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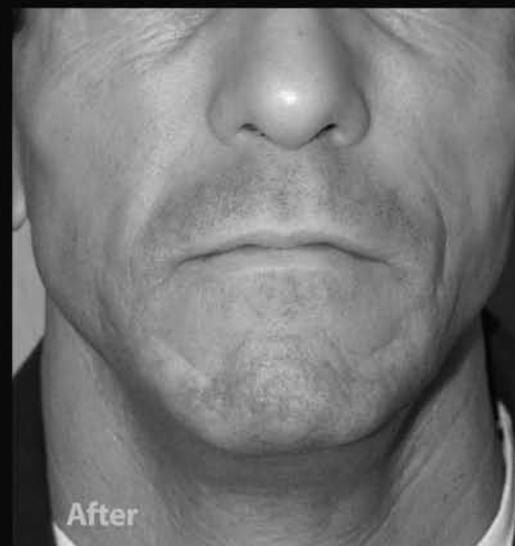
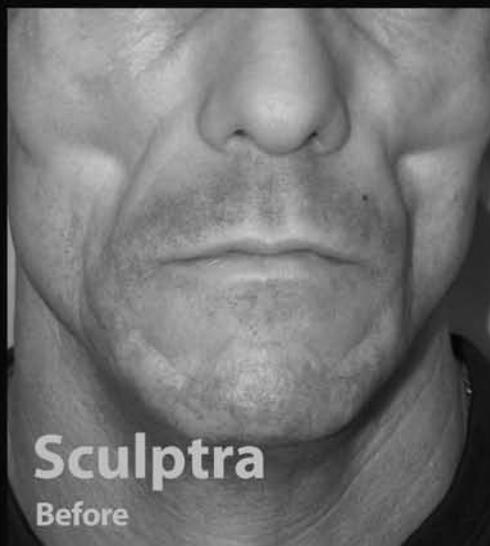
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Up close and personal

Five ways a personal trainer can be worth his weight-loss in gold

By Steven Lindsey



HANDS ON A HARD BODY: Personal trainer Billy Young, back, says one benefit of a personal trainer is having someone who can motivate and encourage you in your routine.

PHOTO BY ARNOLD WAYNE JONES

If everyone had the motivation to work out daily on our own, coupled with an extensive knowledge of human anatomy and physiology, we'd all be underwear and swimsuit models looking for a great ab routine to get us to the next level of perfection.

Welcome to the real world.

How many people reading this today have gym memberships that are going unused? Or home fitness equipment covered in cobwebs and dust bunnies? Let's face it: When it comes to working out, there's always an excuse to find something more enjoyable to fill that hour each day, whether it's a last-minute lunch invitation, a great happy hour or a much-deserved nap.

Most of us need some outside force to motivate us to get off our collective asses. The solution for many is to hire a personal trainer. A good personal trainer doesn't come cheap, but if you think about it as an investment in your long-term health and wellness, perhaps you can find it in your budget to pay a trainer at least once per week (though twice per week or more is optimal). The likelihood that you'll work out the other days increases as will your overall results.

Two of Dallas' top trainers weighed in and gave us five great reasons to put your money where your health is.

1. Increase agility, endurance, balance and core strength.

"Big arms, broad shoulders and chest do not make a fit person," says Billy Young, a certified personal trainer and lead trainer of Eric Peay's Booty Camp, a group fitness program of COREhealth Wellness Center. "Agility, endurance, balance and core strength are equally important and tend to be forgotten by the average gym-goer, much less the person who has never worked out in their lives."

2. Get motivation and find encouragement.

"My primary role is to educate my clients, watch their form, provide meaningful feedback, give them simple direction about their limits, strengths, even their breathing. I'm here to motivate and encourage you to develop a healthy lifestyle," Young says.

The results you achieve will also serve as

further motivation.

"At two weeks your energy levels will spike," says Ron Smith, personal training manager at the new Equinox Fitness on Oak Lawn Avenue. "In four weeks you will notice [a change in] the way your clothes fit."

3. Get a personalized program specific to your goals.

"A truly skilled trainer will write a program for you, not simply a workout. Anyone can find a workout; a talented trainer will assess you, then write a program for you that encompasses everything to reach your goals, including corrective exercises," says Smith.

Individualization is the mark of good training. "Everything is individual to each person. It depends on your background. If your trainer doesn't do a full assessment on you prior to working with you, *run*," Smith says.

4. Learn how to change your way of life.

According to Smith, the best way to see results is through a clean diet paired with a combination of cardiovascular training and weight training. Young attributes even more to the diet portion of the equation.

"Last week I had a client tell me he'd lost eight pounds in the first week we'd trained together. The same day, another told me he'd gained three pounds. Both are looking to lose weight, but one is putting in the extra effort, which I refer to as proper eating habits. If a client wants to continue overeating, making poor choices when it's time to decide what to eat, and continue to drink and par-tay, well, they're gonna have only so much results," he says.

5. Exercise properly and change up your routine.

Even if you exercise regularly on your own, you might not be getting the full benefit. It's important to do different exercises that work out the same body parts to see better results and keep your exercise routine from being anything but, well, routine.

"People tell me all the time, 'I did 500 sit-ups last week and I got nothing!'" Young says. "Well, you probably were not doing them correctly and there are so many other exercises that will build that strong, sexy core."



