

PARMA SUN POST

THE SUN COMES OUT ON THURSDAY

Sun News. Really, really local.

Path to fitness, health is not a great mystery

Our 10-week Dynamic Make-over has come to an official end. And I think this newspaper's readers will agree: The results have been phenomenal.



Health & Fitness
Q & A

Bryan
McIntosh

The five contestants (and one Sun News reporter) were unrelenting in their noble pursuit of greater personal health and fitness. Indeed, the quest for skinnier bodies, more muscle, less fat, losing weight, and achieving an overall greater level of physical fitness is something that could benefit *every single person* who reads this column.

During the conception phase of the Dynamic Make-over (back in October), Sun News editor Linda Kramer stressed the importance of making sure the candidates selected represented different walks of life. The idea was that a broad range of people achieving results through exercise and sensible eating would empower, engender and encourage a wide-ranging readership to do the same. At the very least, it is the responsibility of a newspaper to educate its readers on important social issues.

Let there be no doubt, readers, that obesity is on of the worst social epidemics to hit our country in a long time. This country's inability to eat sensibly and exercise regularly is killing us at an alarming rate. Terrorism, murder rates, war, bird flu and mad cow disease *combined* can't hold a candle to the rate of death caused by obesity (which is unquestionably linked to poor health, cancer, heart disease, heart attack, stroke – the list of diseases goes on and on).

The cost of treating this obesity epidemic is ridiculously frightening. The cost of health care in this country would plummet if people just started taking care of themselves. The number of prescriptions written (along with drug company profits) would fall significantly if people lost weight, ate more vegetables, and walked just 5 percent of the distance driven by car. This country's bizarre reliance on diet pills, quick-cures, crash diets and extra-large clothing would cease if people swapped water for soda, fruit for sweets, and whole grains for fried food. Yeah,

it really is that simple.

Don't have time to exercise? How did Matt (full-time police officer, part-time student, and full time father and husband) find the time to lose 36 pounds?

Don't want to exercise? How did Andrea (housewife and career woman) learn to love exercise for its myriad of benefits?

Don't need to exercise? How did 25-year-old Lisa come to acknowledge that, despite her young age, leading a healthier lifestyle gave her significantly more energy as a nurse (and slimmed her figure as well)?

Think your age is a barrier? How did 47-year-old Laurie accomplish a 9 percent reduction in body fat and shave inches from her hips, butt, waist, thighs and arms?

Think you're too big to start an exercise program? How did Chrissie, who originally tipped the scales at 231, manage to weigh 199 pounds at the end of 10 weeks?

Get the point? You can do it too.

I want to extend a thank you

to Sally Herman, owner and operator of Berea's Style Studios, for her generous gift of complete cosmetic make-over to all the contestants.

I want to thank my editor, Linda Kramer, for making this contest a part of her newspaper.

I want to thank Shelley Guerra, the Sun News reporter, who participated and gave first-person accounts of the grueling workouts these folks endured.

Finally, I want to thank Matt, Chrissie, Andrea, Lisa and Laurie for their hard work. They never gave up. If not for their incredible level of dedication and desire to give 100 percent, this Dynamic Make-over would have been anything but. I am proud of each and every one of you. Thank you for making this such a success, and thank you for your willingness to turn your lives around in front of thousands of eyes.

Submit questions for Bryan McIntosh to the Sun News, 32 Park St., Berea 44017 or email the editor at lkramer@sunnews.com.