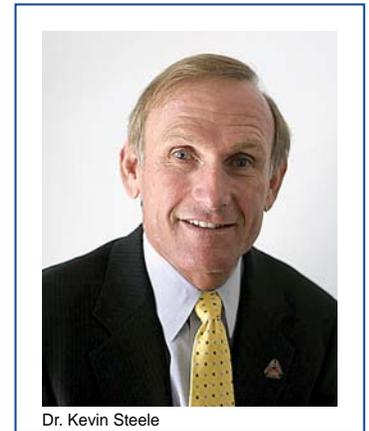
Obviously, there is a great deal that goes into the design and management of these programs, well beyond the scope of this article. It is critical to think through all of the variables before implementing a healthcare referral program. Not every club can do all that I have discussed in this article immediately. A comprehensive healthcare referral program can take many years to develop. Start slow, be consistent and you will reap the rewards.

### A Corporate/B2B Wellness Program

We all have various types and sizes of businesses in our local markets; they have employees and want to keep their employees healthy and reduce their healthcare costs. Clubs can definitely assist them with these two objectives; however, many clubs simply discount memberships and consider this their "corporate sales program." This, I will suggest, is not the most attractive or effective approach. If you are in a market that has a large chain player, you may be wondering how you can compete in this niche with them if they have regional or national presence. This is a legitimate question. The answer is two-fold: First, individual club operators can be more nimble/responsive to clients needs. Second, owner-operated clubs can provide a much higher quality service.

This said, there are some keys to building your corporate business program, and here are a few of them:

1. Identify the size and type of potential partners based upon the size, demographic and culture of your facility.
2. Establish a suite of programs, products and services that are reflective of the businesses that you are targeting. Conduct a needs assessment for each.
3. Understand the competitive landscape in your market. Do a gap analysis. Once you have identified your prospects and solidified a few corporate deals, the next step is enticing their employees to become members. Here are a few keys for doing so: Establish an external marketing/PR campaign. Create a series of internal marketing campaigns designed specifically for each of your corporate client partners. Develop monthly theme campaigns. Design company fitness challenges. Remember, it is all about increasing employee penetration, and many may be resistant at first but will eventually join if their colleagues are having fun and



Dr. Kevin Steele

getting results.

Once the corporate/B2B program is established, new members are being added on a regular basis and the owner or HR person managing the program is happy, what else can be done? Just like the other three pillars, there are strategies or keys to larger purchases:

1. Develop a tiered structure of products and services that your corporate/business clients can purchase in addition to your "basic corporate program."
2. Offer family add-on memberships.
3. Provide "over-the-top" customer service based upon their specific needs.

In closing, it is a great time to be in the fitness industry. We have numerous opportunities each day to impact people's health and change their lives. If you develop a strong portfolio of fitness products and services that are based upon your core strengths, hire a well qualified and experienced team. Align your memberships to reflect/incorporate ancillary programs and services and align your team's compensation to sell and service your products and services. You will dramatically increase your top and bottom line profitability.

*(Dr. Kevin Steele has been in the health and fitness industry for the past 25 years. He has held senior management positions in three of the largest health club organizations in the world. He is currently a Principal of Communication Consultants working with health and fitness centers worldwide. Dr. Steele Chairs several Advisory Boards for fitness industry organizations. He has a B.S. in Sports Medicine/PE and a Ph.D in Exercise Physiology with a sub-specialty in Nutrition. You may reach Dr. Steele by email at [kdstelephd@yahoo.com](mailto:kdstelephd@yahoo.com) or phone at 925 - 200 - 2341)*

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**TLC5** - The Life Coaching Connection reaches out to health clubs and fitness industry vendors nationwide to sponsor TLC5 as a life-enhancing benefit for employees, clients, the U.S. military, civilian veterans and their families. The number five in TLC5 represents the process of having a Life or Success Coach; Coaching, Clarity, Connection, Courage and Creation. Having a life coach helps you focus, find purpose and live fearlessly to create what you want most in your life.