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A real nail-biter? Better not

Metrosexuality made it trendy, but gay men still love their mani-pedis

By Howard Lewis Russell

Like doughnut shops in Los Angeles or electronics stores in New York, there is something almost comfortingly inexplicable about the ubiquity of nail salons in Dallas. Why *are* there so very many personal maintenance emporiums in our city wholly devoted to human gelatin-filing — running the socio-economic gamut from grimly modest to garishly magnificent — sprouting up seemingly overnight, fully formed from nothing, on every single corner and strip mall further than the eye can see? Do Dallasites simply enjoy having perfectly manicured fingers and toes more than the rest of the nation? Is there not a single, secretly closeted nail-biter whatsoever living in central Texas: male, female or even drag queen?

Gnawing truth be known — whether fey heterosexual, butch homosexual, or just plain, unabashedly metrosexual — the better sex is not alone in keeping Dallas' licensed cuticle-cutters in mushrooming business exclusively: Males in Dallas are (secretly or not) getting their nails professionally done, and in droves. As the acerbic Round Table wit Dorothy Parker infamously quipped, "Show me a woman vainer than any man and I'll show you a swinging dick under her girdle."

In our current century's relative infancy — when women's girdles, men's puka bead necklaces (mustache required), mood rings and magnetic copper healing bracelets have long been relegated to the great, moldering dustbin of vanities past — retail sales in the U.S. *men's* grooming market topped more than \$10 billion in 2008, up an incredible 25 percent in the past three years alone.

Even so, salons catering specifically to men tend to avoid these more esoteric, "exotic" trends of pampering in favor of a definitively meat-and-potatoes approach. Male clientele — gay, straight or otherwise — all share the same "big three" universal salon concerns in common: 1) no men ever *like* going to salons; 2) no men *ever* like sitting next to women in salons (they do *not* want to look across an aisle and see a buddy's wife or [gasp!] a mother); and 3) no men like the *smell* of salons.

At Dallas' Face Salon/Spa/Retreat For Men, great strides have been made to establish a clear distance between its all-male clientele experience versus any previously conceived expectations inherent to more traditional "beauty" salons/spas . . . starting with the libations. The first question asked when one walks through the door of Face is, "May I offer you something to drink: soda, beer, wine?" Music to a man's ears!

Tiffany Goodwin, Face's gregarious manager, is astutely attuned to her clientele's Y-chromosome needs and wants: In addition to complimentary wine and beer on tap, BYOB is encouraged as well, with a Member's Reserve cabinet placed front and center of the salon for those



Photo by ARNOLD WAYNE JONES

MANI HAPPY RETURNS: Patricia Valle specializes in nail care (hand and foot) for Dallas men — gay and straight.

who wish to keep their own personal beverage favorites handy on return maintenance visits. "And, of course, Saturday is mimosa day," Goodwin smiles sweepingly. "The only smells you'll inhale here are champagne."

And in fact, Face smells remarkably of nothing *but* air: plain, odorless, chemical-free, deliciously ventilated; the salon is an atmospheric parallel of male heaven all the way around: from its reclining leather, zero-gravity manicure/pedicure chairs, to twin side-by-side, flat-screen televisions mounted above the beer-on-draft taps (one permanently tuned-in to ESPN, another to CNN), to a wall array of men's grooming products-for-purchase, featuring four top-selling men's brands: Anthony, Joe Grooming, Creo and Billy Jealousy.

At Face, a man can get his shoes shined, read a magazine, watch TV with his feet up, sip a foamy beer and have his fingernails buffed all the same time. When asked what percentage of Face's clientele is female, Goodwin exults ebulliently, "Women are allowed on Wednesdays — emphasis on *allowed*."

The pricing of a spa manicure and spa pedicure at Face is equally celestial in comparison to many of Dallas's female-oriented equivalent salons, with a "hand detail" running only \$25, a foot detail \$35, and a combo package at \$55.

Nail therapist extraordinaire Patricia Valle follows a set procedure for turning any male's abused hands and feet into gleaming gems of sophisticated elegance: feet/hands are first soaked in an eucalyptus bath to deodorize and soften skin, followed by clip-and-file cuticle work, then dead skin is abraded off and sloughed away, combining pressure point reflexology with a cucumber calming cream

See **NAILS**, Page 7

Let's play!

For Dallas gay athletes, fitness can come in a group setting

By David Taffet

Working out with a trainer or weight-loss boot camp is one thing, but what about the social butterfly who wants to look great and grab a beer with fellow practitioners?

Dallas is awash in gay team-sport clubs that offer the fitness-minded varying degrees of exercise options. We've listed some of them, roughly in descending order of how much cardio they provide and how healthy you need to be to try them out.

Rugby. No idea how to play one of the roughest and rowdiest sports around or if you'll fit in? The Dallas Diablos Rugby Football Club welcomes every-

one of varying athletic abilities. "If you are new to the sport, the Diablos are a great way to get yourself familiar with the world of rugby," says Diablos president Jonn Thurman. The Diablos have participated in the Bingham Cup Rugby Tournament, which took the team to places such as London, Dublin and New York City. "Because of the camaraderie of the sport of rugby, there is a worldwide fraternity of rugby brothers and sisters where everyone in the rugby world will always feel welcome."

