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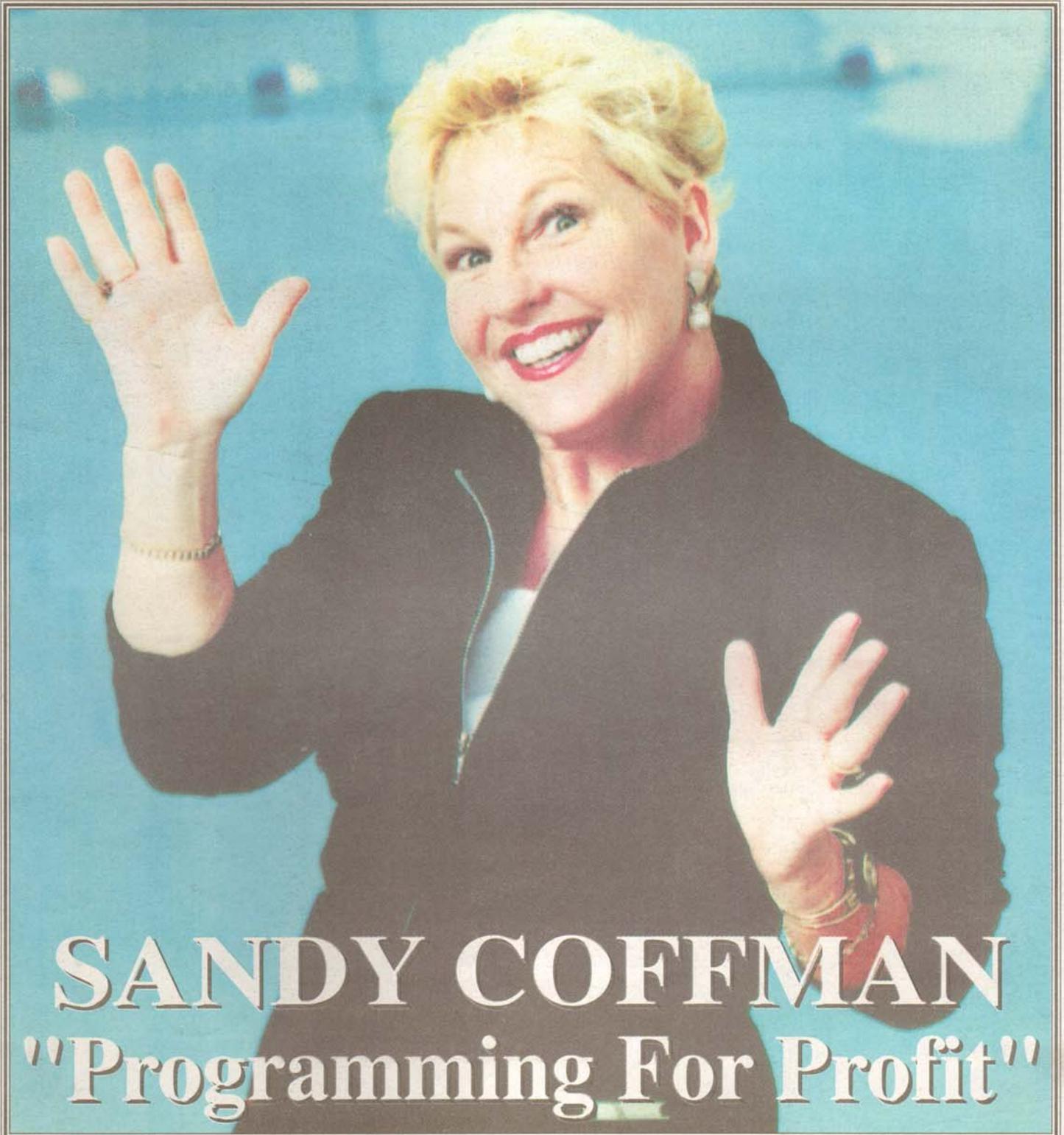
Norm Cates'

THE Club Insider

NEWS

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

©
DECEMBER 2000
VOLUME VII NUMBER 12



SANDY COFFMAN
"Programming For Profit"

I wish

to inspire my members. To give them every opportunity to get exactly what they want from exercise. I will do everything in my power to prove that exercise is not boring. Exercise at my club will entertain. I will capture my members' imaginations with sights and sounds. I will provide members with the best my industry has to give.

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THE Club Insider[®]

NEWS

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

SANDY COFFMAN

"Programming For Profit"

By Norm Cates, Jr.

"Making It Fun!" for club members and employees is something Sandy Coffman has been doing for over 25 years now. I first met this 'dynamo' Bette Midler look-alike when I attended her first ever training seminar in December, 1979. The training was held at the West Allis Racquetball Club, outside of Milwaukee, a leading IHRSA club that was and still is owned by Ted Torcivia and Keith Nygren. Sandy taught our group all of the techniques that she had employed at the West Allis A.C. to fill 16 racquetball courts

during virtually all operating hours. Her bright smile, shining eyes, enthusiastic delivery and lively bounce in her step, mesmerized all of us that weekend. To say that her message was well received would be a huge understatement. Ted Torcivia comments about Coffman, "We had the unique opportunity to see Sandy Coffman at the very start of her career in the club business. She was one of our 3 employees when we opened the doors in 1976. Her professionalism and infectious enthusiasm set the tone for our entire operation, and her influence on our programs and business style continue to this day."

Gary Hamrah, the owner of the Ricochet Racquet Club in South Plainfield, N.J., was also one of the attendees at that class along with about 16 others. Hamrah owned and operated his New Jersey club for 22 years until he recently sold it to Ray and Jeff Zirpolo, the owners of the Club At Woodbridge. Hamrah has continued to regularly employ Sandy Coffman on consulting jobs since then and actually has her booked for employee training in mid-December. Hamrah comments on Coffman, "Sandy Coffman is one of my favorite people in the industry. In regard to Sandy's value to my club here

is how I look at it. We do normal and regular maintenance on all of our equipment which is expensive. But, our most expensive and most important asset is our people. We like to do maintenance on our people, too. She brings a sense of renewed excitement each time she comes. That excitement doesn't go away, but we keep bringing her back frequently to be sure it doesn't."

As the Program Director and part-owner of the West Allis facility for 11 years, Coffman developed the largest racquetball program in the country. Due to her programming expertise, the West Allis club was

experiencing an amazing 80% court occupancy rate from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Friday. Sandy now consults worldwide and does extensive work in marketing and training for the mature adult population. In addition, Sandy Coffman is a very popular featured international speaker and very likely one of the top 3 speakers (in terms of number of presentations) in the industry worldwide. Sandy has provided a tremendous service to the club industry with her role as a speaker. She has given presentations in the United Kingdom, Germany, Netherlands, Scandinavia, Canada, Australia and Japan. (See Sandy Coffman page 13)

LATE BREAKING NEWS

A LETTER TO NETPULSE E-ZONE MEDIA NETWORKS CUSTOMERS FROM THE NEW COMPANY

Introduction by Norm Cates, Jr.

The entire health, racquet and sportsclub industry has been wondering what is going on with Netpulse, E-zone and Xystos. In the October edition of *THE CLUB INSIDER* News, we published a story about the merger of Netpulse, E-zone Networks and Xystos. Since that time, no one has

heard much from the company. That is because the merger was not officially completed until November 14, 2000.

Today, December 11, 2000, *THE CLUB INSIDER* News received an e-mail from Adam J. Handelsman, Director of Public Relations for the newly merged company. In a memo to us, Handelsman wrote: "Netpulse E-zone Media Networks would like to share with

you the following correspondence between Netpulse E-zone Media Network and the 1100 fitness facilities and chains awaiting installation of our products. We feel it is extremely important that the company's plans are honestly conveyed to the industry, and that we strongly address the concerns of our customers."

That letter appears on the right side of the next page (#4) of

this edition.

We have pursued this story aggressively for months on the behalf of all club owners and operators, because we understand the great importance of the situation and we also realize that there are an awful lot of folks out there that have been wondering what is going on. We believe strongly in the concept of "Making It Fun" for members and the utilization of en-

tertainment systems in clubs. Therefore, we are sharing with you the comments from Handelsman and the letter entitled "Dear Customer" on page #4. Our thanks to Mr. Andrew Wiswell, new CEO of the merged company and Mr. Handelsman for providing this information for *THE CLUB INSIDER* News to share. (See Page 4.)

Cybex CEO Aglialoro Re-organizing

Inside The Insider

- The Centerpiece Of The Industry's Growth
- Don't Waste Your Time Having A Web Site Unless You Do Three Things
- Recruiting With A Focus: Sales
- Making It Fun At IAAPA
- The Year 2000 In Review

By Norm Cates, Jr.

Peter Haines has resigned as Cybex CEO and has been replaced for the time being by Cybex Chairman, John Aglialoro.

We attempted to contact Aglialoro at the Cybex offices but he put us off until next month for comment indicating that he was ex-

tremely busy with matters of transition. It appears now that Cybex will have a part-time CEO in Chairman Aglialoro, as he has numerous other major business interests, but will serve as temporary CEO until he finds a new CEO to replace Haines. One thing is for sure, it will no longer be "business" as usual at Cybex.

Check out the letter from Aglialoro on page #4 for details.

I would like to point out something in Aglialoro's letter addressed to "Dear Valued Customer." There is an important lesson for our entire industry to come to grips with. That lesson is the danger of "discounting." In paragraph #5 of that letter, he addresses Cybex's long-time policy of discounting their products. Cybex's competitors, equipment vendors everywhere, will tell (See Cybex page 4)

...Cybex

continued from page 3

you that what Cybex has been doing for the last few years has been detrimental to the entire supplier side of the industry. I agree with them. But, the lesson here goes beyond manufacturers and vendors.

Think of your club's marketplace. If you have been around for a long time as a club owner/operator/manager, think back about the "membership discounters" that have come and gone. Not only are they

long gone and out of business, they have permanently left their mark on your marketplace. They have depressed the very value of your club product that you have worked so hard and continue to work hard over the years to build. In essence, "membership discounters" say to our communities: "We have the greatest product in the world here for you: health and fitness! But, we don't think our product has any real dollar value for you, so we are going to sell it to you at a price that you can't refuse. A price that will assure that we will go out of busi-

ness!" Man, over the years I have seen it all, including some operators that sell 2-year memberships for \$69! Remember those operators? How about those 400+ "LivingWell" clubs that went by about 10 years ago?

I give Agliandro a D- on 'valued-customer' public relations because his letter is so damaging in terms of what you might send to customers, and it is and will be used extensively by his competitors. Plus, he 'bad mouths' his very own products stating in paragraph #4: "Most of our products then

were sold to lightly used consumer customers." But, I give him an A on intent. At least he has figured out what the problems at Cybex are and he appears intent on and dedicated to correcting them. Elimination of the ridiculous discounts, collecting the money that is due your business efficiently and regularly, reducing costs on such major items as shipping and adjusting a misguided warranty policy are all decisions that should bear fruit over time. Agliandro, however, better have deep pockets because it is clearly going to get worse before it

gets better.

Agliandro promised to speak with us at a later date and we hope to reach him and hear his comments about his effort to turn Cybex into a profitable company and thereby fixing his "negatively impacted financial ratios." (See John Agliandro letter on this page.)

STAY TUNED.

(Norm Cates, Jr. is the Publisher of *The CLUB INSIDER News* and a 27-year club industry veteran. Cates was the 1st President of IHRSA and a Co-founder of the Association in 1981.)

November 27, 2000

Dear Valued Customer:

We want to apologize to you for letting a few things get out of hand here at Cybex. It will necessitate a few adjustments to be made effective immediately or by January 1, 2001.

SCYBEX

Cybex International, Inc.
10 Trotter Drive
Methuen, MA 02543
USA
508.523.4330
508.533.6200 fax

First, it is common practice in domestic markets to allow limited credit to good customers. However, we let this go too far, and in so doing, negatively impacted our financial ratios to an uncomfortable level. We expect that you will work with your Cybex credit representatives to bring us back to the financial standard that will enable Cybex to continue to serve you best.

Second, rather than announce an outright price increase on Cybex products, we decided to re-adjust a favorite but internally costly and difficult to administer offering, and that is freight. Effective January 1, 2001, all freight charges will be F.O.B. factory. After agonizing deliberation, this was the cheapest alternative to a price increase.

Third, Cybex (when formerly Trotter, Inc.) initiated the industry standard of the three year parts/labor service warranty policy. Most of our products then were sold to lightly used consumer customers. This continued practice has proved to be not feasible at the least, and in fact, has turned into a financial nightmare, and in too many instances, abuse was the order of day. Effective, January 1, 2001, Cybex will implement a comprehensive one-year no nonsense product warranty. The duration of one year is ample time to prove the toughness, wear and tear features and quality of Cybex products. However, orders shipped by December 31, 2000, will include the full three years parts/service warranty.

Finally, it has proven difficult, if not impossible to pick and choose what customers at what times and under what circumstances receive price discounts. Margins too often become eroded from deal to deal and worse, some customers rightfully point to how others were given extra pricing privileges. No more. By January 1, 2001, Cybex will announce a uniform pricing schedule, which will ultimately decide product-pricing discounts by the size of the invoice at the time of the order only.

We definitely believe you agree that the survival of a business relationship depends on parties receiving payment for goods delivered, or that products be given a reasonable and measured period of time to show that they are working properly. This is common ground upon which all business parties in all industries worldwide could agree. The steps we are taking are meant to enhance our ability to continue to deliver to you the best product offerings possible... This in turn will enhance your own customer base and future growth. We value our business with you, our customer, and look forward to a continuing relationship.

Sincerely,

John Agliandro, CEO

Dear Customer,

We are pleased to announce that on November 14th the merger between Netpulse Communications, E-Zone Networks, and Xystos Media Networks was finally completed. Through the merger and the combined strengths of three companies, we have assembled a team with proven track records and vast expertise in the fitness, media and technology industries.

Netpulse E-Zone Media Networks would like to thank you for your patience during our merger. We realize that our customers are extremely important to us.