Barbie Hall Gummin is a former health club GM of a Denver Racquet World Athletic Club (now Colorado Athletic Clubs) and former Founder of Promote It! (Sampling “healthy products for healthy people” in health clubs throughout the U.S.). She now works with a team of life and success coaches whose mission is to provide “Fitness for the Mind” for America’s frontline workforce and US military. TLC5 is a convenient (online), affordable and

exceptional Life and Success Coaching resource that nurtures people’s emotional, spiritual and practical needs whenever they want guidance, clarity or support. TLC5 coaches are among Fortune 500 speakers and accomplished authors who are at the top of their field in Success, Relationships, Wealth, Life Empowerment, Wellness and Leadership. TLC5’s coaching resources include one-on-one coaching, continuous ask-a-coach chat room, coach tips, coach workshops, free blogs, books and videos.

TLC5 coaches teach and motivate members to have an “I can do it” attitude. They instill decisive long-term integral values and teach members how to practice positive thinking, bounce back from letdowns and live without fear being a deciding factor in the course of life’s defining moments.

Research has shown that success in both personal life and work is 60 - 70%

due to social and emotional intelligence, with only 30 - 40% affected by IQ. TLC5 gives you the chance to increase your social and emotional intelligence through numerous coaching resources. Results from TLC5 include an increase in the following: productivity and sales, listening skills, clarity, courage and self-esteem. Individuals also find a decrease in confusion and chaos, negative thinking, time wasting and tunnel vision. TLC5 teaches you how to make these changes and sustain that lifestyle.

TLC5 is offered as a free service for our troops, veterans and families in a program called “Coaching for Soldiers.” With this initiative, we reach out to sponsors (individuals, businesses and organizations) to join TLC5 for a nominal fee. Sponsorships range from \$60 to \$25,000 per month to \$600 to \$250,000 per year. There are sponsorship packages or individual memberships. Every \$5



Barbie Hall Gummin

received, grants an annual membership to a military family.

Sponsors of TLC5 receive a variety of benefits including free memberships to give as gifts, spiffs, rewards and goodwill. Differing levels of sponsorship determine the benefits and number of free TLC5 memberships allocated.

TLC5’s Fitness Affiliate Program is an important part of this life-enhancing program’s growth. Health clubs and fitness centers that enroll as a sponsor of TLC5’s “Coaching for Soldiers” program receive coaching benefits for employees and offer TLC5 life and success coaching at a discounted rate (\$150/year) to their members resulting in a 40% commission for the participating clubs (\$60/commission). Commission is earned whenever someone uses a club’s affiliate URL link (200 Members equates to \$12,000 in commission for participating clubs and 6,000 FREE TLC5 memberships for our military families). Commission checks are TLC5’s way of appreciating the fitness industry’s support for our troops and veterans. Health Clubs also receive a “We Support Our Troops” Certificate of Appreciation to display at the fitness facility, showing that US Health Clubs care about the health of our US troops at home and abroad.

Barbie’s new book, Ka’Ching - How to Make your Fortune in Mid-life explains the development of TLC5 <http://amzn.to/139dCYe>. Contact Barbie Gummin ([barbie@TLC5.com](mailto:barbie@TLC5.com)) for more information and to get started as a TLC5 sponsor/member today!



