

Health centers help with New Year's resolutions

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With the holidays (and leftovers) gone, many residents are looking to make personal changes in the new year. One of the most popular resolutions is to get fit.



Keeping resolutions Staci Leinenberg works out at the Lindenhurst Health and Fitness Center's team training session Jan. 7. (Dan Luedert/Staff Photographer)



Sandy Sass (left) and Kerry Calhoun pull at the rubber bands holding them back during the Lindenhurst Health and Fitness Center's team training session Jan. 7. (Dan Luedert/Staff Photographer)

From cardio equipment and classes to contests with cash prizes, local park districts and gyms have plenty of possibilities for people looking to shed some pounds.

The Lindenhurst Health & Fitness Center of Lake Forest Hospital, located on Route 45 about a mile north of Grand Avenue, is challenging members - both seasoned and new - to participate in its "Lose to Win" program.

The program, which pits teams against each other, was awarded "Best of the Best" Group Training Program by the country's leading fitness experts and editors at "Club Industry" magazine in 2009.

"It's a weight-loss program tied into people's new year's resolutions to get healthier," said Beck McNabb, the program's coordinator. "We just look to set them up with the tools they need."

Lindenhurst Health & Fitness Center members can enroll in the "Lose to Win" program for an additional fee. The week before the program begins, the participants are split into teams. Those teams then get T-shirts and assign a team captain.

The teams have initial weigh-ins followed by an opening ceremony, slated for Jan. 16, which will feature speakers to "get everybody all riled up," said McNabb.

Then the fun begins. The nine-week boot camp-style program features circuit training in special "Lose to Win" classes. McNabb said there will also be a bigger push to feature all of the center's offerings to educate participants on their post-program options.

McNabb said the program will also feature some "challenge weekends."

"It's kind of like a field day for adults," she said.

"We really want you to become integrated into the club and get the results that you're seeking," said Jamie Soch, membership and marketing director at the center.

Soch added that because people are part of a team, "there's accountability worked into the program."

Last year, eight teams of 25 people apiece lost a total of nearly 1,000 pounds.

At the end of the program, the individual who has lost the most weight will win a \$1,000 cash prize. The second place winner will receive \$600, while the third place winner will receive \$400 in "club cash."

For more information on the Lindenhurst Health & Fitness Center and its "Lose to Win" program, visit health-fitnesscenters.com or call (847) 535-7601.

Park departments and districts are also sources of fitness opportunities. The Antioch Parks Department, for example, offers "Workout with the Mayor," "Men's Workout" and "Kickboxing for Women" classes each month. For more information, visit www.antioch.il.gov/parks.html.

The Gurnee Park District also has options for people looking to get fit.

"We are hoping and expecting to see some new faces and welcome back those who took a hiatus over the holidays," said Amber Patton, supervisor of the Gurnee Park District's Hunt Club Fitness Center.

For added motivation, the park district has reduced its fitness center prices for a limited time. New and existing members can save 20 to 25 percent off fees if they lock in a 12-month membership by Jan. 31.

The basic "silver" membership, which includes unlimited use of the center's cardio equipment, strength training area, free weights, elevated track and open gym, costs \$29 per month for park district residents and \$36 for non-residents. There are also gold and platinum memberships which include add-ons like lap swim, group exercise class and child care, and memberships for seniors, students and families. The center does not charge a registration or orientation fee.

Daily fitness center fees for ages 18 and older are \$8 per day for residents and \$12 for non-residents. Students with ID receive a discount.

The 4,000-square-foot Hunt Club Fitness Center, which opened Oct. 2006, features an elevated indoor track, cardio equipment, strength training area, open gym climbing wall, group exercise classes, personal training and child care.

The center also employs personal trainers, which can kick-start a fitness goal by helping members pinpoint problem areas, learn the proper way to use equipment and set up a workout regimen.

"I highly recommend a personal trainer if you're new to exercise or getting back into it," said Patton. "They can help you create a plan you can do on your own. Even just a few sessions (with a trainer) is beneficial, and efficient."

For complete details about rates, call (847) 623-7788 or go online at www.gurneeparkdistrict.com.

Residents can also visit the center at 920 N. Hunt Club Road for a personalized tour.

Gurnee is also home to Gold's Gym, Curves and Advocate Condell Medical Center's Centre Club, which features more than 60,000 square feet of space including a running track, group exercise area, cardio machines and free weights, a lap pool and athletic courts.

While the Grayslake Park District does not have its own fitness center, it does offer a variety of group exercise classes from Jazzercise to yoga.

"It's great for people who want to exercise but don't want to commit to a gym membership," said Tracy Putkonen, recreation supervisor for the Grayslake Park District.

"Women especially have become strongly bonded with those in their class and you see them come in in little groups. It's a way out of being mommy for an hour."

Friday night Zumba, a class which combines Latin and international dance with fitness, said Putkonen, has become a popular "Girls' Night Out."

Last week, the Grayslake Park District offered free exercise classes to introduce newbies to their offerings.

"A whole mess of people came in to check out classes," said Putkonen.

One class that is filling up quickly is PiYo, a new class that combines Pilates and yoga.

Putkonen said there is a class, and an instructor, for everyone, and child care is available in the morning.

To learn more, visit www.glpd.com or call (847) 223-7529.