With the three companies working as one, we have been able to merge our inventories and evaluate our newly combined installation commitments. Our commitments for all three companies represent a significant number of fitness facilities nationwide (many which signed up for product with two or even all three of the former companies).

Coincident with the completion of the merger, the capital markets for companies in our sector has softened to the point that we have withdrawn our current equity offering, until there is an improvement in the capital markets. Our efforts now focus on uncovering new potential investors, and our initial findings indicate that these new investors will not finance the installation of "free networks".

Based on our limited inventory allocated for our free offer, and the extremely capital intensive venture of providing the fitness industry with free equipment, the situation requires that we postpone indefinitely the installation of the special offers made by both Netpulse and E-Zone between January and July of 2000. We regret this decision but hope you understand that we cannot continue to build a viable, long-term business without access to capital.

We welcome your questions about further specifics relating to your facility. Please find the attached contact information for the specific Netpulse E-Zone sales representative who will be working with your facility.

The Board of Directors and Management of Netpulse E-Zone Media Networks wishes to thank all of its existing and prospective customers for their interest in our products, and we look forward to a long and mutually beneficial relationship.

Netpulse E-Zone Media Networks

GOLD'S GYM INTERNATIONAL BUILDING NEW \$15 MILLION HEADQUARTERS

**Complex Includes
New Showcase
40,000 Square-Foot
Gold's Gym**

FALLS CHURCH, Va.
(December 8)-Gold's Gym International, Inc., (GGI) will move its East Coast headquarters to Ballston, Va., in 2001 as part of a \$15 million development project that will include a new office building and a 40,000-square-foot state-of-the-art showcase Gold's Gym.

The company will relocate from its current location in Falls Church, Va., to 3910 Wilson Boulevard in Ballston, previously an auto dealership site. Company officials said the dealership would be converted to a multi-level Gold's Gym. A three-level corporate office, complete with retail space, will also be expanded from an existing structure on the site. Construction is scheduled to begin in February.

"We are tremendously excited about the scope of this new project," said GGI Chief Execu-

tive Officer Kirk J. Galiani. "We are constructing a facility unlike any other fitness center. We chose to renovate and enhance this unique 1940s-style structure rather than put up a cookie-cutter building. The size and character of the building, combined with a young, vibrant Ballston market, will undoubtedly make this the most popular health club in the metropolitan Washington area."

Galiani said the new Gold's Gym would be outfitted with the latest equipment from

each of the major fitness equipment companies seeking to showcase their product lines to Gold's Gym owners visiting the company's East Coast headquarters. The new gym will feature more than 150 pieces of cardiovascular equipment and four spacious group exercise rooms.

The new Ballston gym will be the third Gold's Gym in the Arlington area, joining fitness centers in Clarendon (2900 Clarendon Boulevard) and Rosslyn (1830 N. Nash Street).

"This new facility demon-

strates our ongoing commitment to the Arlington community," said Galiani.

Kirk Galiani and John Galiani, who along with business partners Jeff Skeen and Bruce Ebel, operated one of the most successful Gold's Gym franchises in the world-wide chain, were named CEO and President of Corporate Development, respectively, of Gold's Gym International, Inc., in 1999. As part of the transition, Skeen was tapped Chief Information Officer and Ebel was (See *Gold's Gym* page 20)

• NORM'S NOTES •

• HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

•DALE DIBBLE's incredible story was told last month as Dale was our Cover Story subject. In the report I told you that when I was with Dale and his wife OLIVE MAE last August, Dale looked great and seemed to be in terrific health. Well, over the Thanksgiving Holidays Dale took a turn for the worse and had to have emergency heart surgery again at the Cleveland Clinic in Ohio. Dale is back home now. We have great news to report. IHRSA has decided to name the annual **IHRSA Industry Distinguished Service Award** after Dale. The first Dale Dibble Industry Distinguished Service Award will be made to the honoree at the 20th Annual IHRSA Convention and Trade Show on March 22, 2001. (Show dates March 21 thru 24th). Which reminds me, if you are not booked for that Convention and Trade Show, please consider making a call to: (800) 228-4772 for Convention and Trade Show information and for membership information about the Association if you are not a member. Try to be there. You will be glad you did! And, speaking of Conventions and Trade Shows, the IHRSA/Athletic Business Convention had a really good line up of speakers including far out futurist, **DR. RICHARD CANTON** who dazzled a couple of thousand people with his predictions on the electronic world. Also, Coach **DON SHULA** shared his secrets about winning. Additionally, Gold's Gym's **DEREK BARTON** gave a remarkable presentation on branding. Barton's offering was one of many that professionals, including **SANDY COFFMAN**, **CASEY CONRAD** and **KAREN WOODARD** gave in Orlando.

•And, speaking of IHRSA, congratulations to **MARK SMITH** of TSI, **CAROL NALEVANKO**, of DMB Sports Clubs and **JULIE MAIN**, of Santa Barbara Athletic Club as they have all been nominated to serve on the IHRSA Board of Directors. Also, **MICHAEL LAMB**, of FTP Sportathlon Clubs, LTD. has been nominated to serve as the new IHRSA International Ambassador. Good luck folks! Nalevanko is on quite a roll as in October, she was honored by **Club Industry Magazine** as the **BUSINESS WOMAN OF THE YEAR!**

•The Spectrum Clubs, headed by Chairman, **RICK CARO**, IHRSA Founder and Former

President, have named a new Senior Management Team. The team, named on November 20th, includes CFO, **LARRY PAGE** from CEC Entertainment, VP Marketing, **ANNIE BENDALIN** from Chancellor Marketing, Corporate Controller, **TANA TOULMIN** from the Metromedia Restaurant Group, VP Finance, **STEVE KAUSLARIC**, from Vertaport, and Purchasing Director, **GARRY CULLINANE**, from United Advertising. The Spectrum Club group currently includes 18 facilities. Good luck to everybody on the new Spectrum Clubs Team!

•Tennis Corporation of America Senior Vice President, **DOUG CASH**, recently announced the promotion of **WILLIE SCHUETTE** to General Manager of Tri-State Athletic Club in Evansville, Indiana. Schuette comes to Tri-State from TCA's Mid-Town Athletic Club. Good luck Willie!

•I missed this Note last month: **The Iron Grip Barbell Company** has settled a lawsuit against **Fitness Products International, LLC**, out of court. The defendants are manufacturers of Jade weight plates. Sorry.

•Bally Total Fitness stock continues to increase in value as during press week, BTF stock topped 30 on a day when the NYSE dropped 250 points!

•**CHARLIE SWAYNE** has cancelled his IPO that was intended to fund a new \$5 million club in his hometown of Lacrosse, Wisconsin. Sorry about that Charlie!

•**CheckFree Health and Fitness** has announced that the re-

design of its **RCM2001 Club Management Software**. The new redesigned club management solution will offer is based on N-Tier computing models and will offer additional scalability, performance, load balancing and flexibility to **CheckFree's** software. It is good to see my old friend, **DICK MITCHELL**, a long-time club industry veteran and supporter of IHRSA, recovering well from recent back surgery.

•**DAVID LEVY**, formerly Co-publisher of **Fitness Management Magazine** has left the publication to attempt to recover from a serious case of Lime Disease. The rare disease is transmitted by tick bites. We wish Dave the best as he recovers from this awful affliction.

•**The Bel Air Athletic Club** in Bel Air, Maryland, formerly owned by **ROGER** and **ELAINE RALPH**, and now owned and operated by the **WellBridge Company**, was recently honored by the **Harford County Chamber of Commerce**, **Harford County Government** and **Harford Community College**. The Bel Air Athletic Club received the **Harford Award for Service**, an award that honors those organizations that exemplify a strong commitment to the county's business community. The Bel Air Athletic Club stands virtually alone in the club industry when it comes to excellence of family programming and activities. And, that standing has recently been enhanced with the opening of the 20,000 square-foot **BAAC Backyard Clubhouse**, a \$2.5 million Kids' Arena with a huge and magnificent 'Life Tree' The clubhouse contains dance, karate and multi-purpose studios, a unique kids' sized gymnasium, arcade, party rooms, and a most extraordinary and creative kids' environment. Roger and Elaine and the creators of the **BAAC Backyard**

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Clubhouse, the **PlayWorks** founders **BRUCE BARKER** and **PATRICK KING**, have surely hit a homerun with this creation and are definitely **MAKING IT FUN!** for the kids of the Bel Air Athletic Club.

•It was a pleasure visiting with **SANDY COFFMAN** and her husband of 38 years, **BUD**, at their waterfront home in beautiful Bradenton, Florida. Her story is a terrific story and I urge you to take the time to read it all as there are a lot of good lessons and ideas for club owners/operators/managers therein. Sandy will be speaking at IHRSA's 20th Anniversary and Convention on March 23 and 24th. Her subject on the 23rd is: **FUN and FITNESS FOR THE OVER 50, 60, 70, and 80 YEAR OLDS...& OTHERS**. On the 24th, she will teach: **BREAKING DOWN THE BARRIERS! HOW TO DEVELOP SALES TECHNIQUES FOR YOUR NON-SALES STAFF**. Sandy was named one of the "Top IHRSA 2000 Convention and Fitness Business Conference Speaker! Congratulations Sandy!

•It is great to see that the total number of health clubs has grown 3.4% during the first six months of the year. The six-month increase from 15,372 to 15,910 Marks the sixth consecutive year of continuous growth!

•**MARK SMITH**, CEO of TSI, has reported that revenue has risen \$61.2 million in the 3rd quarter, an increase of 47% over the same period last year! The club count has increased by 28% to 106 clubs. Mark and his **Executive Team** continue to do an amazing job

of consolidating the Northeast.

•Proving that **DALE DIBBLE** last month and **SANDY COFFMAN** and **COLIN MILNER** in this month's **CLUB INSIDER** News are right on target, the **Beverly Healthcare Corporation**, the nation's largest provider of nursing homes, has begun the installation of comprehensive fitness centers at 8 of its 400 locations. If successful, the program is projected to grow quickly to all 400 Beverly facilities. Nautilus was selected as the equipment supplier by Beverly. Also, Beverly Healthcare is centering its fitness center roll-out around **DR. WAYNE WEST-COTT'S** 14-week "**Freedom Through Functionality**" strength training program which has proven to increase lower body strength amongst the elderly by 82% and upper body strength by an average of 38%.

•**RICH BOGGS**, Founder and CEO of **The STEP Company**, tells me that his company hosted in early November an event called the **BTS Body Systems Challenge** to benefit an inner city youth program called "**Moving In The Spirit**." The organization appeals to inner city kids through dance. The event drew 160 people from around the country who participated in all 5 Body Training Systems classes and **MOLLY FOX** from New York taught **BodyFLOW**, **MIKE McSWEENEY**, taught **RPM** and **BodyPUMP** and **NATHANIAL LEVIAS**, from Argentina, taught **BodyATTACK** throughout a very busy Saturday. The event raised a little over \$11,000 for the cause. Boggs even did his part by attending all five classes in a row! What a guy!

(See Norm's Notes page 25)

Norm Cates' **THE Club Insider** NEWS
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Box 681241, Marietta, GA 30068-0021 • (770) 850-8506
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THE CENTERPIECE OF THE INDUSTRY'S GROWTH?

By Colin Milner

Would your business benefit by accessing 100million North Americans who have 80% of the nation's wealth and 55% of the discretionary income and account for 50% of total consumer demand? Especially if 64% said they wanted to participate more in fitness activities and all of them tended to remain members 4.7 years longer than average?

In fact, these potential members started arriving one every eight seconds on January 1, 1996 and will continue to do so for the next 20 years - bringing with them a lifetime of experience and wealth. That's right: the aging of America is in full swing, and ac-

ording to a recent industry report by IHRSA and Fitness Products Council of the SGMA, the Age Wave opportunity constitutes the centerpiece of the industry's initiative to reach 100 million members by 2010.

According to a survey conducted for the Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association, 13 million people over 55 were frequent participants in various sports, fitness and recreational pursuits in 1997. That represents a 25% increase over the 10.4 million identified in 1987. So why do they only make up 13.9% of the 21 million people involved in fitness? Maybe our greatest obstacle is staring at us in the mirror: ourselves.

Fitness facilities and

programming have been molded around the younger adult, leaving our belief system - which is made up of our life experiences and which creates our paradigms and rules about this market - woefully undernourished.

In the wake of many industry successes is a reluctance to change. It's human nature to stick with what you know, especially if it has worked, and the fitness industry is no different. But continuing to depict slender young individuals in our media and literature reinforces the perception that older people do not belong.

Paradigms go through a three-phase cycle. In the first phase, problems are solved slowly, because people are only reluctantly learning about a new and unfamiliar paradigm (where the industry is right now regarding the aging market). In the second phase, things happen fast; the new paradigm becomes standard practice and nobody considers using anything else - aerobics in clubs, for instance. In the third phase, the curve flattens out, leaving insoluble problems and a probable new paradigm shift.

As a society, we're so uncomfortable with the concept of aging that we're often in denial about it; when in fact, we need to embrace the idea of aging and the value system of older adults - which has little to do with sex appeal or ego and much to do with feeling good while maintaining one's independence and functionality.

To get them to exercise requires eliminating barriers to entry. In an IHRSA study on the deconditioned market, Dr. Christine Brooks cites intimidation as the chief impediment to market penetration. A heightened fear of not fitting in and images of scantily clad, muscle bound, barbell-pumping bodybuilders kept the studied group out of the clubs.

Needless to say, these individuals have a well-defined sense of fragility - which paradoxically impedes their ability to use exercise to restore hardness. A sedentary lifestyle is a major contributor to their losing 50% of their strength by the age of 80.

But all is not lost. On June 23, 1994, the landmark study by Tufts University, published in the New England Journal of Medicine, showed that even at age 98, training at intensity can reverse the loss of strength by 113% within 10 weeks. NBC Nightly News called it: "one of the most important medical discoveries ever about how to treat elderly

people." Many retirement and assisted-living facilities are now offering full-fledged wellness centers in their communities. How about us?