And speaking of sisters, the Dallas Debutantes is the area's women's rugby team.

Practice for the season starts in September. Dallasdiablos.org

Rodeo. Whether you grew up in the country roping and riding or in the city and have always wanted to, Texas Gay Rodeo Association welcomes participants at all levels to its Dallas and Fort Worth chapters.

"Most members who compete have never done rodeo events before. We are a large family within the IGRA Rodeo Circuit. New contestants will have lots of support to get them started," says TGRA rep Dan Nagel. The Cowtown Rodeo arrives in Fort Worth at the end of the month.

Find upcoming meetings and membership application on the Web site. Tgra.org



MAYHEM FOR HEALTH: The Dallas Diablos Rugby Football Club is a strenuous workout for men; for women, there's even the Dallas Debutantes.

Soccer. This gay and lesbian soccer league fields teams in other local leagues and plays in both gay and mainstream local, regional, and international tournaments. Oaklawnsoccerclub.org

Biking. Doing a long distance bike ride takes months of training. Although the Lone Star Ride is a fundraising event for three local AIDS organizations, they also help with training and safety. This year's big ride through the North Texas countryside is Sept. 26-27. Lonestarride.org

Flag Football. The Texas Bulls Flag Football team practices at Ranchview High in Valley Ranch. The team plans to travel to Washington, D.C., in October for GayBowl IX. The Web site invites new players saying, "No matter your experience, fitness level or athletic ability, we'll find a place for you." Texasbullsffc.com

Running. The Dallas Frontrunners call themselves "the social group with a healthy attitude." They meet for runs and walks Tuesdays and Thursdays at 6:30 p.m. on the Katy Trail at Knox Street and Saturday mornings at 9 a.m. (8 a.m. April through November) at White Rock Lake. Dallasfrontrunners.org

See PLAY, Page 7

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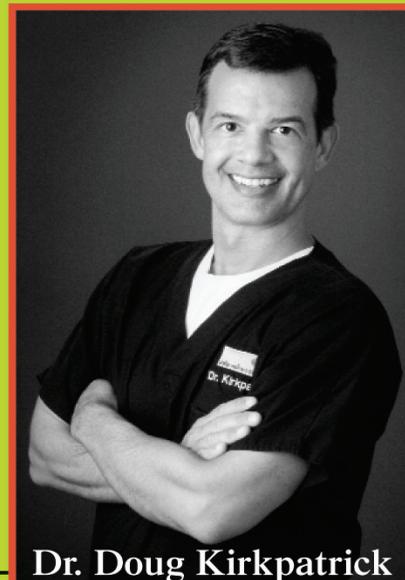
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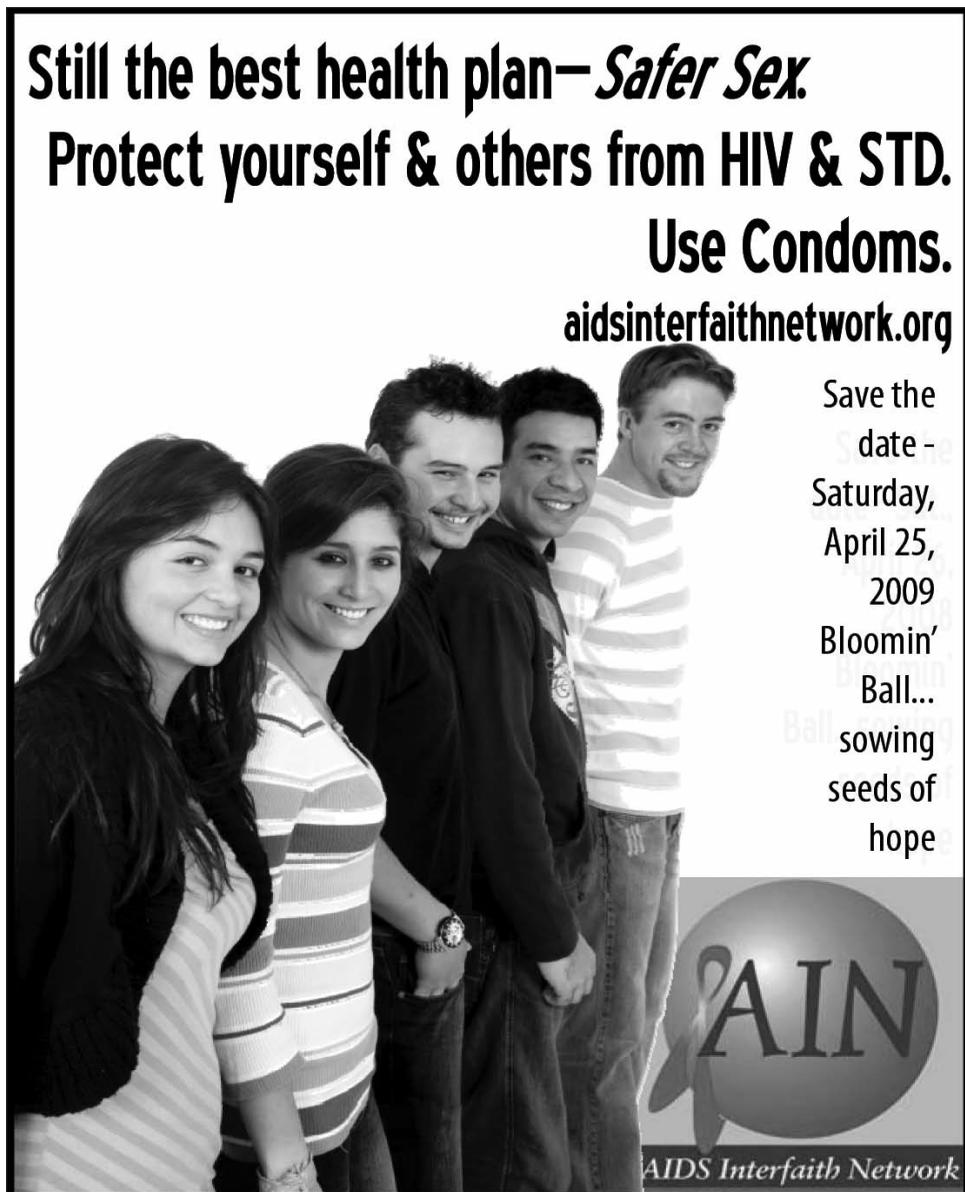
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Zoom Zoom!

