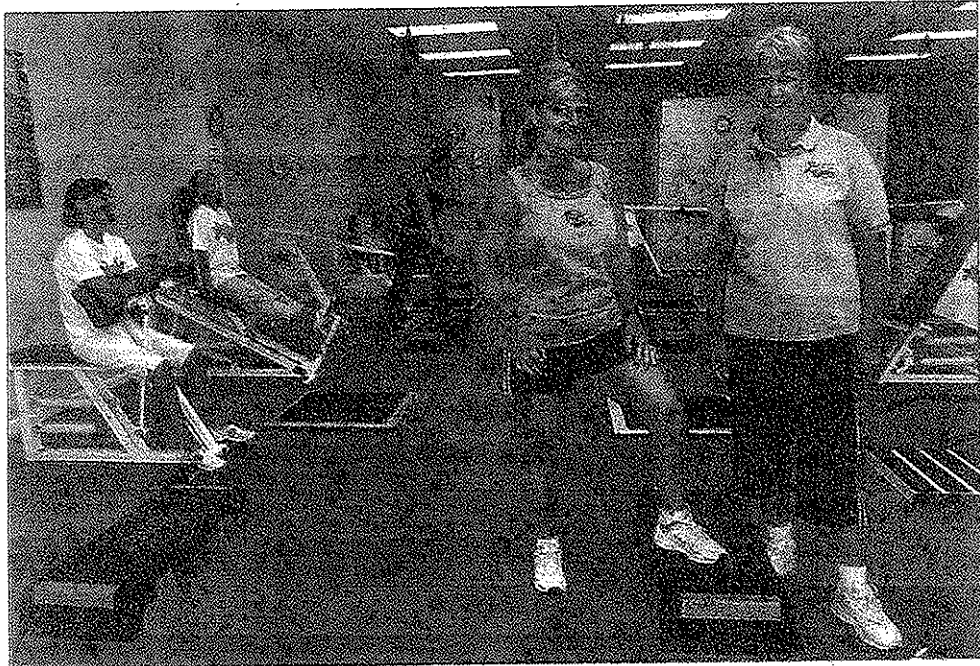


Business



Ladies Workout Express owner Susan Heard, right, with personal trainer Lani Rochin. / DONN BROWN, STAFF

Fitness that fits into your lifestyle

By Melissa Lane

You know you should. You mean to get around to it. Yet, for most American women, exercise is an elusive goal.

"Fitness should be another important part of a woman's self-care routine, not another pressure in her life," says Susan Heard, owner of Ladies Workout Express in Naples. "In the area of fitness, women's physical, emotional and nutritional needs are very different from those of men. Women need their own workouts."

The former teacher and librarian worked in a fitness club for a year, where she saw the need for a women's-only center that offered both cardiovascular and strength-training workout in a comfortable setting with easy-to-operate equipment. She opened Ladies Workout Express as a solution to that need.

Getting the message out to women that their health depends on exercise is her mission. She says current research shows that lack of physical activity in women is a direct cause of numerous diseases.

"The leading causes of death in women are heart disease, cancer and stroke, and they need strength training exercise to prevent these illnesses," Heard says. In addi-

tion, aerobic exercise increases cardiovascular performance and strength-training exercise builds body muscle and provides for joint stability that helps to fight osteoporosis.

It's a message that will be sung loud and clear during National Women's Health Week, May 13-19.

Heard understands why many women do not take the time to work out regularly, and tries to alleviate those roadblocks.

"Our reasons to not exercise include, 'I have to ask my husband,' 'It costs too much,' and 'I don't have enough time,'" Heard relays. "We listen to the statistics on rising obesity in our culture, yet we still do not give ourselves the gift of health and exercise."

Ladies Workout Express offers warm-ups, cardiovascular and strength exercises to music and instructional cues in four different workout formats. The innovative hydraulic equipment is different from other workout centers because it is specially designed with 10 resistance settings for different fitness levels. These settings are adjusted daily by staff so that members get a different 30-minute workout everyday.

The programs are designed for women of all shapes, ages, and fitness levels, including seniors. A FitTeen program is available,

as well as a "Golden Girl Club." A trainer always oversees the circuit, guiding and encouraging members.

Ladies Workout Express offers a structured 12-week exercise/weight loss program called Skinny Jeans, which includes a free Personal Health Diagnostic. The workout center also includes seminars on topics of interest to women, including a women's self-defense seminar, a bra-fitting clinic, yoga classes, and speakers on weight loss and nutrition.

Heard encourages women who have become stuck in an unhealthy lifestyle pattern to take a step in the right direction by adding exercise to their daily routine. A free one-week pass is available online at her website www.ladiesworkoutexpress.com/893VanderbiltBeachRoad.

"If it's lack of motivation or you feel you can't do it alone, there are a lot of workout 'buddies' waiting to help you achieve your fitness goals at Ladies Workout Express," Heard says.

Ladies Workout Express

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ADDRESS
893 Vanderbilt Beach Road
(The Pavilion Shopping Center)

WEBSITE
www.ladiesworkoutexpress.com