A study by the Alliance for Aging Research found that older Americans who lose independence each year cost \$26 billion more in medical and long-term care than if they could live on their own. "It is now chronic disease that poses a threat to our nation's health and economic well-being," the study says.

Two of these diseases, osteoporosis and arthritis, are among the major causes of loss of independence due to mobility impairment. The Center for Disease Control projects that 59.4 million people, almost 20 percent of the population, will suffer from arthritis over the next 20 years. Osteoarthritis is the most common form of arthritis affecting persons age 45 and over. The United States could save \$10 billion in health costs, most stemming from loss of independence, if the osteoarthritis could be delayed by five years.

Every year, osteoporosis causes 1.5 million fractures injuries that can lead to permanent disability, loss of independence, even death costing \$14 billion. Osteoporosis is a major public health threat to 28 million Americans, 80 percent of whom are women. Currently, 10 million Americans have osteoporosis, and another 18 million have low bone mass, a condition that increases their exposure to the disease. One out of every two women and one in eight men over 50 will have an osteoporosis-related fracture over their lifetimes.



Colin Milner

One out of three people over 65 fall every year, and of those hospitalized, 50% die within the first year. The total direct cost of fall injuries in 1994 for those over 65 was estimated at \$20.2 billion.

How do we change our paradigms to address the biggest target market in history? Hospital fitness centers did - by broadening their appeal, becoming more multigenerational and, in the process, swelling their ranks of mature members to 43%.

If this market is to be the centerpiece of our industry's growth, the first step is to change our belief system around aging. The second is to open yourself and your facility to a new world of possibilities. Let's start.

(Colin Milner is VP Sales/Marketing - Idea Health & Fitness Association (800) 999-4332.)

FRIDAY REPORTS

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Why The Mature Adult Needs Specialized Programming

- *Changes in physiological systems result in balance, coordination, vision, hearing, and muscle deficits;
- *Chronic conditions that impact exercise ability and safety;
- *Psychological factors that can prevent seniors from envisioning themselves in a fitness environment, including:
 - images of exercise
 - media images of older adults
 - images common to fitness facilities
 - personal perception of self as a non-exerciser
 - lack of programming which has personal relevance

The environment must not reinforce this 'non-relevant' image

- *Standard exercise classes (music, instructor's approach, movements, surface, temperature, etc.) are not appropriate/safe for older adults.
- *Standard exercise equipment is generally not suited to older adults.
- *Operational procedures must take into account the special needs of older adults.
- *Marketing messages must be geared toward or at least relevant to the mature adult.
- *This is a new, complex, rapidly changing field.
- *If you do it wrong the first time, they will not come back.
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RECRUITING WITH A FOCUS

By Cindy Scibetta

We often forget to ask ourselves an all-important question as we begin the recruiting process: what specific personality traits are absolutely necessary for this particular position? We spend a lot of time on skill sets, certifications, education and titles. Let's look closely at whether this person is a good match for your club and/or company culture? Have you focused on specific personality traits? Are you looking for someone very outgoing or someone who is more comfortable being behind-the-scenes? Have you decided if you need a systematic problem solver or an innovative and creative problem solver? These people differences can make or break any hire.

What makes a highly successful Membership Sales Representative? Are you sure that you know EXACTLY what you are looking for as you begin your search? Is it important to replace the position with a carbon copy of the person that has just left you? Do you have a hiring pattern where a sales person stays for 6 to 8 months and then they pick up and leave? Are you even surprised when they leave?

With so much turnover in

the sales departments of our clubs, here are some ideas to help improve your retention rate. We have found that specific profiles are more successful for particular positions, based on profiling top performers from IHRSA clubs throughout the country for the past 7 years. We use the PREP Profiling System, which found its way into the health and fitness industry through an original Faust Group in 1991. Many profiling systems can work wonderfully, providing another layer of information in which to guide your hiring and everyday management practices.

Here is a "BENCHMARK PROFILE," for top performers in membership sales.

Outgoing Is Preferable To Introspective

An Outgoing membership salesperson is enthusiastic, persuasive, team oriented, optimistic, and adaptive to change. He senses the other's needs and then respond with a personalized solution. He has strong negotiating skills and uses diplomacy to the fullest. It is important for him to be able to "think out loud" when goal setting and meeting with a su-

pervisor. Even though he doesn't show it, he is very sensitive to criticism and rejection. Help this salesperson focus on improving the qualification stage. Outgoings like to be rewarded with public recognition, money, and anything that improves their lifestyle.

An Introspective, of course, can sell when the right motivators are in place. He sometimes insists on reviewing many programs in detail, while the prospect squirms in his seat looking for an exit strategy! Introspectives are actually much better listeners than Outgoings and will remember many details of conversations from long ago. Since Introspectives process information internally, they often won't show much expression or enthusiasm in the beginning of a tour. They will be matter-of-fact and straightforward sales people.

Controlling or Supportive Can Both Be Effective

A Controlling salesperson will ask for referrals upfront with ease and be very comfortable closing. They appear assertive and often demanding with fellow staff, less tolerant of other's weak points. They have a strong self-image and

will expect a lot from others as well. Controllers enjoy the challenge of the sales process and get a thrill out of closing sales. They can be team players but are not cheerleader types. Controlling styles need to be in control of how much money they make, so a commission structure is a natural. Controlling styles need boundaries (if you don't give them your boundaries, they will create their own!). These are the people who are more likely to become Sales Managers in your club or organization.

Supportive styles appear as helpers, very customer service oriented. These are the sales people that jump behind your front desk and help out during your busy hours. Supportive styles will be less comfortable "closing" in the sales process. They often have many be-backs. When the follow-up is excellent, the Supportive style can be highly successful. This style has been most successful working with special populations, seniors, deconditioned market and hospital-based centers. This style obtains referrals due to excellent follow-up and customer service instead of at the close of the sale.

Urgent Is Preferable To Relaxed

The Urgent trait behaviors help to ask for the close and move the process along. The Urgent style readily adapts to renovations, new program and new staff. They have a "do it now" attitude and like to have many projects going at once. They enjoy immediate rewards for a job well done. The Urgent style struggles with time management, simply due to the fact that they throw themselves into so many different projects. When supervising an Urgent, help him prioritize and be realistic about what is actually physically possible. This is an extremely important trait in sales staff in our clubs. We have yet to see very effective results from sales staff without the Urgent trait.

The Relaxed trait can be most effective in a high-ticket sale where the sales cycle is long (real estate, computer, high tech). The Relaxed trait also works well when the sales requires long-term relationship building. In the health and fitness industry, some highly successful equipment sales and corporate sales people have a strong Relaxed trait.

Exactng And Generalizing Can Both Be Effective

Exactng styles demonstrate a very systematic and methodical sales tour. They will take copious notes in training and ask detailed questions. They will also read your Company Handbook from cover to cover. Improvising the sales tour and process will be tough for this style - they don't like to wing it! Their paperwork will actually be complete and submitted on a timely basis! In a start-up or renovation phase, they will be less tolerant and sometimes cranky. The Exactng style is very capable of taking on extra sales administration work. They will often present too much detail during the sale. Train this style on how to respond to the qualification stage.

Generalizing styles are innovative and creative problem solvers. They will have many different ways to close and appear very casual in their approach. Without missing a beat, they can easily adapt to new and evolving environments during renovations, program changes, and staff changes. They will present the "big picture" in the sales process and then fill in the details later. (Sometimes they forget the details altogether and try to close before they have given the payment options!) The Generalizing style helps the prospect "feel good" and becomes their friend and/or confidant. Unfortunately, their paperwork is most often a nightmare and they will forget some details of your current promotion. Role-playing comes naturally to this style, so this problem is easily remedied with practice!

An important reminder for you — the information here is only one element of your hiring decision. You cannot hire on personality alone! But once you have found candidates with similar skill sets, educational backgrounds and work experience, then the BENCHMARK PROFILES can come in extremely handy. Remember to thoroughly assess the experience, skills and educational backgrounds of each candidate. Check references, calling at least 3 people for each candidate. Spend some time with your staff reviewing EXACTLY what you are looking for BEFORE you begin your search.

(Cindy Scibetta is an Associate of JLR Associates, a Boston-based club management recruiting firm. She may be reached at (401) 245-0077.

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DON'T WASTE YOUR TIME HAVING A WEB SITE UNLESS YOU DO THESE THREE THINGS!"

By Pat Necerato

WHOA!!! (That means "Wow!" but with much more surprise)

This is the word that first came to mind when viewing the 1,000 or so fitness center web sites our company analyzed recently. Why have a web site if you're not going to use it to better the sales, production, profits, or customer service of your organization?

I'm referring to the web sites that literally persuade customers, prospects, and all visitors **NOT TO ACT** while browsing in their web site!!

Can you imagine a prospect coming into your facility, showing you buying signs, asking questions, showing interest, and then when they pull out their credit card to buy your offering, you ignored them, walk away, and point them to your competitor!

This is what some fitness center web sites are doing right now!

You will avoid this by ensuring your web site has these three components.

In order to have a productive web site, regardless of what you're selling, every single, solitary, visitor must be enticed to do one of the following 3 actions:

1) Purchase Your Product or Service:

Memberships, personal training services, pro shop items, supplements or whatever you offer on your site **MUST BE OFFERED TO YOUR VISITOR IN EVERY WORD, SENTENCE, PAGE, OR PICTURE!**

Make offers constantly. "If you buy this, you get that," "If you act now, you get this." Laden every word and enticement with juicy, drippy, sloppy, gooey, benefits!

Don't just tell people they'll get in shape or feel better by acting on your offering now. Be specific. Tell them they'll lose 2 pounds of fat per week, their inches will be reduced, their clothes will get bigger on them within one week, their friends will ask them "are you losing weight, you look great!". You get the idea.

(Also, go to www.success-ercise.com and click on "Up Closing 10-50%" to get a blueprint on presenting benefits for maximum profits.)

2) Give You Their E-mail Address:

This is the second best thing to a sale. Not getting an e-mail address is like letting a prospect walk into your facility to see your club and refraining from speaking to them about membership or even asking them their name.

Get e-mails by giving information in exchange for an e-mail address. I'm not talking about a guest book. These are too "90's" for people and are a thing of the past (not to mention pointless). They take too much time and do absolutely nothing for the prospect.

Simply get the e-mail by presenting a basic e-mail capture form (short and sweet), and give them something instantly that has high perceived value. A discount coupon, a free month, a special report, a free gift, etc.. When you get their e-mail, send them offers, enticements, notices, bulletins, passes, or any information pertinent to



Pat Necerato

your offering until they join, give you referrals or act on anything.

Then move in to make the sale. The Internet Profit System accomplishes this tenfold with its Sales Maker,

Follow Up, and Buddy Referral Systems, and literally increases daily sales thousands per day. See it at www.success-ercise.com.

3) Contact You Now:

The third best thing you can have your visitor do is contact you by phone, fax or regular mail. This is the slowest way to approach the sale, simply due to the fact that most web surfing prospects are on you site, instead of in your facility, because they want to make online contact and do business the fastest way possible (and with the least amount of sales person contact, especially in the fitness industry).

Have multiple areas on your site that gives your prospect your phone number, fax and address, but have your e-mail present everywhere to encourage an online contact.

As soon as your prospect contacts you via phone, ask them their e-mail address and tell them you're going to send them info along with answering their questions on the phone.

Once this happens add them to your e-mail list, and start the e-mail process we discussed earlier.

Be sure your site has these three ingredients. Without them, a web page is nothing more than a bulletin board, making it an unproductive, costly endeavor for you and your business.

(Pat Necerato:webmaster@success-ercise.com)



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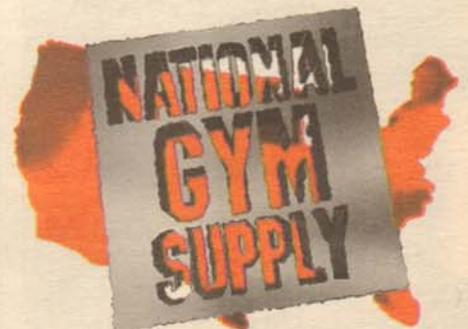
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IAAPA 2000 MAKING IT FUN!

Atlanta, Georgia, USA - Excitement, experience, and education were the buzzwords on the lips of the 28,000 attendees who came to IAAPA 2000, the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions' 82nd Annual Convention and Trade Show, held November 14-18, 2000, in Atlanta. This convention is one of the largest in the country, filling the entire Georgia World Congress Center and the Georgia Dome.

The health, racquet and sportsclub industry can benefit from the IAAPA Convention as it seeks to retain members by providing new and exciting programs and activities for their clubs. This trade show has hundreds of opportunities and this report will give you, a club owner/operator some ideas to con-

sider as you advance your club. Roger Ralph, Founder and former-co-owner of the Bel Air Athletic Club was found at the Play Works, Inc. Exhibit. (See photo below) Ralph had commissioned PlayWorks, to design a 20,000 square-foot Kids Sports Arena addition to the Bel Air Athletic Club in Bel Air, Maryland. The \$2.5 million Bel Air Kids Sports Arena has opened to rave reviews at Bel Air and once again, Roger Ralph, has set the bar higher for the club industry.

An Amazing Show!