Whiter teeth enter the sci-fi realm

By Howard Lewis Russell

There's a proverb that says, "Be true to your teeth or your teeth will be false to you." And in the sparkle-bright world we live in, a white smile can make all the difference.

For those, Zoom has fortuitously arrived.

Everyone knows that coffee, tea, colas, red wines, tobacco and even certain fruits and vegetables can stain teeth. The buildup of plaque, due to inadequate brushing or flossing, is also a major contributor of dingy choppers, and certain diseases and conditions (and even their treatments, from chemotherapy to tetracycline) can affect color. Throw in age, genetics, environment (excessive fluoride levels in water), too much sugar, stress and trauma, and teeth discoloration eventually becomes a given.

Clint Herzog is at the cutting edge of the latest options in whitening advances. As a technician at Floss, his free-standing dental haven across from the West Village, states, "Zoom achieves superior bleaching results in one hour of what it would take trays a week or longer."

Most people do not have the patience, to say nothing of desire, to wear trays in their mouths all night while sleeping (the traditional whitening route). Zoom bridges the sighing void between perseverance and prompt results. (To quote Carrie Fisher's adroit assessment, "Immediate gratification takes too long.")

Happily, Zoom is a relatively simple procedure to complete. Mary Carmen, assistant to Dr. Kyle G. Keeter's Cosmetic and Restorative Care practice on Preston Road, offers every comfort possible during the three, 15-minute successive intervals one is in her care: massage chair, optional nitrous oxide gas, iTouch music of one's choice, a suspended-ceiling TV... or just take a nap and relax — at least as much as possible while wearing a plastic retractor to keep your mouth forced open with teeth



PHOTO BY ARNOLD WAYNE JONES

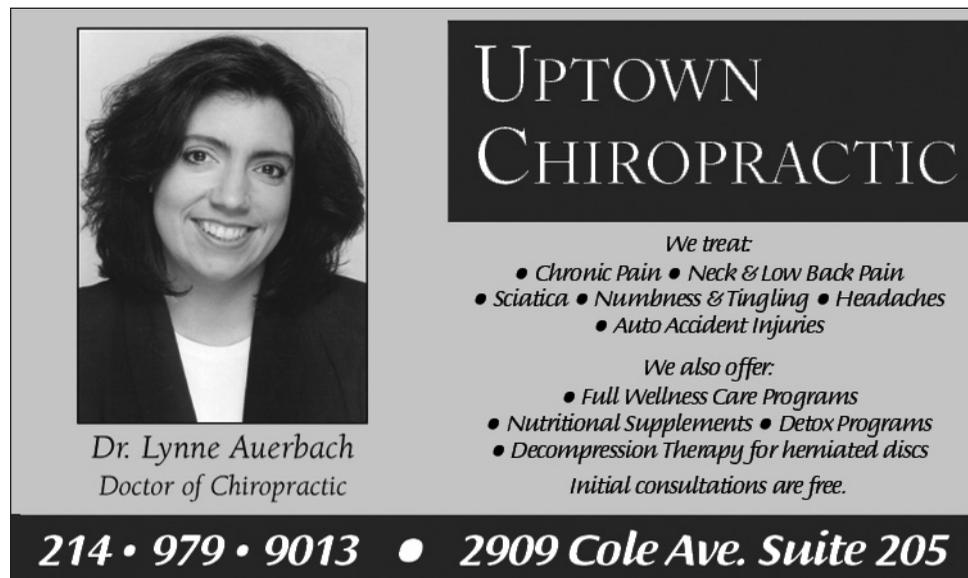
WHITE BRIGHT: Park Cities dentist Kyle Keeter uses the Zoom teeth whitening system for his patients.

slathered in hydrogen peroxide gel are zapped by an ultraviolet laser light strong enough to leach bleaching oxygen molecules into granitic porous dentin enamel. (Take the nitrous.)

To retain the maximum benefits of your new sparkle-bright investment, it's crucial to avoid dark-staining substances for at least 48 hours after treatment.

Temporary increased tooth sensitivity is a side effect to Zoom that even the healthiest teeth will experience immediately following the procedure. Symptoms disappear within 24 hours, but to avoid any sensitivity issues altogether it's advisable to brush with a heavily-fluoridated toothpaste such as Sensodyne one week prior to your Zoom appointment.

