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## Updated 1/12: Gyms shed fees to help members shed pounds

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Having a gym membership may be a luxury few can afford in this economy, but some park districts and fitness facilities are offering New Year's incentives to help potential members stay physically active without breaking the bank.

"It's a tough industry now for everyone, and we are especially sensitive to pricing and people's needs," said Jennifer Gilbert, public relations manager for the Gurnee Park District.

A one-year membership to the park district's Hunt Club Fitness Center will cost \$29 per month for residents and \$36 for non-residents if they sign up by Jan. 24. There is also no orientation fee for first time members.

The 4,000 square-foot facility, which opened October 2006, features an elevated indoor track, cardio equipment, strength training area, open gym climbing wall, group exercise classes, personal training and baby-sitting.

Fitness center supervisor Amber Patton said the incentive is attracting new members. "We've seen a huge flow of people dropping in to check us out."

The park district, said Executive Director Susie Kuruvilla, wants to help keep families healthy while being sensitive to financial conditions.

"During such economic uncertainty we must do everything we can to prevent residents from choosing short-term finances over long-term health," she said.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 24.9 percent of Illinois adults were obese (a Body Mass Index at or greater than 30) in 2007.

"The statistics are alarming. It is so important that our residents know that staying active should not be eliminated during stressful times," said Lisa Sheppard, superintendent of recreation.

### YMCA

Through Jan. 31, the Grayslake YMCA at 1850 E. Belvidere Road is waiving its orientation fee. Anyone can join and pay on a monthly basis rather than sign a one-year contract. The non-profit organization also offers free memberships for eligible military families and has an income-based program in which members can receive discounted rates.

Manager Annette Tatchala said the "Y" is a great organization to support through membership because "everything we collect goes back into the community."

If you're looking for a workout, she said, the YMCA offers a full range of cardio equipment and includes a weight room, aerobics studio, stretch room and children's center with baby-sitting. New members also receive a free session with a personal trainer.

To learn more, call (847) 548-8300.

### Biggest loser

The Lindenhurst Health & Fitness Center is looking for the biggest loser to award \$1,000 in cash.

Inspired by the popular television show, the fitness center launches its 2nd 60-day "Lose to Win" program Monday.

The initiative involves teams participating in boot camp classes and team workouts while receiving personal instruction by certified personal trainers. Team prizes will be awarded along with the \$1,000 grand prize to the team member who safely loses the most weight by the end of the program on March 20.

"Given the economic climate and associated stress levels, there is never a more appropriate time to focus on our health and well being," said Executive Director Eric Nelson.

Today is the deadline to register. Costs are included with membership. A kick-off celebration will be held Saturday at 3098 Falling Waters Boulevard, off Route 45. To learn more call (847) 535-7601.



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