There were 1,303 exhibitors at this show and it would be impossible to give a full representation of the show here. However, there were several ex-

hibitors that caught our eye and we would like to bring them to your attention here. One was Air Dimensional Design, a company that produces air supported advertising displays that are ideal for club owners utilization for Grand Openings, Special Events and other events that need the public's attention. A company called realfunspots.com was there. realfunspot.com is a unique company that provided access to your traveling members to over 100,000 fun destination spots. For club owners that are developing outdoor pool and recreational environments, Safari Thatch, Inc. provides turnkey outdoor gazebo environments at a really reasonable price. Here is another good one. Wall climbing is popular across the country, but there

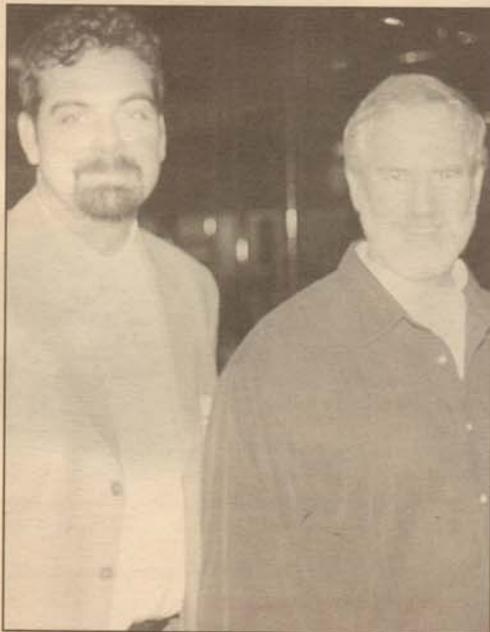
is always the safety issue of properly done spotting. Solid Rock Productions, Inc. provides a mobile rock climbing wall system that has an automatic spotting system. They have never had an accident after years of operations. In the world of food and beverage, two of the most outstanding exhibits out of about 50 food vendors were Dominic's, a mobile sausage stand and Quik n' Crispy, a greaseless fryer system that is ideal for club food environments. And, for special events, lest me not forget to mention Carvalho's 'Friends of a Feather.' This company provides incredibly intelligent, large-colorful birds who would make any event more fun. Joe Carvalho had, among others, two big birds called 'Thelma and Louise', that stole the show. Pho-

tos of these exhibits appear on page #_____.

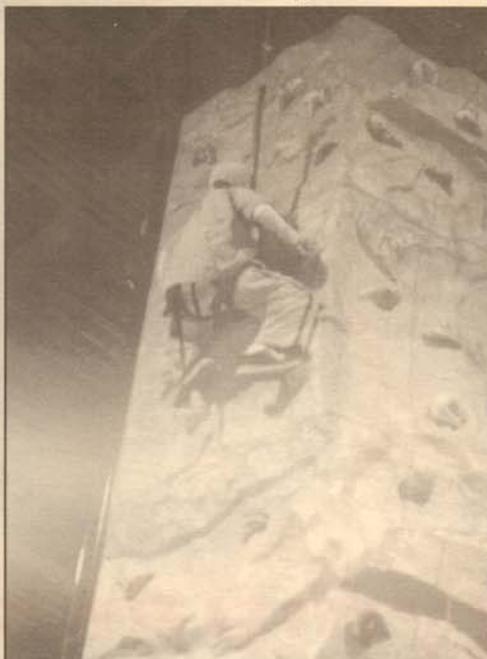
"IAAPA 2000 lived up to its billing as the place to find the latest and greatest in the global amusement industry," stated outgoing IAAPA Chairman Rene Aziz. "The show floor has been full of activity, the seminars have been packed, and the exchange of information and ideas has been as lively as ever. In addition, Atlanta and the World Congress Center have once again been terrific hosts."

Buyers came from 101 countries to view the products and services of 1,303 exhibitors in 552,009* net square feet of exhibit space. Of those buyers, 76% were U.S. and 24% were international.

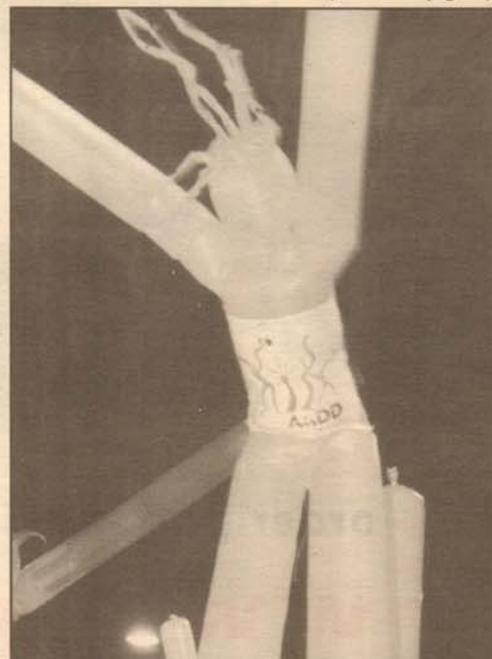
IAAPA is the largest in-
 (See IAAPA page 25)



(L to R) Patrick King of Playworks, Inc. & Roger Ralph former owner of Bel Air A. C.



Solid Rock Productions, Inc



Air Dimensional Design, Inc.



(L to R) Clif Mark & Carolyn Strand of realfunspots.com



(L to R) Joe Carvalho & "Thelma & Louise," of 'Friends of a Feather'



(L to R) John Felico and Walter Felix of Dominick's

...Sandy Coffman

continued from page 3

The European Bodylife Conference recognized Sandy as "EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR" for her training in mature adult programming. She provides continuing education credits for ACE, AFAA and the Senior Fitness Association. She has also been a contributing writer for many trade publications, including serving as a **CLUB INSIDER** News Contributing Author. As President of Programming For Profit and a partner in Retention Works, a U.S. consulting firm, her client list includes Marriott Hotels, UK, Texins Association, Dallas, Texas and several clubs and corporations in Canada.

NO LONGER JUST ABOUT RACQUETBALL

Since beginning her seminar teaching career in 1979, Sandy Coffman has presented programming ideas and concepts to hundreds of groups in the U.S. and abroad. Importantly, her message is no longer just about racquetball. Her training encompasses all phases of programming including group exercise, racquet sports and aqua exercise. Sandy Coffman is the #1 programming guru in the health, racquet and sportsclub industry, an industry that has concluded that programming is a key to both retention and new membership sales.

Coffman grew up in Sheboygan, Wisconsin and attended the University of Wisconsin in Madison, majoring in dance with a minor in physical education. She comments, "Everything I did as a kid, I am still doing now. Golf, cheerleading (the 'V' in Victory), and I played just about every sport there was. I also worked part-time during school at the YMCA." Coffman met her husband of 38 years, Bud, on a blind date during final exams at the University of Wisconsin. She says, "I gotta tell you Norm, it was love at first sight. We saw each other every day thereafter for a year, and then we were married!" They have a daughter, Colleen, 34 and a son, Craig, 33. They also have a grandson, Zachary, age 6. The kids grew up at the club and Bud and Sandy had their social life tied closely to the club.

It Didn't Start With Racquetball

Coffman's career has taken a circuitous route. She recalls, "I first got involved in racquetball when I was teaching aerobics classes

and mom/child classes at the YMCA. I had been an "at-home" Mom for five years when I started to get interested in teaching aerobics classes. I took my first job at a YMCA teaching aerobics and I learned about racquetball at the Y as well. I fell in love with the game the first time I tried it. I took Bud down to the Y and he fell in love with the game, too. That is where I met Harry Jordan who was the actual Founder of the West Allis Athletic Club, at that time called the Racquetball Club. The West Allis A.C. is one of five clubs now known as the Wisconsin Athletic Clubs and are now owned by Ted Torcivia, Keith Nygren and Ray O'Connor. Harry wanted to build the club and became partners with Ted Torcivia and Keith Nygren to do so. Harry also brought me on board to develop the daytime racquetball business with the women. The club opened with 8 courts, two locker rooms and a front desk. And, we all were sure we were going to get rich; but in six months, we knew that wasn't the case. The club was expanded from 8 courts to 12 and then to 16. During that time, we built two other clubs in the Milwaukee area, one with 10 courts and another with 12 courts. I was in charge of the racquetball programming for all three clubs. I loved programming, organizing people and making people happy right from the start. I really had an interest in learning business in general and being productive. I think my spirit is entrepreneurial. When we began, there really wasn't anybody teaching us what to do, we just knew that racquetball was a 'hot' thing."

Coffman continues, "During that time, the biggest thing that was going in Milwaukee was bowling. You could not get an open bowling lane anywhere in Milwaukee until after midnight, and, there were tons of bowling facilities. From the minute they opened, until they closed, the bowling lanes were full of people playing in leagues. I signed up for a league and carefully studied what was happening. I wanted to learn what made these people love bowling. After a while, I came to realize that it wasn't bowling that they loved, it was everybody wearing a funny shirt that matched everybody else's and it was the 'beer frames' that was getting everybody to enjoy bowling! It was the way they



Bud & Sandy Coffman

were put together. That would be my definition of programming. It is the way you put people together. As the industry grew, and I became known as 'the programmer' of the industry in aerobics, the fitness center, the pool, you name it, I patterned absolutely everything that I did from the way I put racquetball programming together in the early days. The way I put racquetball programming together was the same way bowling leagues put people together. You put people together to enjoy a sport or activity and they socialize before, during and after the activity. For example, one of the biggest things in the bowling league business was the end-of-season-banquet. So, the first thing that I did was incorporate a banquet at the end of my racquetball season and at that event we would get everyone to sign up for the next season. All the other people that weren't in it for one season wanted to sign up for the next season. So every single racquetball league doubled in size for 8 to 10 years. It really fed on itself in terms of growth. But, I never left my leagues alone. I never left the customer to run the program. That is rule #1. Do not think that your customer is going to run the program. Your customer responds to how you put it together."

Programming Visionary Still Challenged By Member Fitness Socialization

I asked Coffman what her greatest challenge was. She

replied, "More than 10 years ago when fitness was becoming a huge part of all clubs, I was telling people that we have got to have fitness leagues. We've got to have socialization in the fitness center. I am still promoting that and finding that to be my toughest barrier. That is getting the club owners, managers and more importantly, the exercise physiologists, to understand that the fitness center has got to be fun and social. They are starting to do it now, but there is still resistance there. The fitness area is probably the most beneficial area to our member's health and yet we are losing a large percentage of the new members that join the club. Physiologically, health-wise and wellness wise the fitness center is most important, but we are still losing them because we are not good enough yet at the socialization factor of fitness programming."

We asked, "What is the formula to solve this?" Coffman replied, "Very simply, right back to basics, the old word 'group.' People forget that is really our business. It is the club business. Fitness and exercise, all of that is the product that we sell. Our business is the club business. Club equals group. Group means friends, relationships, socialization and camaraderie. Anytime that you get friends, camaraderie and socialization, they should be laughing and talking. So, you better have laughter and conversation in the fitness center. I think that you can laugh and talk and exercise too. There is a good trend now because people are starting to understand that you can put groups together on bikes, treadmills, etc. I would still like to see group classes done on equipment

right in the middle of the fitness center. I think an axiom to remember is the more technical we get, the more fun we take out of the exercise. As soon as we start doing that we start losing participation."

"We're getting people to try things one time. We are not getting them to stay with it. For example, the PACE system was probably the very first group exercise program that was introduced into the fitness center and it took off like gangbusters because it was exercise...it was a 30-minute workout, it was something that everyone could do at his own level and it was SIMPLE! And, it was FUN as long as the instructor was having fun. PACE has lost a lot of its participation. There was no reason for it, except that club operators decided to put in red lights and green lights and take the instructor out of the room! Club operators tried to tell members, 'We still have the PACE system. This is very simple. Just follow the red light and the green lights. Nobody wants to follow a red light and a green light! They want to follow a smile, eye contact and a touch on the arm, verbal encouragement and an 'ataboy!' They want to follow somebody that will tell them they are doing a good job. As soon as you leave it up to the individual without a leader, it loses its momentum."

We observed that it looks like some clubs have made a 'penny-wise and pound-foolish' decision when it comes to removing the instructors from PACE classes and replacing them with lights. Coffman replied, "That's right. Everybody looks at the \$10 (See Sandy Coffman page 16)

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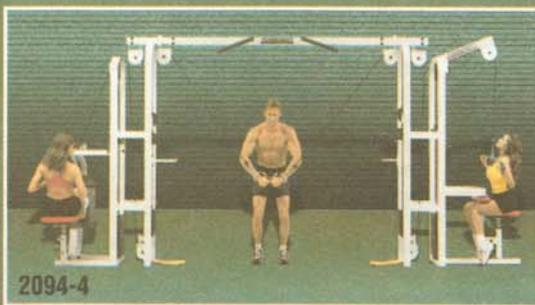
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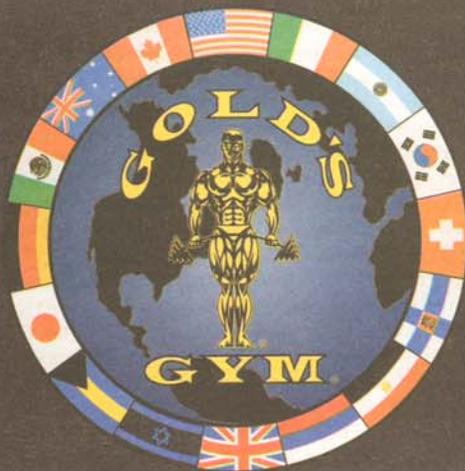
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...Sandy Coffman

continued from page 13

that they are paying the instructor. But, there is one more thing that happened. They didn't give the instructor the proper training. Not just to run the program or the class, but how to market it - how to set up the goals to make sure that these people do come back. If you give the instructor the proper training, the people will come back and if the people do come back, you will have the money to pay the instructor. So, it is first things first.

Hire The Right People - Fire The Wrong Ones!

Coffman continues "One of the reasons we have not given the instructor proper training is that so many owners and managers are getting into the business who don't know how to give proper training to people they hire. They are hiring people that have certifications, but haven't been taught the business aspect of the business - the communications skills. They haven't written job descriptions for the people that they are hiring. The second factor is that because the instructor has not received the proper training to teach and market the class, the instructor does not receive praise and positive feedback for his/her efforts. The instructor becomes bored teaching the class. When the instructor gets bored, the class gets boring. End of story. I write or help rewrite job descriptions to make people less boring and thus less bored. I give them more responsibility, but I teach them how to live up to that responsibility. When they do, there's greater job satisfaction. The members are happier and the club has more money to work with. Right now and forever, this industry should be as concerned with retaining good staff members as they are members. The bottom line: 'Hire The Right People - Fire The Wrong People.' Importantly, the right people are not necessarily the most educated in fitness. Fitness education is important, but it can be obtained. Don't bother getting it until you have communication skills and you have the right concept of what this business is all about. And, this business is all about making friends with people whom you've never met. That's what a club is. One of the reasons I love my job in this industry so much is that I went to work every day at the club and felt like I was throwing a party. I was throwing a party and I helped people enjoy my party. I was absolutely the hostess of the club which is a far better definition of the program director than the words "Program Director."