As for Zoom's cost, individual dentists set what they charge for a teeth-whitening session, with the average price usually ranging somewhere in between a family of four's outing to Six Flags to a built-in kitchen appliance: Pricing is affected by such variables as whether they include take-home whitening kits for touchups, whether the dentist requires a paid first visit to assess your teeth, whether teeth tray molds are



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cast for individual whitening maintenance between Zoom-ings (most people usually re-Zoom every two to three years) and how many uses of carbamide peroxide gel are included in the kits.

In the buoyant anthem of a Civil War slave preacher's words, "We ain't where we wanna be, we ain't where we oughta be and we ain't where we're gonna be, but, thank God, we ain't where we was."

One's teeth will feel that way about Zoom: Thank God, they ain't where they was.

Clint Herzog's Floss, 3131 Lemmon Ave. 214-978-0101. Flossdental.com.

Kyle G. Keeter's Cosmetic and Restorative Care, 8201 Preston Road, Suite 255. 214-360-0055. DrKeeter.com.

NAILS

Continued from page 4

massage, and finally nails are prepped with a finish of one's choice: either a buff shine or a polish shine.

"All implements are sanitized, disinfected and sterilized," explains Valle, "and the polish we use, if you prefer that option, is Man/e-cure: a clear, scent-free brand designed exclusively for men."

My digits have never gleamed so good. And just remember, boys, what mama always said: Don't bite your nails . . . you may scratch something.

Face For Men, 3000 Blackburn Ave., Suite 190. 214-520-1103. Faceformen.com.

PLAY

Continued from page 5

Tennis. The Oak Lawn Tennis Association begins its new season March 1 at Samuel-Grand Tennis Center in East Dallas. Register and pay season or half season fees on line at the OLTA Web site. Oltadallas.org

Volleyball. The Dallas Independent Volleyball Association had five levels of experience to ensure that everyone can participate. Play takes place at Texas Advantage Sports off Highway 360. The season began Feb. 1 but teams may be looking for subs if you're interested but couldn't make the new member clinics earlier this year. Divadallas.org

Softball. Practice for the new season of Pegasus Slowpitch Softball has already begun, with opening day on March 15. The North Texas Women's Softball Association season spring league runs March 8 through May 3. The summer league begins June 7. Both leagues use the fields at Trinity View Park off Irving Boulevard in the Trinity River bottoms. Dallaspsa.org, Ntxwusa.net

Golf. Colene Drace, president of Different Strokes Golf Association, says that DSGA "organizes fun and competitive golf events for gay and lesbian golfers of all skill levels." About two golf outings are scheduled per month from March through October culminating in the two-



Riding a bronco is just one of the skills you can practice in the gay rodeo — and many who start have no cowboy experience prior to joining.

day Texas Shootout club championship. The season begins March 14 at Cedar Crest Golf Course. Dsgadallas.org

Bowling. A number of leagues play different weeknights, throughout most of the year at alleys around the Metroplex. The Oak Lawn Bowling Association remains one of the largest bowling leagues anywhere. The largest annual tournament is the Dallas Invitational Columbus Day Tournament.

Jim Putnam, who directed the tournament last year, says, "DICDT is a fundraiser for an HIV organization each year. Bowlers from five leagues in the Metroplex help us run it and people come in from all over the country, Canada, Australia and New Zealand." Oaklawnbowling.com



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OM SWEET OM

In uncertain times, meditation may be the ticket to change your outlook — and your physical health

By Steven Lindsey

People cope with stress in many different ways. For some, it's an after-work cocktail (or six). Others enjoy a long, hot bath in the warm glow of candles. A professional massage might be even better.

Yet so many of us never take the time to relax in any way, leaving us anxious, irritable and often depressed.

Taking a little time each day to unwind and free your mind of all the useless information, petty problems and never-ending to-do lists can not only make you feel better mentally and physically, but many experts believe that some form of meditation can improve your quality of life, and even extend your years on earth while you're at it.

Meditation in its purest form is growing in popularity as a way of relaxing and opening one's mind to new possibilities; yoga also has similar meditative benefits.

Brother ChiSing, M.Div., is the spiritual director and founder of Awakening Heart, a Dallas-based spiritual ministry inspired by the universal teachings and practices of the contemporary Buddhist teacher, Thich Nhat Hanh, and his "Order of Interbeing," which is composed of both lay and monastic members worldwide.

Awakening Heart's meditation group has always had close ties to the LGBT community.

"When we first started our meditation group in Dallas, it was 90 percent LGBT because it was first held at the Cathedral of Hope," says ChiSing. "When we moved to the Unity Church of Dallas, we grew in numbers and we are now one of the largest meditation groups in North Texas, but it became more like 50/50."

According to ChiSing, the "big three" reasons for meditation are 1) real inner peace that lasts; 2) spiritual evolution and enlightenment (to realize who we really are — not the self, but the Self); and 3) to visualize and manifest a better life and a better world of abundance, happiness and harmony where no one is left out.