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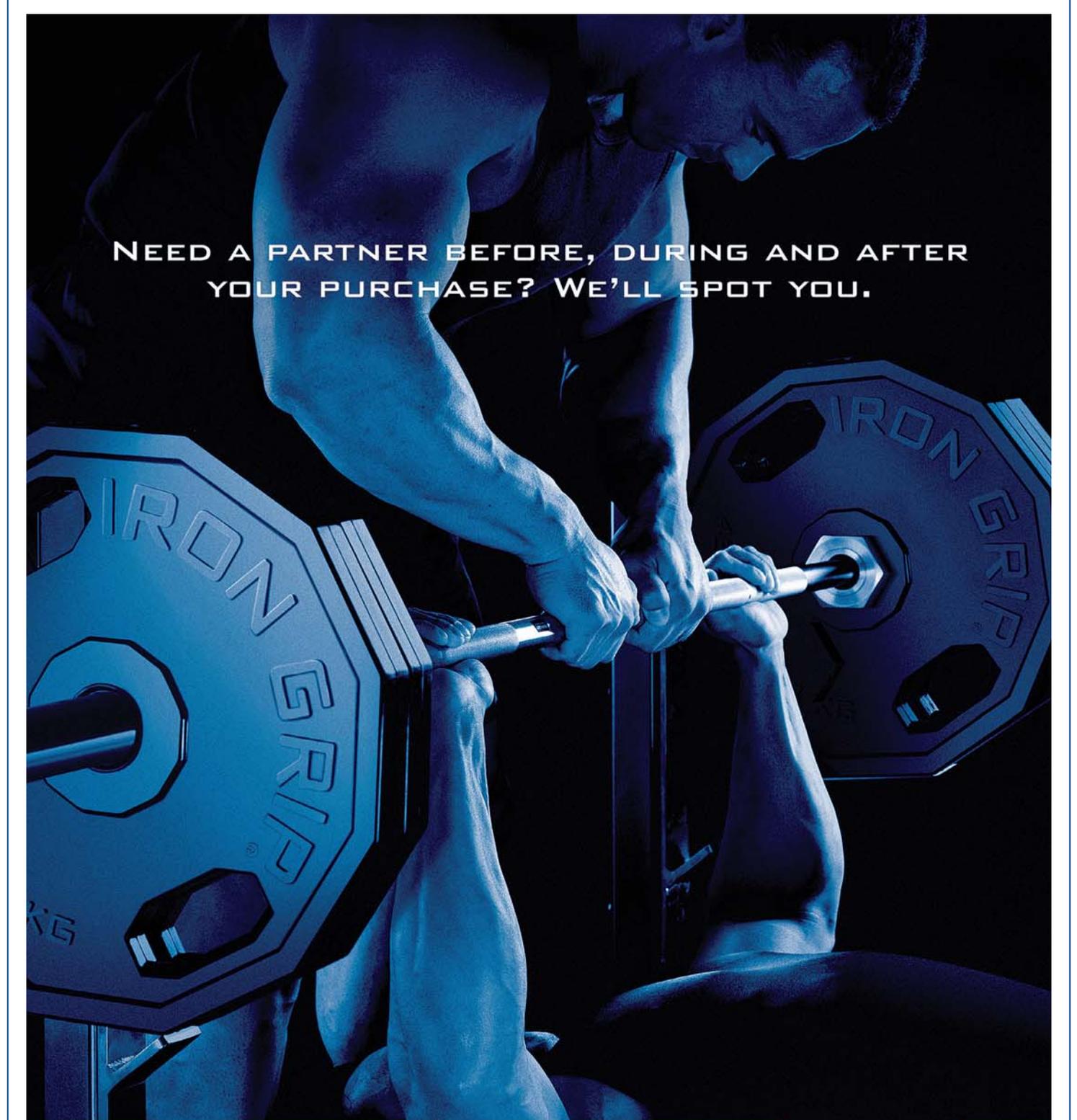
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Barbara Hall Gummin  
Founder  
TLC5 – The Life Coaching Connection

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## Thanks and Appreciation

At CLUB INSIDER, we are excited to be celebrating our 20th Anniversary of this home-based health and fitness club trade newspaper! The thought that this newspaper was founded to serve an industry I truly love, and so that I could become a Mister Mom for my son, Justin, is still intriguing and amazing to us. I wish to extend our most sincere Thanks and Appreciation to everyone that's made this amazing run possible.

A very sincere Thanks and Appreciation go to Rick Caro, Dr. Gerry Faust and the Faust Executive Roundtable #1 for helping me decide in 1993 what my home-based business would be. Thanks and Appreciation to my long-time friends, Ron Hudspeth and Cathy Miller of Atlanta's Hudspeth Report for the tremendous assistance they provided us during our first 8 years of publication. Thanks and Appreciation to all of the folks at Walton Press in Monroe, Georgia. They've done an absolutely excellent job for us all these years and have printed every one of our monthly editions! Thanks and Appreciation to all of our READERS. Sincere Thanks and Appreciation to our CLUB INSIDER Advertisers, past and present, for their kind and dedicated support of this publication. It's amazing to know that we have several advertisers with over 15 years of continuous advertising with us. Plus, we have one advertiser, National Gym Supply, with over 18 years advertising with us and one, Affiliated Acceptance Corporation, with over 19 years as they have advertised in every single edition of CLUB INSIDER since the first month that we sold advertising in June, 1994! We also want to say sincere Thanks and Appreciation to all of our CLUB INSIDER Contributing Authors, past and present, who've contributed hundreds and hundreds of excellent articles to help our readers with their Best Business Practices. Thanks and Appreciation to IHRSA for all it does.