A Simple Message

"Hire the right people, fire the wrong people. Hire the right personality and then give them the proper training. Don't hire the proper training and then try to change a person's personality. John McCarthy said to me a few years ago while discussing this subject, "Sandy, The industry is starting to get it now."

Coffman continues, "My message is so simple, but it is so important. However, if people are not reminded of it, it gets put on the back burner. I can understand that because I was there. I've experienced every single employee's job in a club today in one way or another. I know how busy we get, how fast we are growing, how many different directions we may go. So, I know that our priorities get messed up so easily. But, I believe that my message is the top priority, and it is the first one that gets lost. That is why it has got to be heard on a continual basis. Any good club has got to remind its staff about it at least twice a year."

Sandy's husband, Bud, added, "The thing I've observed is when Sandy goes into a club and begins to hammer on programming and retention, she often gets a response from the owner that goes something like this, 'Are you kidding? I'm so damned busy just trying to make the rent for the first of the month, I haven't got time to mess with any of that stuff!' And, she comes back 10 years later and they still are fighting to make the rent because they have never done the programming necessary to make their club successful. You can't make a club work without excellent programming and the retention that results from that!"

Some people that have taken Sandy Coffman's message to heart with great success include Connie Martin, the Program Director for the Cascade Athletic Clubs outside of Portland, Oregon. Connie comments, "I've known Sandy Coffman for 25 years. I've followed her footsteps in programming for clubs. She remains one of the top programmers and speakers in the industry. She is one of the few people that after year-after-year-after-year of hearing her speak at conventions you still enjoy listening to what she has to say and how she

says it. You don't get tired of listening to her. She is just a dynamic speaker and she always has something new to say. She is very diverse in so many different areas, but what she really sells is motivation and a positive attitude. That is what you need no matter what area of a club you are working in. Motivation and attitude!"

We heard from Geoff Dyer, founder and owner of 11 Tampa-area Lifestyle Family Fitness Centers and an IHRSA Board Member, another client of Sandy's. Here is what Geoff had to say, "I think Sandy is a great lady and an asset to the industry. Personally, I think she is as fired up now as she has ever been. I've been watching her for the past 10 years at IHRSA Conventions and she pretty much replicates those performances at our meetings. The passion for customer service is very important in our organization because we offer month-to-month memberships and retention is as important as sales. Her ability to shop our clubs and give us advice as to the feel and culture of our clubs is a valuable tool for us to perform at a higher level. We've had an ongoing relationship with Sandy now for the last three years that has been very important to our success."

Two other long-time Sandy Coffman clients weighed in as well. Dean Wallace, the long-time General Manager of the Courthouse Athletic Clubs in Salem, Oregon gave the following input on Coffman: "My Assistant General Manager, John Miller, has worked very hard for the past decade to build one of the industry's state-of-the-art and leading retention programs. We have used Sandy on a regular basis for years as a backbone to bridge our program year-to-year to get it where it is today. Sandy is a true professional. She has done it all. She's worked in the clubs. She's a great speaker, consultant, teacher and writer. She can "walk-the-talk. She always brings new information and excites our staff!"

Bob Provost, a 25+ year owner/operator of the highly successful Greenville Racquet & Fitness Club in Greenville, S.C. adds the following message to Sandy, "Sandy, during your last visit to our club in May, 2000, you were awesome! Our staff is still talking about it. And, I can really see a difference, especially in the front desk and fitness staffs. Thank you for your inspiration to my staff, to all people in our industry and for your continued friendship."

Her Message Has Not Changed

We asked Coffman how she has shaped and changed her message over the years to stay up with the changes in the business and she replied, "The first thing that I would say is that I have tried to be sure that my message has NOT changed a whole lot over the years. It is the message that helped build the foundation of this industry. As the industry grew so big so fast you have to always remember where your roots were and what helped that growth. I do my best to keep that in the forefront. The message hasn't changed. We are still in the club business. We are not just in the fitness business. We have packaged our services to focus on training and communication skills. We teach how to greet people and form relationships with customers that you have never met. That makes the customer feel comfortable and makes that customer like you. To be successful in the club business you have to be a very approachable person, a likeable person."

The Evergrowing Seniors Market - A Vast and Untapped Reservoir of New Business

We asked Coffman to give her view on the senior citizen niche market that is emerging. She was not shy in expressing some very strong and well developed opinions about that subject. Read on: "For starters, it has always been important to me to develop niche markets, and the senior market is certainly one that now offers huge opportunity for all club operators. To get seniors started you need to have groups, and classes especially geared and designed for them. Close personal contact and communication at the beginning stage is essential. You've got to gear your instruction to the type of personality that is coming in. We've seen the average age of our market increase. Although

our industry has grown, it is a real concern of mine that there are still so many out there that want us and need us more than the people who are actually using our clubs right now. The generation after this one will have it easier. Many people in this country and the world did not grow up with our industry and feel that the marketing that has been done indicates that we are here for the young to make the fit-fitter."

"That's been my challenge all along and it is emphasized now that I am getting involved in the senior market. The seniors need our clubs now more than ever. When we hear a club owner or manager say, 'Our seniors don't want to be treated as seniors, they just want to melt in with the rest of the club, that's wrong. Those are the seniors who have already been exercising. They want to melt into the membership, but there are more of the seniors out there that really need our direction. They need a place to go every day. They need the socialization every day. They need the camaraderie. These people are being kept alive now by the medical industry. The medical industry isn't doing anything for their quality of life. 25 years from now, the people who are 65 years old will have grown up in this industry and will already be in it. Right now, our industry faces a unique challenge for the next 20 years. That challenge is getting the people that are 60 years old and will live to be 80 or 90 involved and into our clubs right now. One of the biggest reasons we are not attracting them is because we are not sending that message that we will give them personal attention and that we really care about them and their specific needs. They need to know we are not going to just 'throw-them-in' with the 20 and 30 year olds. It is an unrealistic thing to expect them to come in without special programming and attention to their needs. As with women's only clubs we now are seeing a few senior only facilities opening in our industry. I think we will see more and more of them. But, right now, there are only a few people who are dedicated and want to embrace this challenge of the aging market.

(See Sandy Coffman page 26)

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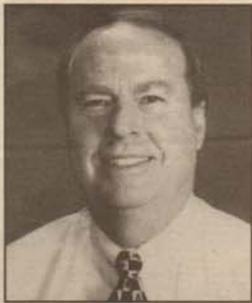
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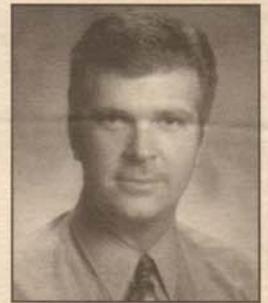
Credentials:
22 years in the Fitness
Industry, Marketing
Consultant, Former
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Mary Jo Chaiken

Specialty:
Customer Service
& Operations

Credentials:
20 years as a Supervisor/
Front Desk Employee
Trainer, Author of several
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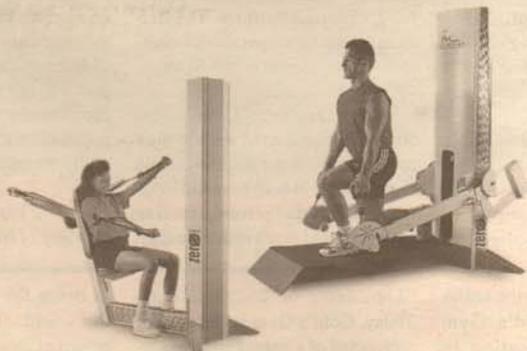
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Clubdoc's Corner

By Mike Chaet, Ph.D

The following questions, issues and situations are commonly brought up during my visits with clients and clubs around the globe. The Clubdoc's Corner is designed to share my solutions with you as well as to challenge you to come up with solutions of your own.

Q: I'm an experienced membership coordinator who just began working for a new club. I was surprised to see a virtual absence of follow-up past the closing. As our sales manager respects your opinion... would you please set him straight on the importance of member follow-up on the part of the salespeople, especially when it comes to referrals.

A: Your sales manager needs to introduce himself at my next seminar... he needs serious help. I hope he listens to ONE of us-as constant membership follow-ups are absolutely essential to a thriving membership base and key to obtaining those referrals - the lifeblood of all clubs. The success of a referral program is directly proportionate to the strength of the relationships between your members and your employees. Put that one in the bank, if you don't have relationships, you're not going to

have good referrals.

There's a lady in New Hampshire that works at one of our client clubs. Every day, she sits down and calls all the members she has sold over the years. Checking up, making sure everybody's happy. That's what she does several hours of each day. The rest of the day she's giving tours. Know who she's giving tours to? She's giving tours to the referrals "her" members brought in.

She takes no walk-ins, she takes no call-ins-all she takes is referrals. And when a walk-in or call-in comes in, they're given to another salesperson. Pretty strong, 100% relationship selling.

So in your club, when you sell a membership or if you're in charge of people who sell memberships, the person who sells the membership "owns" that membership and should call them at least once a month. Should have a card with a record. What was discussed? And each time she calls them, she asks them: "Would you like another guest pass?" "Would you like an invitation to the Open House for your friends?" "We just finished a meeting. And at that meeting, they introduced a new referral program. I'll tell you about it..." on and on and on.

The reason for that phone call is an attempt to get a referral. But you're doing it in a way that it's a favor to the person.

You're not saying to the person, Gee, I haven't met my quota this month. I need 4 members, could you give me 4 names? That's not what we're saying.

I recently visited a diet center in Ohio. The referral line that they use is: "Well, Mr. Smith, you've had such great success... don't you want to share this with a friend? Because we know your friend is going to notice you've lost 30 pounds. He's going to ask how you did it and you're going to tell him that we helped you. Now if you just simply put the names down of people you're going to tell anyway, for every one that comes in and buys a diet program, you get a gift." Prospects, of course, play right into it. Almost all of their business comes from referrals.

Q: We're a large, very busy club in a big city. As manager of a great juice bar, I'm too cost-conscious to enforce anything but a firm "no-return" policy, mainly because of the irritation of members-frequently children-changing their minds and wanting something else. The general manager disagrees. Isn't it appropriate to draw the line and stop jumping up for every single member's whim when it starts costing money?

A: Your general man-

ager is right and, although I understand your logic, you are absolutely wrong. The key to maintaining a happy, thriving membership base is to follow the basic rules of what I call The Service Retention Advantage.

Your dilemma falls under Rule #3: Sort out the details later. Don't worry about the cost of throwing away that extra strawberry juicer because the member thought he ordered a boysenberry supreme. You throw out one order in exchange for another. So it costs you a little more to service that one customer. If you think about it, down the line, you're going to make 10 times over because you have a happy customer. Don't worry about the details of an extra few cents here or there.

Do the good work and the money will follow.

Consider these points from the book *The Nordstrum Way, The Inside Story of America's Number One Customer-Service Company*.

When talking to their salespeople, they say, "Relax. Stop worrying about making sales." Author Kennedy explains, "When you stop worrying about money and concentrate on serving the customer, the money will follow."

People who succeed in sales understand this paradox.

Along those same lines,

you'd be well-advised to take this hand-in-hand with another service retention rule: Be A Problem-Solver. Another highly-recommended reading is *Raving Fans*. The essence of this book is that it's no longer good enough just to have happy members... you've got to have people that are ecstatic about what you're doing so that they're raving about your product and telling everybody else.

In describing how they do it, successful business operators point out many things that apparently are common sense. The core idea is for us to adapt to the customer-to make the system work for them-not the other way around. The customer is the one who is driving the business, not a nickel-and-dime savings here and there.

(Mike Chaet, "Clubdoc," is president and CEO of Club Marketing International, Inc., a club consulting company located in Helena, Montana. Mike is considered by many to be one of the leading consultants in the industry and has received many awards for this work. To contact Mike, you may call him at (406) 449-5559, fax at (406) 449-0110, or visit his website at cms-clubweb.com. To receive Clubdoc's free monthly newsletter, simply send your e-mail address to clubdoc@cms-clubweb.com)

The CLUB INSIDER News World View

It was great to see IHRSA's JOHN KERSH in Orlando. Kersh was extremely excited about the great success of IHRSA's first Brazilian Convention and Trade Show. The event was held in conjunction with Fitness Brazil and was so successful that the two organizations have agreed to an arrangement for 5-years. Great job John!

*SATORO ISHIHARA, President and CEO of People Co.LTD. in Japan, announced that net sales had increased 9.9% to \$278,842,120 for the first six

months of the year, ending August 31, 2000. Net income rose 64.5% from \$9,373,831 (USD) to \$15,734,728 (USD). As of September 30, 2000 the People Co. owned 114 clubs with over 420,000 members, franchised another 21 clubs and licensed an additional 106 clubs. People Co. predicts year-end results of \$506,734,728 (USD) net sales and \$25,616,186 (USD) in net income.

*GRAHAM COLES, the Chairman of ESPORTA, PLC, announced that his company had acquired the former Healthland assets in Spain, Sweden, France

and the UK. Also, Coles' Esporta PLC was voted the "Best Health Club" in the UK by Zest, the country's best selling health and fitness magazine for women. Esporta also won the "Club Retail Brand of the Year" awarded by Club Mirror. Club Mirror awards survey the entire club sector including social clubs, entertainment clubs and sports and fitness clubs.

*HENRIK GOCKEL, President and CEO of TC HoldingGmb has announced that his company has acquired the Healthland assets in Switzerland.

TCHoldingsGMB now operates 80 facilities and is the leader in Switzerland with 21 clubs.

*The Balance Group, acquired the assets of Healthlands Germany. The Balance Group was founded by the UK private equity fund, Compass Partners. The Balance Group now operates 27 clubs in Germany, France and Norway.