Referring specifically to the LGBT community, ChiSing believes that "meditation is important because it speeds up an individual's and a society's ability to evolve to more inclusive, tolerant and affirmative ways of thinking and acting. There is no need to segregate ourselves. We are fully accepted and appreciated here. Meditation helps us realize our Oneness, not our separateness. If you want the fundamentalists to treat us better, then teach them to meditate. Meditation will help them, and us, to evolve to higher ways of thinking and acting that are more liberal, progressive and accepting. So, meditation is a revolutionary act of deep activism."

At Awakening Heart, they teach meditation to Buddhists, Christians and Interfaith communities, as well as to non-religious secular audiences.

"Meditation is good for anyone and everyone, regardless of beliefs. It is universally beneficial," ChiSing says.

If people need more motivation than simply spiritual well-being, there are plenty of physical benefits that can be attributed to meditation, as well.

"Stay younger-looking and age slower. I am living proof. I look 10 years younger than my actual age," says ChiSing.

He also lists a host of other benefits, including the ability to lose weight, especially if you practice eating meditation and walking meditation; becoming more attractive because of heightened pheromone production, including oxytocin; an increase in the rate of natural



Photo by ARNOLD WAYNE JONES

INNER PEACE: Bill Kennedy with Awakening Heart, who has practiced meditation for more than 15 years, says the lessons learned can be applied in everyday life to soothe anxiety.



Brandon Hartsell, CEO of Sunstone Yoga, incorporates aspects of meditation into his yoga practice.

healing properties within the body; a better immune system; healthier skin; less sexual compulsion and more sexual fulfillment; less desire for addictions and more desire for a healthy lifestyle.

Bill Kennedy, who leads a meditation group at Awakening Heart, believes that meditating in a group atmosphere is far more effective than meditating alone, but he does offer up a simple way that anyone can use to slow down and meditate just about anywhere.

"Pause whatever you're doing and take a deep breath," he says. "Let go of thinking about what you are doing and focus on any physical sensations you are aware of. Scan your body and try to take in all of the sensations you are aware of at once. Now for three breaths, pay attention to the feeling of the air coming in, and then flowing out. You can feel it in various places — the nostrils, the throat, the belly. Don't alter the breathing and just focus on the sensations of it. Then allow your mind or awareness to open up to all that is present in your awareness at this moment. Let thoughts and feelings pass by, aware of them but without getting into them. Enjoy this 'view' for the next 30 seconds to a minute. Then, let it go and resume your day."

If you practice yoga, you're getting meditative benefits that you may not have even pegged as true meditation.

"Physical (Hatha) yoga as we practice it requires your full attention," says Brandon Hartsell, CEO of Sunstone Yoga in Uptown. One of his longtime students put it best. "He said, 'Brandon, I used to be a runner before Sunstone Yoga. The great thing about running is that I can problem solve when I run. The problem with running is that I can problem solve when I run. When I practice yoga, whatever I was doing or thinking prior has to go away. You just can't problem solve while you are practicing yoga. For many people who meditate the meditation is about being without thought and rumination. Physical yoga has a similar effect."

Yoga, like meditation, works best when practiced daily. For many people, that's just not a possibility in their lives right now, but if meditation is of any interest it's a goal worth pursuing.

"We need the energy of the community in meditation as well," ChiSing says, emphasizing the importance of meditating with other people. "Others need us. Without the attitude of wanting to support others, we will not go very far in our own meditation practice."

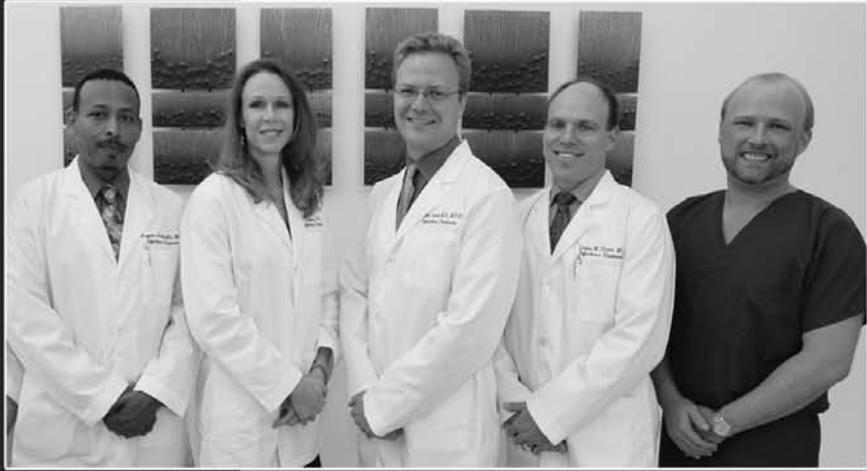
"Inner peace is not about individual narcissism. Inner peace is for world peace or it is no peace at all."

Awakening Heart meets at Unity Church of Dallas, 6525 Forest Lane. Awakeningheart.org.

Sunstone Yoga at Uptown Plaza, 2907 Routh St. 214-764-2119, Sunstoneyoga.com.