Sincere Thanks and Appreciation to my son, Justin, who started working part-time for CLUB INSIDER when he was just 8 years old (helping with mailings). This young man, pretty much behind the scenes for 20 years now, has truly been a fantastic partner for his Dad in CLUB INSIDER. Justin does our editing, publication layouts, all of our website design and maintenance, all of our bookkeeping and subscription processing work, as well as archive management and anything else that needs doing, including writing eight cover stories per year.

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

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

*Norm Cates, Jr.*

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## Programming For The "Fun Of It!" Ode To Fitness

By: Laurie Cingle, MEd

Give Your Next Member or Staff Newsletter a Kick! Draw Attention to your Program Offerings with this Familiar Rhyme. Include the following poem in your next member or staff newsletter for a bit of fun. It can be adapted for any season of the year or for holiday time. **Warning:** The last paragraph may need to be eliminated.

### Ode To Fitness

T' was the middle of Summer and through all the gyms<sup>1</sup>  
 Men and women were working on chest, abs and limbs.<sup>2</sup>  
 Bikinis and short pants and tank tops galore  
 Caused some of the members to shudder in horror.

"Oh what can I do to fit into my shorts?"  
 A woman had said as she walked off the courts.  
 "My stomach is flabby my hips are too wide,  
 I cannot imagine being seen at poolside."

The men were no better they exercised but  
 The winter had expanded the size of their gut.  
 "Oh Summer, oh Summer, you crept up so fast,  
 New Year's resolutions are a thing of the past."

"I tried, how I tried, to just do it alone,  
 I need some assistance to increase muscle tone."  
 "Someone to help me learn eating low fat,  
 A coach who can guide me and teach me... like that!"

Look, there's a person! Oh, could it be fate?  
 With black<sup>3</sup> shirt and clipboard to help reduce weight.  
 Ten sessions of training and barbells for pumping,  
 Kickboxing and Boot Camp and ropes used for jumping.

Pilates, Hot Yoga, and Cycling indoors,  
 Zumba and group TRX training in fours.  
 Calling Ryan and Lisa, Amy and Karen,  
 Please Victor and Billy and Cristy and Aaron<sup>4</sup>

From the top of their head to the sole of their shoe,  
 Now work them out, work them out, work them out; do!  
 This Newsletter's<sup>5</sup> published Fall, Winter and Summer.  
 Please don't recycle; that would be such a bummer.

Read it with vigor, with excitement and glee,  
 Some programs cost money, but most are for free.  
 Our intent is to help you achieve all of your goals,  
 Improve fitness and wellness and fit into your clothes.

This Newsletter's<sup>5</sup> chock full of sessions and classes  
 Designed to assist to shrink the size of your buttocks.

Enjoy the Summer!

Sign Your Name  
 Print Your Title

### Notes:

1. Substitute your club's two or three syllable name or nickname here. If your club name or nickname can't work because it's too long or nothing rhymes with it, use your location, like "Midwest."
2. This body part must be one-syllable and rhyme with your club's name in the line above. Example: "The Plex" and pecks; "The MAC" and back; "Club Northwest" and chest.
3. Insert the color of the shirt that your staff wears: blue, green, gray, etc.
4. Substitute the names of your personal trainers and fitness staff. Make sure the names rhyme.
5. Instead of using "Newsletter," you can substitute "Program Guide," "e-News," or whatever you call your publication. Instead of "recycle," you can use "delete it."

*(Laurie Cingle, M.Ed., is a fitness business success coach and club consultant. She has been instrumental in leading highly-successful clubs like the Houstonian Club, the Maryland Athletic Club and Wellness Center and Fitness Formula to break industry records and set them on a path for continued long-term success in programming. Laurie may be reached at [laurie@lauriecingle.com](mailto:laurie@lauriecingle.com))*

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