*Deutsche Banc Alex. Brown has projected double-digit revenue growth for the U.S. health club industry in both near and long-term and adds "strong top line growth should result in double-digit

earnings expansion for the next several years.

*United Kingdom health club membership is up 26% in 2000! The UK Millenium Health Club Report, developed by David Minton and compiled by Jamie Buck and based on a survey of 1,687 clubs estimates that there are now 2,422,489 health club members, up 26%, since the report was last published in 1999. Approximately 4.1% of the total UK population (59.1 million) are currently members of health clubs.

(World View information courtesy of IHRSA.)

...Gold's Gym

continued from page 4

named Director of National Accounts.

The Galiani's Washington franchise, The G Group, was pur-

chased along with Venice, California-based Gold's Gym Enterprises, Inc., and its affiliate companies in simultaneous transactions sponsored by Brockway Moran & Partners, a Boca Raton, Florida-based private equity firm.

Regarded as one of the

most famous names in the health club industry, Gold's Gym opened its first location in Venice, CA., in 1965. With the notoriety of Arnold Schwarzenegger, Lou Ferrigno and the movie, "Pumping Iron," Gold's Gym quickly became known as

"The Mecca of Bodybuilding." Today, Gold's Gym is the gym of preference of amateur and pro athletes and the entertainment industry.

Gold's Gym is recognized in the Millennium Edition of Guinness World Records 2000

as being the largest gym chain in the world. Gold's Gym is comprised of more than 560 gyms in 46 states and 34 countries and includes more than two million members. Gold's Gym is celebrating its 35th year as a leader in the fitness industry.

IHRSA/ATHLETIC BUSINESS 2000



The **CLUB INSIDER** News "Fans!"



Sandy Coffman In Action!



(L to R) Mike Arteaga, Joe Cirulli & John McCarthy - Team IHRSA



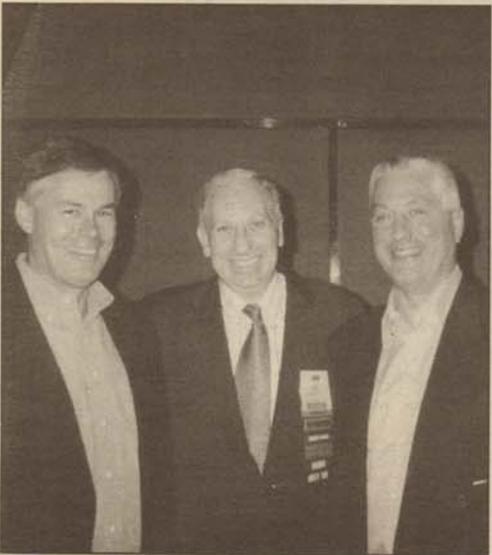
(L to R) Victor Brick, Geoff Dyer, Sandy Coffman, Mike Arteaga, Dean & Linda Wallace



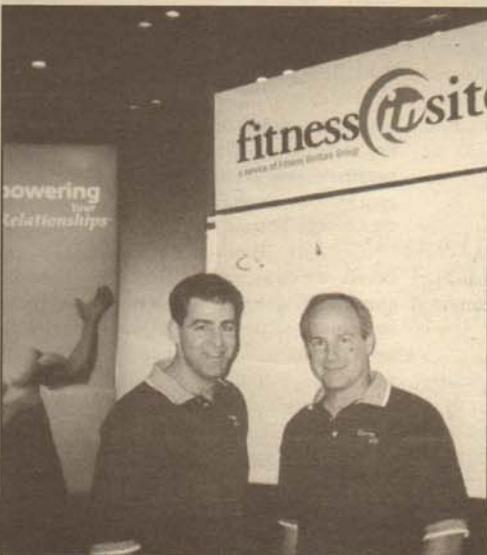
(L to R) Elaine Blake, Lynne Fusteig & Ruth Blake



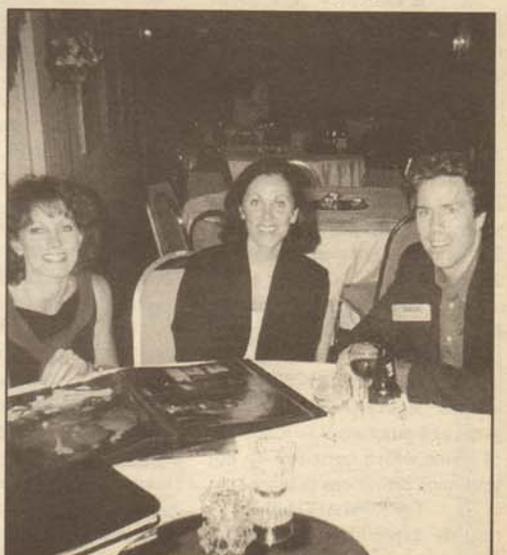
(L to R) Tim McCarthy, Phyllis Dannon, Jay Magna & Jon Thorsell of Life Fitness



(L to R) WellBridge's Art Curtis, Spectrum Club's Chairman, Rick Caro and WellBridge acting CEO, Ed Williams



(L to R) Fitness Insite's Pete Moore & Don Hoskyns



(L to R) Debbie Lee, Karen Woodard and IHRSA's John Kersh

IHRSA's Capitol Report

Capitol Report Reprinted Courtesy Of IHRSA

MORE ELECTION RESULTS

The votes are in on another recreation referendum. In Norton Shores, Michigan, a proposal for a \$6 million facility complete with pool, weight training room, and exercise class space was defeated by a 4 to 1 margin.

In other election news, Florida property appraiser Doug Putnam was voted out of office last week. His challenger, Jeff Furst, who criticized Putnam throughout the campaign for spending \$12,455 in taxpayer money on private health club memberships for employees, said the lesson from the election was clear. "You better be real careful how you spend that money. If you aren't, (voters) aren't going to react favorably. If we start spending on non-essential services, people get upset."

Furst had waged an aggressive campaign against Putnam in the past month and spent \$32,000 on a mass mailing on the spending issue in the last week before the election. The mailing showed a picture of people working out at a gym and asked, "What does this have to do with appraising your property?"

Putnam had defended the club memberships for his 53 employees as a "wellness program" that would cut health care costs.

PRESIDENT CLINTON SIGNS TWO AED BILLS INTO LAW

Recently, President Clinton signed into law two pieces of legislation that expand the availability of automated external defibrillators (AEDs).

The two bills, the Cardiac Arrest Survival Act (CASA) and the Rural Access to Emergency Devices Act (Rural AED bill), were signed as components of the Public Health Improvement Act of 2000.

The CASA bill expands public access to AEDs in buildings owned or leased by the federal government. It also expands "Good Samaritan" legal protections to AED users and purchasers in a number of states which currently do not have such provisions in place.

The Rural AED bill authorizes the expenditure of up to \$25 million in federal funds to help rural communities purchase AEDs

and to train rural emergency response crews, including police and fire personnel, to use the devices.

IHRSA is currently updating its legal briefing paper on AEDs. E-mail gr@ihrsa.org to receive a free copy when the revision is complete.

WASHINGTON, FLORIDA CLUB OPERATORS TO MEET IN DECEMBER

Health club operators in Washington and Florida met to discuss their ongoing efforts to repeal the state sales tax on health club memberships.

The Washington Health and Fitness Club Association (WHFCA) has been working hard for many years for a repeal of the state sales tax on fitness services that was enacted in 1993. Attend WHFCA's Annual Statewide Conference this year to find out how you can help them — and help yourself — as a Washington business owner. Tickets are \$10 per person which includes a buffet lunch. All club owners and their representatives are welcome to attend. Reserve your seat today by contacting WHFCA board member Mieko Hart (425 823-2318 ext. 103 or mieko.hart@miekofitness.com) or Mick Stevens (206-343-4692).

The Florida meeting was held on Friday, December 1 during IHRSA's 15th Annual Club Business Conference in Orlando. All Florida club operators were welcome to attend, even if they were not registered for the conference. For details on the meeting contact Bob Karshner (813-264-1711) for more information.

PROPERTY APPRAISER SAYS PARK COMPETES, SHOULD BE TAXED

A Florida property appraiser is going to court in an effort to put a portion of the Lake County Water Authority's Hickory Point recreation park on the tax rolls, the Orlando Sentinel Tribune has reported.

Ed Havill filed suit Monday in Circuit Court, seek-

ing taxes on a portion of the recreation area assessed at \$701,633. None of the property is "immune from taxation," Havill said, "nor is it used for a governmental purpose," the suit claims.

That's not what a county assessment review board said in August. The panel rejected — for the second year in a row — Havill's decision to put the park on the tax rolls. Havill is trying to overturn that decision in court.

The park, with docks, a picnic shelter and a residence, was built with tax money assessed on county residents. It is open to the public, charging entrance and rental fees.

Havill's position has been that the park is "in competition with private entities," so therefore, it should be taxed. If Havill wins, the water authority would have to pay \$13,000 a year in taxes to the county.

According to the lawsuit, Havill granted an exemption this year on a portion of the property that was assessed at \$661,025. Havill claims that the assessment appeal board's refusal to tax the land was a violation of state law.

PALOS HOSPITAL SUES STATE OF ILLINOIS OVER FITNESS CENTER

Palos Community Hospital in Palos Heights, Illinois is charging that a state health-care advisory board acted "illegally, unfairly and arbitrarily" when it denied the hospital's application two years ago to build a fitness center, according to a lawsuit filed in Cook County Circuit Court.

The hospital says the Illinois Health Facilities Planning Board does not have the authority to regulate or investigate health and fitness centers developed under separate corporations, Tim Brosnan, the hospital's Vice President for Planning and Community Relations, told the Chicago Tribune.

The Health Advisory Board, which is appointed by the governor, is charged with overseeing medical-related capital expenditures exceeding \$6 million and fitness centers exceeding \$2.7 million, said the board's counsel, Barbara Weiner.

"The real issue is whether the expenditure of \$14 million was made by or on behalf of Palos Community Hospital," she said.

The \$14.5 million fitness center planned for Orland Park is be-

ing developed by a new corporation, St. George Wellness Center. That corporation and Palos Community Hospital are subsidiaries of a reconstituted St. George Corp., Brosnan said.

Two years ago, when the State Board denied the request to build a fitness center, the hospital existed under one business entity, St. George Corp.

The hospital announced the new corporations and construction of the fitness center two months ago. The State Board then asked the Attorney General's Office to investigate whether the hospital's corporate restructuring was an attempt to circumvent the law. The Illinois Attorney General's office will be defending the Health Advisory Board.

In the lawsuit, the hospital calls the investigation illegal because the Board only has jurisdiction over licensed health-care facilities. It claims Palos Community Hospital is being singled out by the State. That claim stems from the fact that the Board has not taken action against the 13 other health-care facilities in the State that have built fitness centers under apparently similar circumstances, Brosnan said.

The 80,000 square-foot fitness center is under construction in Orland Park and is expected to open in November 2001. The center will feature cardiovascular fitness and weight-training equipment, an indoor pool, a physical therapy pool, a running track and an aerobics room.

FORMER EMPLOYEE MUST PAY CLUB \$50,000

A federal complaint filed against the River Valley Club in Lebanon, New Hampshire, by one of its former employees has ended with an agreement that finds in favor of the club and directs the former employee to pay \$50,000, the Valley News reports.

Robert Aubin worked as general manager of the club in 1998. Earlier this year, he filed a complaint in U.S. District Court alleging that he was fired in retaliation for reporting allegations of sexual harassment

of female employees at the club and for his role in a state hearing concerning the discharge of another employee.

The club countered in court filings that Aubin's discharge had been planned well in advance for reasons related to job performance, and submitted extensive e-mail correspondence to the court to prove this. Aubin knew he was going to be fired and helped manufacture the claims of sexual harassment in order to prevent his firing or so that he would be able to claim retaliation when he lost his job, the defendants claimed in court documents.

The club filed counterclaims alleging defamation; breach of a fiduciary duty and duty of loyalty; civil conspiracy; abuse of process; and wanton, malicious and oppressive conduct. The agreement finds in favor of the defendants on all claims and counterclaims, compels each side to bear its own costs and attorneys' fees, and assesses a \$50,000 judgment against Aubin. Attorneys for the two sides declined to explain how or why they came to agree on that amount.

As this case reminds us, proper documentation is very important when disciplining or terminating employees. For more information, e-mail gr@ihrsa.org for your free copy of IHRSA's legal briefing paper entitled "Employment Law: The Basics for Club Operators."

CALIFORNIA CLUB OPERATORS: SHOULD WOMEN-ONLY CLUB LEGISLATION BE PURSUED?

Women-only health clubs exist all across the country, but only a handful of states have passed laws explicitly allowing fitness centers to be single-sex.

Some California IHRSA members have expressed an interest in lobbying for such legislation. IHRSA would like to hear from others in California about this issue. Has your single-sex facility been the target of a complaint or lawsuit? Would you support legislation that would legalize single-sex fitness centers? Are you concerned that if the issue is raised, the legislature might specifically outlaw single-sex health clubs?

Please e-mail all comments or concerns to gr@ihrsa.org. For more information on this topic, request IHRSA's legal briefing paper entitled "Women-Only Health Clubs."

The Year 2000 In Review

By Norm Cates, Jr.

Happy New Year!

Here is a summary of the news headline stories reported in **THE CLUB INSIDER** News during 2000.

JANUARY-2000- Cover - Frank Napolitano Sells Highpoint A.C. and Joins TSI. Netpulse Rolling Out Huge-No Cost Program. Spinning (r) Trademark "Valid and Enforceable." TSI Contract Largest Club Deal In Ezone History. Why The YMCA Should Pay Taxes. Ground Broken on the BelAir Athletic Club's BAACYard Clubhouse. Atlanta Area Gold's Gyms Donate \$8,095 To American Heart Association. Bally Bulletin.

FEBRUARY-2000- Cover - Rich Boggs and Ray Irwin - The STEP Boys Leading The Way! Ezone Announces Strategic Alliance With Cardio Theater. Netpulse and Broadcast Vision Announce Alliance. 24-Hour Fitness Busted In Oregon. Why The YMCA Should Pay Taxes.