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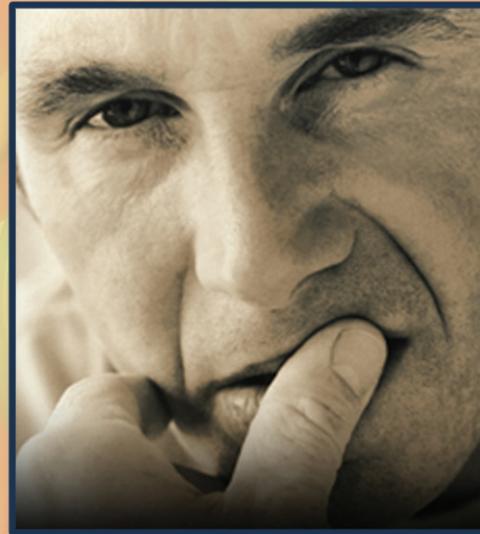
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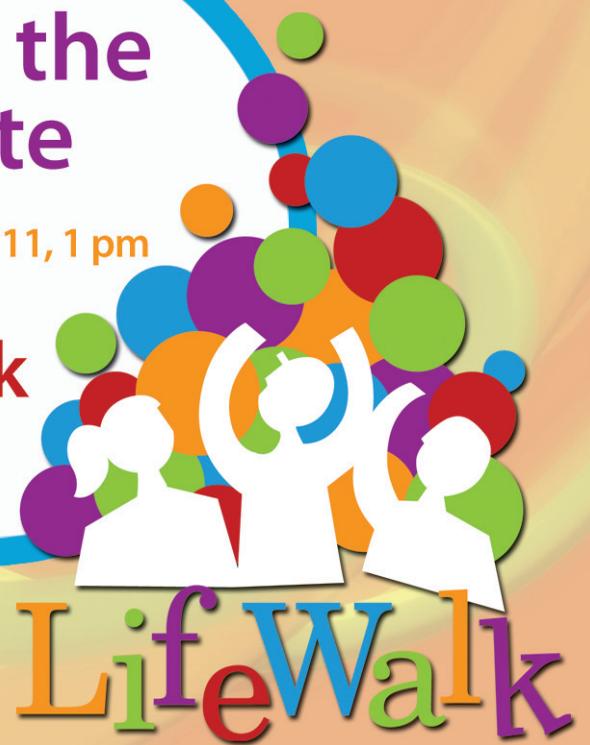
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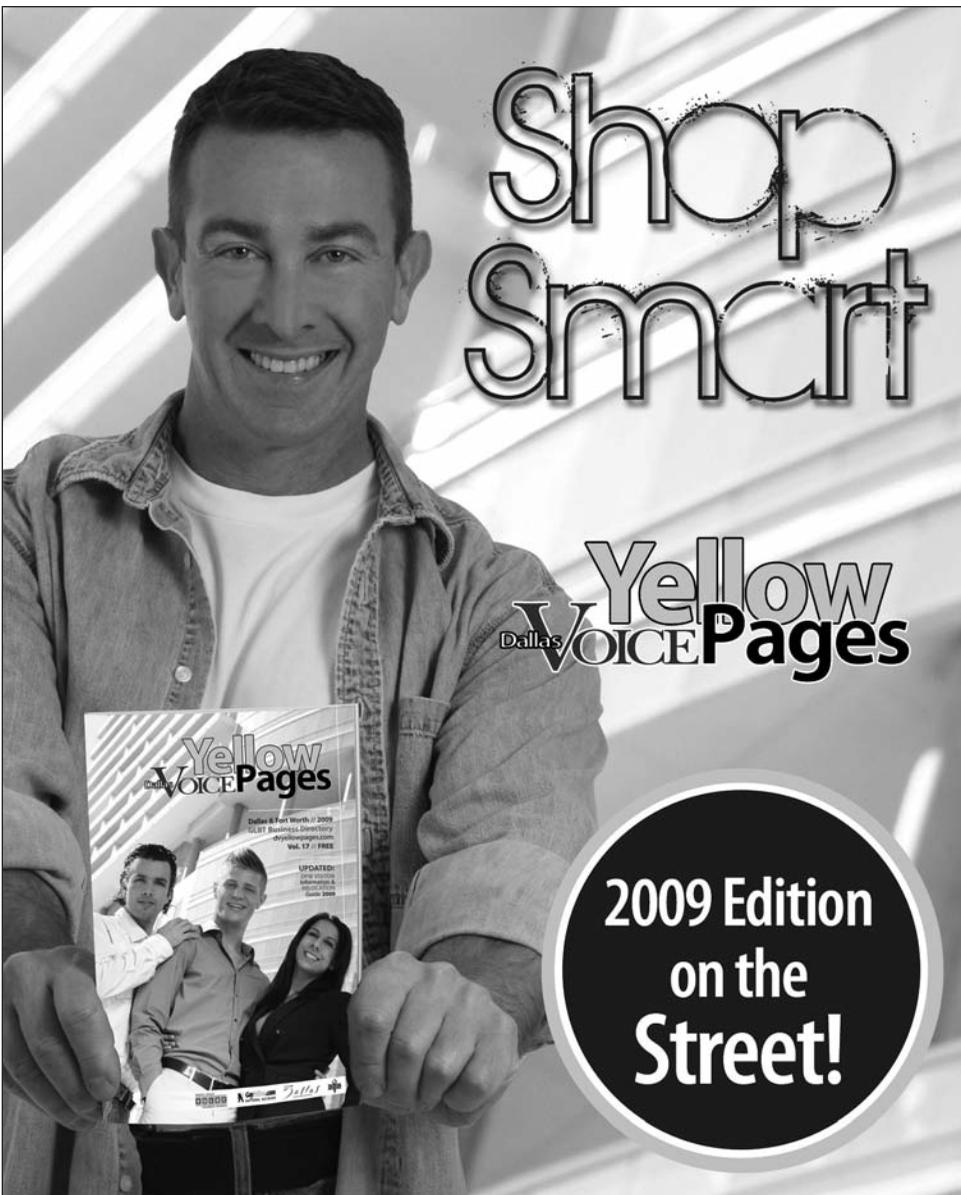
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A Wii bit of exercise

Can Nintendo revolutionize the way we get fit?