MARCH- 2000- Cover -

Cecil Spearman Honored By IHRSA Friends With Distinguished Service Award. Tilley Named Chief Information Officer At Spectrum Clubs. Judge Rules Against Hospital Tax-Free Health Club In Ohio. Working Woman Magazine Recognizes Jazzercise Founder and CEO, Judi Sheppard Missett. Why The YMCA Should Pay Taxes. YMCA Loses Another One. FitnessMX.com To Provide Procurement Solutions.

APRIL-2000- Cover - Jack LaLanne- The Man-The Living Legend. IHRSA 2000- A Monster- A Special Report. Ground Zero Design An IHRSA Trade Show Hit! Why The YMCA Should Pay Taxes. LIFE FITNESS and Netpulse Announce Alliance.

MAY- 2000- Cover - The Sales Makers - Masters Of Club Membership Sales. Stein Named CEO At E-Zone Networks, Inc. E-Zone Surges Past 10,000th Installation. Joe "The

Gladiator" Moore Battles Public Fitness Center. Meet Mr. Toshikazu Saito - Japan's 'Renaissance Man.' Why The YMCA Should Pay Taxes. Downtown Milwaukee YMCA Told To Pay City \$47,955 Property Tax Bill. Bob "Mr. Inspiration Wieland." Jack LaLanne Feats.

JUNE- 2000- Cover - The DOT.COM World - A Special Edition. L.A. Fitness Acquires Australian Body Works In Atlanta. Gold's Gym International Inks Body Training Systems Deal. Wells Fargo Buys 1.9 Million Shares Of Direct Focus, Inc. Parent of Nautilus. FitnessMX.com Names Mitch Wald President, COO. Do What The Dot.Coms Do! Michael Levy and Jay Kell Receive "Lifetime Achievement" Award From IHRSA Canada. Gold's Gym International Teams With FuturLink. National Gym Supply Using E-Commerce Successfully Everyday - An Interview With Jon Webster, President of NGS. Lifestyle Family Fit-

ness Secures \$5 Million In Investment Capital. Life Fitness Celebrates Grand Opening Of Expanded Consumer Division Facility.

JULY- 2000- Cover - Health Development Corporation Acquired By Town Sports International. Life Fitness Names Kevin Grodsky As New Company President. Bel Air Athletic Club Acquired By The WellBridge Company. Upcoming IHRSA Events Should Be On Your Don't Miss List!, Gold's Gym and ClubCom Announces Formation Of Gold's Gym Broadcasting Network. Charley Swayne Announces IPO. Gold's Gym International Acquires Original Facility. A Tribute To Coach Tom Myslinski. Club Industry/NEHRSA Convention and Trade Show A Success.

AUGUST- 2000- Cover - Glenn Colarossi - Helping The Older Get Better. The STEP Company Pursuing Legal Action Against Body Pump (Offenders). State Of The Health Club Industry Report. The IHRSA Spotlight - 20 years, \$250-Again. IHRSA's 20th Recalls

Industry's Progress.

SEPTEMBER- 2000- Cover - Casey Conrad - Talented...Driven...Respected. Ivanko and Iron Grip Settle Lawsuit Out Of Court. Booming Health Clubs, Slipping Fitness Participation And Healthier Diets All Coexist In The Overweight Society. Industry Consultant Casey Conrad Opens National Chain Of Weight Loss Centers. IHRSA and The YMCA - Non-U.S. Member Advisory.

OCTOBER-2000- Cover - David Patchel-Evans. Netpulse, E-Zone and Xystos Announce Three-Way Merger. LeisureNet Files For Bankruptcy. New, In-Club Weight Loss Center Pulls In "Big" Revenue At Grand Opening. FitnessMX.com Surpasses 1,000 Signed Suppliers and Facilities.

NOVEMBER- 2000- Cover - Dale Dibble - "Mr. Enthusiasm", 8 Years And Counting!, Industry Leaders View LeisureNet Bankruptcy As Anomaly. IHRSA/ Fitness Brasil Conference and Trade Show.

New, In-Club Weight Loss Program Projects 200+K Annual Profit With Using Just 750 Sq. Ft. of Space in Your Club

Casey Conrad, long-time industry consultant, has developed a complete turnkey weight loss program that's designed to be installed within health clubs that combines proven weight loss programming with sales, service and marketing systems. It's easy to fit into almost any layout. It can add a valuable service to your existing members and help you attract an additional target group within your local area. Most importantly, it is proving to be a huge profit center. It's called **HEALTHY INSPIRATIONS** and here are the results from the first three licensees of the program:

HEALTHY INSPIRATIONS at Bull Run Athletic Club, Manassas, VA: 1st month, September = \$34,000

HEALTHY INSPIRATIONS at Contours Express, Warrenton, VA: 1st month, November = \$36,000

HEALTHY INSPIRATIONS at Bodez by Tasso, Ormond Beach, FL: 1st 10 DAYS, December = \$46,000

Imagine what these clubs will do in January! Call today to receive a FREE 12-page info-pack that gives you an executive summary of how **HEALTHY INSPIRATIONS** can give you extra profits and a valuable service to your club. Act quickly and you could still take advantage of the January weight loss market.



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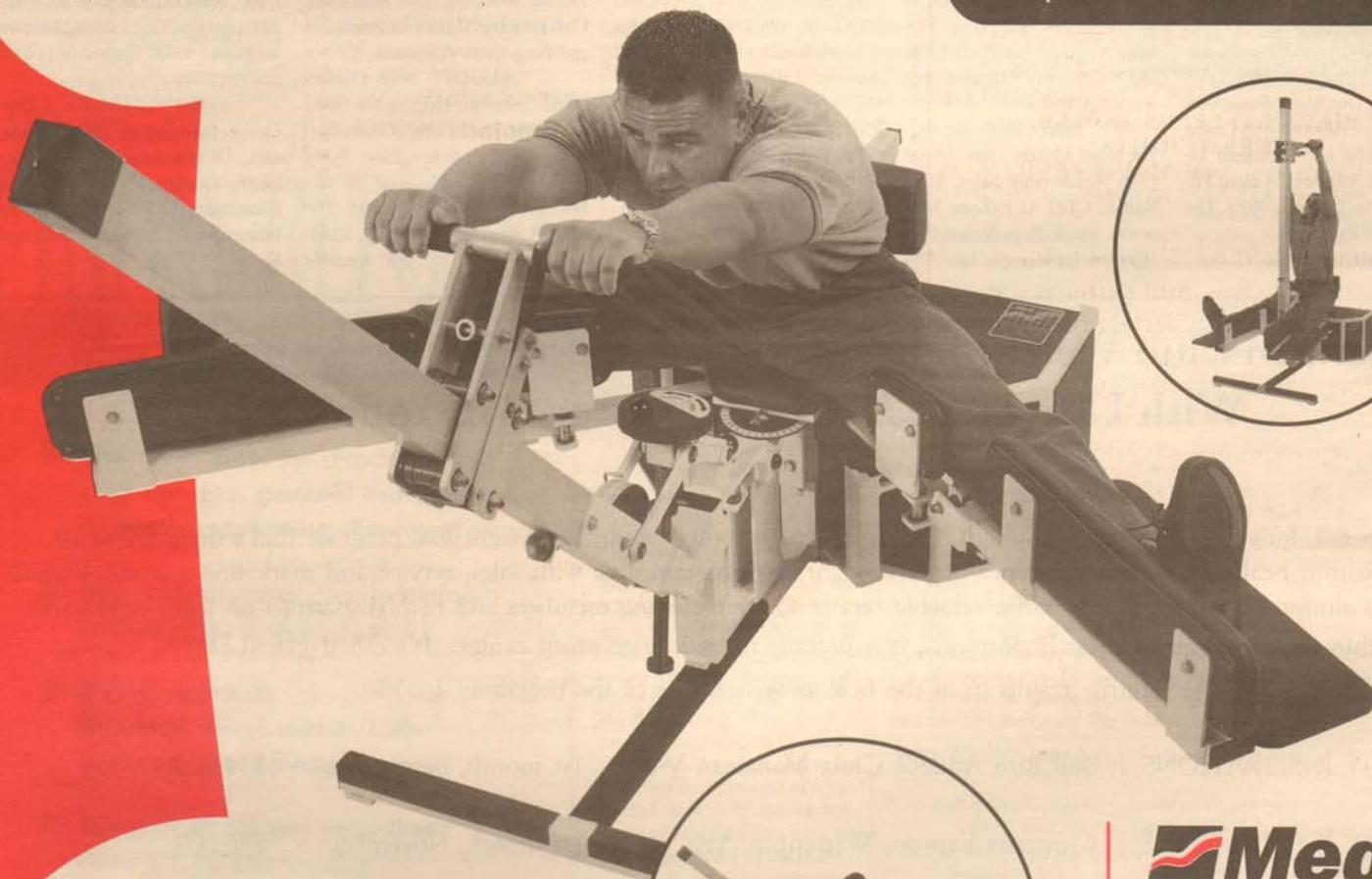
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...Norm's Notes

continued from page 5

•**Health Fitness Corporation** has announced that for the 3 months ending September 30, 2000, net income was \$78,868 as compared with a loss of \$941,866 for the same period in 1999. Health Fitness Corporation, a Minneapolis, MN.-based company, manages corporate and hospital-based fitness centers.

•**Direct Focus, Inc.**, the company that owns **Nautilus** and **Bowflex** has seen the stock surge to 45.875 up 8% in two days. Since February, 2000, the stock has increased in price by 226%!

•**Lakeshore Management Group**, operators of 5 Chicagoland mega-clubs, has now moved into hospital club management with 5 large hospital clubs under contract.

•**StairMaster** has announced that they have started a

Consumer Products Division. The new division will be headed up by **JOHN POST**, previously a VP of Sales and Marketing. Good luck John.

•**STEVE and SALLY GOLDMAN** recently celebrated the opening of a 3,000 square-foot addition to their 23,000 square-foot **Canton Club.** The Canton Club opened in March of this year and due to a huge success already had to be expanded. The Goldman's are veteran club operators and also own and operate the **Weymouth**

Club in Weymouth, MA. Congratulations on your great success Steve and Sally.

•**Good news** on the non-profit front! Voters rejected a \$6 million, 105,000 square-foot park district athletic and fitness center proposed in New Lenox, Illinois. In Colorado, voters tossed overwhelmingly a \$15 million bond issue to develop a sport and fitness center that would then be turned over to the YMCA to operate! **TAX THE YMCA OF THE USA!** Another victory was had in Norton

Shores, Michigan, where a \$6 million referendum proposal for a swim and fitness center was defeated by a 4 to 1 margin.

•The **CLUB INSIDER** News subscription rates are going up after the 1st of the year, so we hope you will **SUBSCRIBE TODAY!**

•**HAPPY HOLIDAYS** and **HAPPY NEW YEAR** to you all! Thanks for reading **The CLUB INSIDER** News. **STAY TUNED**

FOR SALE

Ladies-only 2500 square-foot Fitness Studio in Desirable Branson, MO. Location.

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...IAAPA

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ternational trade association for permanently-situated amusement facilities worldwide. The 82 year-old organization represents over 5,000 facility, supplier, and individual members from more than 100 countries, including most amusement parks and attractions in the United States. IAAPA strives to help members improve their efficiency, marketing, safety, and profitability while maintaining the highest possible professional standards in the industry.

Next year's next year's IAAPA Convention will be held in Orlando, Florida, November 14-17, 2001. But, don't wait until then to contact IAAPA. They may be reached at: www.iaapa2000.com or by calling: (703) 631-8623.

CLUB INSIDER News Contributing Author Team

The 2000 **CLUB INSIDER** News 2000 Contributing Author Team is listed below. Our thanks to all of our authors for sharing their expertise and taking the time to write for **The CLUB INSIDER** News.

•**MICHAEL HOFFMAN** - President-Heart Communications (949) 489-0301

•**KLAUS HILGERS**- President-Epoch Consultants- (727) 447-1773

•**KAREN D. WOODARD** - President-Premium Performance Training- (303) 417-0653

•**JULIA WHEATLEY**- Owner- Women's Fitness Center- (540) 434-9692

•**DR. GERRY FAUST-**

Founder and President-Faust Management Corp.-(858) 536-7970

•**RAY GORDON**- President- Sales Makers- (800) 428-3334

•**EDDIE TOCK**- Vice President- Sales Makers - (800) 428-3334

•**ART CHAPPELL**- Owner-Courthouse Athletic Clubs- (503) 885-1964

•**PATRICK PINE**- Founder- National Fitness Therapy Association- (970) 726-0697

•**RICK BARRERA**- Founder and President- Rick Barrera & Associates (800) 835-4458

•**MICHAEL SCOTT**

SCUDDER- President- FITNESS FOCUS- (505) 751-4236

•**CASEY CONRAD** - Communications Consultants - (800) 725-6147

•**RICK CARO** - Chairman, Spectrum Clubs International and President, Management Vision, Inc. - (212) 987-4300

•**BONNIE PATRICK MATTALIAN** - Fitness Company - (732) 548-0970, Ext. 111

•**JIM EVANS** - President & General Manager - Peninsula Athletic Club - (619) 224-4644

•**MIKE CHAET** - Ph. D. President - Club Marketing &

Management Systems - (406) 449-5559

•**MIKE CONNORS** - President, Optifitness, - (413) 567-7300

•**BRIAN McBAIN** - President, Club Market Vision, - (480) 946-9600.

•**SANDY COFFMAN** - President - Programming For Profit - (941) 795-7887

•**NANCY FRIEDMAN** - President - Telephone Doctor - (314) 291-1012

•**JOE MOORE** - President - Moore's Fitness Centers - (937) 435-0072.

•**KIM DONOVAN** - Brick Bodies Director of Marketing and Advertising - (410) 252-8058

•**GEOFF HAMPTON** - President Club Marketing Resources - (619) 267-6862

•**TED LAMBRINIDES** - Director of Education for MEDX Corporation - (352) 622-2112

•**JIMMY MACK** - Partner - Health Club Experts.Com (877) 732-7528

•**MIKKI WILLIAMS** - President - Mikki Williams Unltd. - (203) 762-2526.

•**COLIN MILNER** - VP Sales/Marketing - Idea Health & Fitness Association - (800) 999-4332.

•**PAT NECERATO** - President - www.successercise.com

•**CINDY SCIBETTA** - Associate - JLR Associates - (401) 245-0077.

...Sandy Coffman

continued from page 16

Right now, my perception is that our industry as a whole does not want to embrace this challenge. They are talking the talk, but they are not walking the walk when it comes to serving the senior market. They are saying, 'We've got senior classes available and they are playing rap music on the intercom and the phone hold button. Clubs all over are doing that. They will get a few people that will come in with apprehension to a club and our staff is not prepared to talk with them and make them comfortable. Unless a senior person comes up to a staff person and requests specific information, we lose them from the start.'

Talk Is Cheap!

“You asked what is the future of our industry? It is obviously the seniors. We all know it and we all talk it. But, we aren't doing it. Because the club operators are not responding, the equipment manufacturers are starting to move away from the club business to other businesses that are em-

bracing the growing seniors market. They are moving into retirement home facilities and nursing home facilities because these people are business people. Club operators are closing their minds to the real needs of the senior market. They want it to come easy. That's why the club operators keep talking about the fact that the seniors just want to be part of the membership and that is wrong. They are saying that because that is the easiest way to deal with them. Club operators out there are not hearing this senior message and they are not getting it. They want the easy way out and there is no easy way out. But you know Norm, there is an incredibly rewarding aspect to senior programming. Just look at the Bentley Village Wellness Center! Have you ever seen a happier group of people? They are happier because they are being so well taken care of. Those members love it because they look forward to going in and seeing their friends, being greeted by David Lahait (the Bentley Village Wellness Center Director), receiving encouragement for what they are doing and sitting down and having a cup of coffee and a cookie with their friends. There is the essence of senior programming. In their wellness center they have cook-

ies and coffee. There is no reason that as big as our clubs are that we can't have programs that concentrate their efforts on this niche. But, the club operators want the easy way out and that is why we are totally missing the ball.”

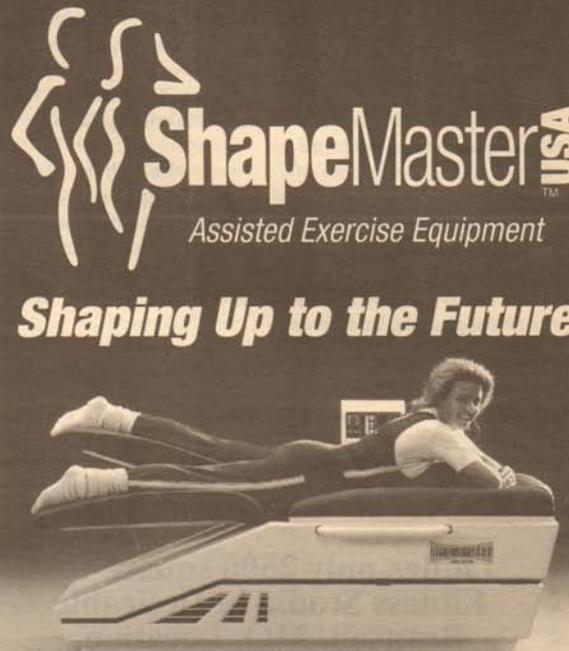
An excellent example of Sandy's creativity and special programs is her Chair Exercise Class for seniors. The class is intended to do two things: (1) Promote awareness of healthy exercise to the mature adult community, and (2) to parlay that awareness into full-time membership at the club in order to encourage further activity. After one of her chair classes Coffman enjoyed lunch with some of the ladies in the class. One of the ladies asked her, "What do you get out of this?" The questioner was a 93-year old wheelchair bound lady. Coffman thought for a moment and replied, "Stella, the fact that you have come to my class. The fact that I watched you smile, laugh and enjoy yourself while exercising in my class. The fact that you've come back for a second time and that today you brought your friend with you. What more could anyone ask for?"

HER GREATEST AWARDS

Sandy Coffman has received numerous awards in addition to the Bodylife Magazine honor previously mentioned. In 1995, IHRSA Convention attendees voted Sandy as the #1 Presenter in both Presentation and Content. Coffman was rated as one of the top speakers at IHRSA San Francisco last March. Coffman comments on her awards, "My greatest awards are the things that I hear from people who embrace what I have to say and the experience that they get from it. I have warmly written letters and e-mails that bring tears to my eyes. I get telephone calls with good news from my clients that warm my heart. That, to me, has really been my biggest award in my career. I am gratified greatly because I totally know that I am helping develop leaders in this terrific industry."

PICK UP THE PHONE

I expressed to Coffman an understanding of the importance of her message to club owners and a hope that this article would result in some of our readers "seeing-the-light" and deciding to pick up the phone and call her for help. Coffman commented, "I have many people at every convention that come to my seminars year after year, seminar after semi-



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Norm Cates' THE Club Insider
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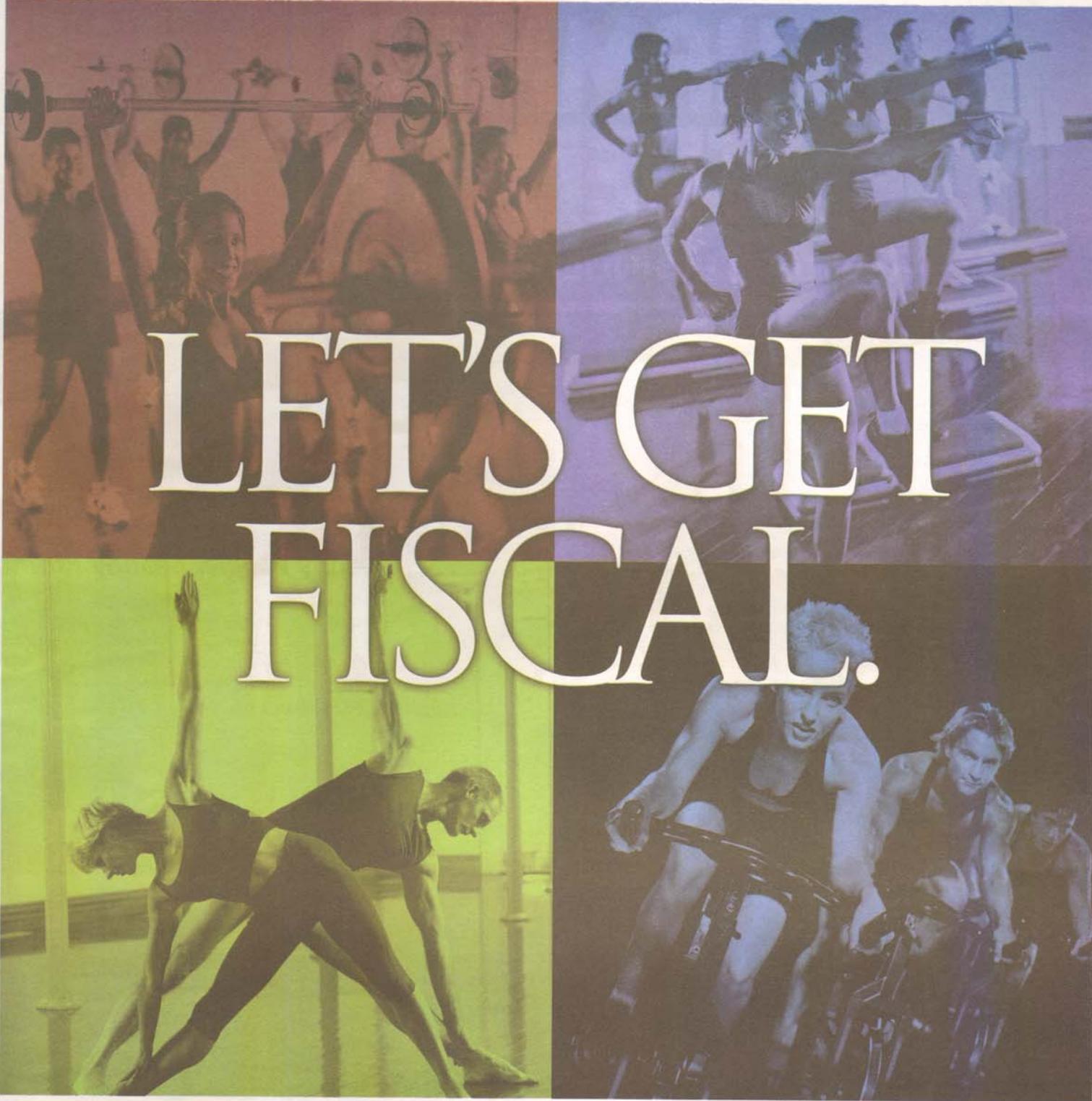
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nar. Many times I'll get a call from somebody that would like me to come to their club and I'll say to them, 'Would you like me to send you some information on what I do?' They will say, 'Oh no, we've got a file on you! We know what you do. We just need for you to come to our club and we need our whole staff to hear your message. That is the essence of it. In addition to personal appearances at conventions and consulting sessions, Coffman has developed six training videos. (See side bar). Coffman's training seminars available on a consultancy basis include: Operation Cheers a.k.a. Delivering Customer Service Excellence, Secrets To Making Fitness Fun a.k.a. Get New Members - Make People Happy, Programming, Marketing and Customer Service, Special Sales Techniques and Communication Skills For Your Entire Staff, Integrating

the New Member/Participant, Promotion! Promotion! Promotion!, Thirty Retention Programs In Ninety Minutes, Fun and Fitness For The Mature Population, We're All In This Together, How To Measure Staff Performance a.k.a. Program For Profit - Pay For Performance and How To Grow Your Racquetball Program To Grow Your Business. Sandy Coffman may be reached at: (941)795-7887.

Sandy Coffman is one of a kind. She is one of the most unique, totally enthusiastic and talented individuals on the planet. And, the health, racquet and sportsclub industry is indeed fortunate to be able to call her one of our own.

(Norm Cates, Jr. is the Publisher of The CLUB INSIDER News. Cates, a 27-year club business veteran, was the 1st President of IHRSA and a Co-founder of the Association in 1981.)



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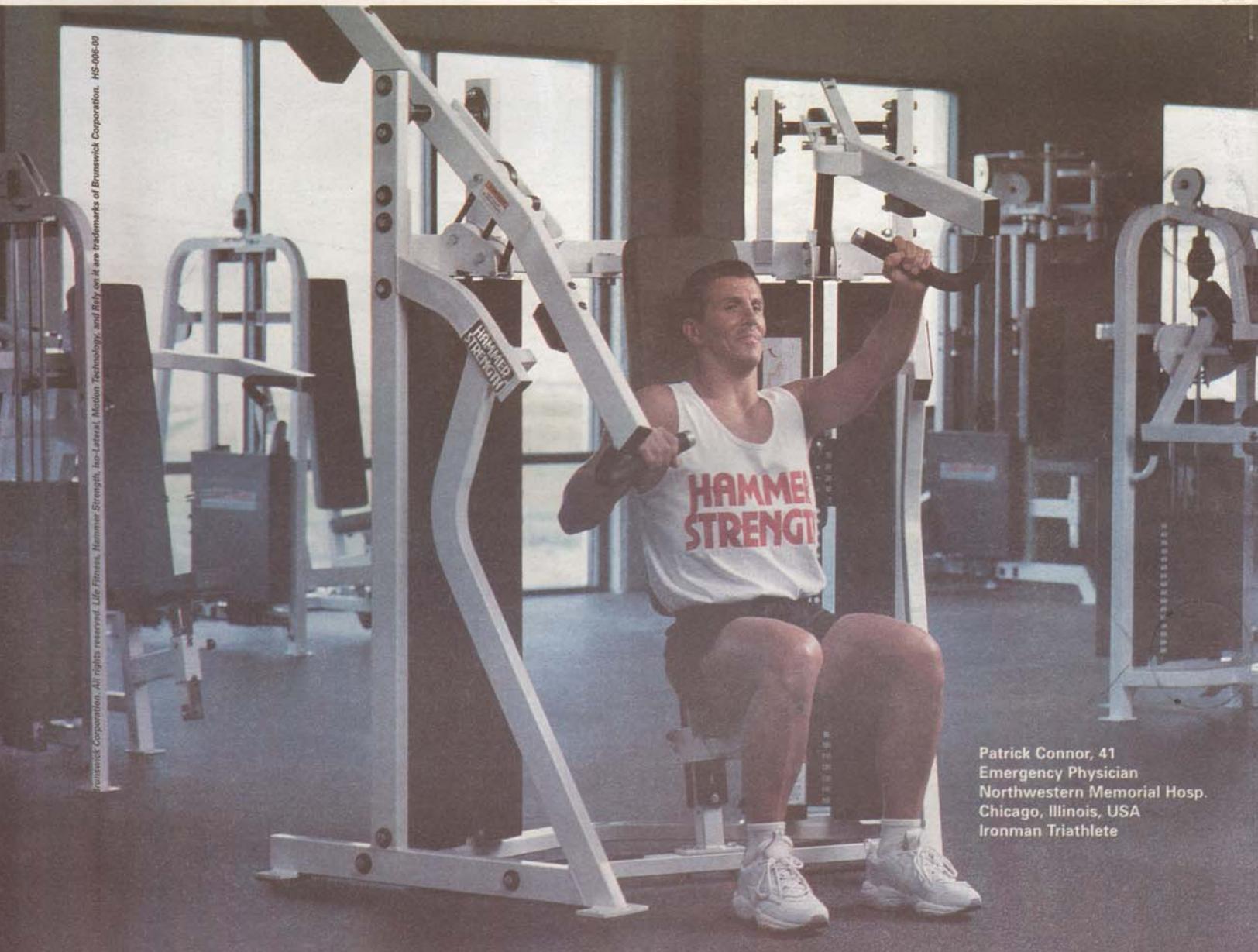
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