By Steven Lindsey

In the good old days of Ms. Pac-Man, Tetris and Missile Command, video games were all about sitting in front of the TV for hours, mind turning to mush while munching on Steak-Ummms and drinking Clearly Canadian. If I wanted exercise, I hopped on my rowing machine or pulled the dirty laundry off the Bow-Flex and went to town.



GRAPHIC BY CHRIS EDWARDS

Now, with the introduction of Wii Fit for the Nintendo Wii gaming system, Americans seem eager to use virtual-world exercise to eliminate their real-world muffin tops. But can the high-energy videogame really provide a decent workout and motivate people to exercise more?

Sales figures would answer that question with a resounding "Yes, Wii Can!" In January, Wii Fit was the top-selling videogame, with 777,000 copies sold in the U.S. alone.

Was it the guilt of failed New Year's resolutions or a cultural phenomenon that could finally slim down our double-cheese-and-bacon culture? The only way to attempt to solve the mystery was to check it out for myself.

Admittedly, I went into this experiment as a skeptic. It's one thing to play videogames to escape to distant worlds, fight zombies or steal cars while running from the po-po; it's another to accomplish something in the real world. What possible purpose could there be for doing something that I could just as easily accomplish without the need for a TV, balance board and high-tech joystick?

Perhaps there's a viable niche market for those of us who like the idea of yoga but prefer not to have a stranger touch our feet and tell us we need a pedicure before the next class.

But enough speculation. It was finally time to put technology to work for me, even if I'm the one doing all the work.

After taking a large swig of Slim Fast, two aspirin for my achy back, and a lint roller to my leg warmers, I was ready to take the Wii Fit challenge. An hour later, after I figured out how to hook up the damned thing, I was *really* ready.

As the friendly (and slightly creepy) computerized voice walked me through the setup, it was time to take my fitness stats. For the record, I work out at least six times per week, so I felt pretty confident that I was going to achieve the Wii Fit equivalent of my three initials atop the high score list on Q*bert.

First, it weighed me in. The multi-function balance board that comes with the software mimicked the exact results of my bathroom scale. Impressive!

After entering my age and height, it calculated my body mass index. Again, the results matched what I'd been told at my last stat-check

with a personal trainer. Happily, I was in the normal range and not in the feared overweight or obese zones.

I then engaged in a few balance tests before learning the most important statistic of my life: my "Wii Fit age." Like watching the ticking scale during the weigh-ins on "The Biggest Loser," my palms began to sweat as I awaited the big reveal.

Click. Click. Click. BOOM.

"50" appeared in a gigantic font behind my smiling avatar. For someone rapidly approaching 40, this extra decade was devastating news. Then the machine continued to taunt me by making fun of my lack of balance. "Do you often trip when you walk?" it sarcastically asked. "Only when carrying armloads of Nintendo equipment to the dumpster," I responded, ready to hurl my Wii remote through the flat-screen.

Instead, its childish taunts made me even more determined to succeed, unlike my entire adolescence when such teasing sent me running for the nurse's office faking leukemia, diabetes or paralysis to avoid gym class for the foreseeable future. No, this time was going to be different. This sissy-boy was going to overcome!

As the next screen prompted me to action, I was required to select the male or female virtual trainer. Naturally, I chose the guy with the surprisingly hot computer-generated fitness guru with the sweet-yet-masculine voice eager to give me encouragement at every turn — and, I hoped, a rub-down in the cyber locker room afterward. (Yes, even in virtual reality, I'm a perv. But I can't be the only one who's spotted the nice animated bulge in his bicycle shorts.)

My trainer selected (I named him Miguel) and remote controllers strapped to my wrists for safety, I stretched my hamstrings and cracked my neck from side to side, just like an Olympian.

For the next hour, I took on various challenges, from deceptively simple balance games to crazy yoga poses and even an unexpectedly exhausting run around the beautiful countryside, in what I imagine to be a tiny town in Wisconsin. In some events, I excelled; in others, I was laughed at by not only my electronic neme-

See Wii, Page 15

Happy feet

Proper foot care is essential to overall good health

By David Taffet

Even the most athletic and active of body-conscious men and women probably think far too little about one of the most important parts of their bodies. And we're not talking about the abs.

It's feet.

We stand on them, walk on them, run on them and lift weights with them, but the human foot is often overlooked — at least until it causes problems.

That's where Dr. Michael Saginaw of Advanced Foot Care steps in.

Saginaw too often sees patients who have waited too long to pay attention to their feet. "If a problem arises, don't put it off for six months," he says. "Delayed treatment leads to problems."

Keeping your feet healthy doesn't have to be complicated, but may require diligence. Here is some of Saginaw's advice about how to keep your feet happy.

Shoes

Will wearing improper shoes cause foot problems?

"Are we talking about drag queens?" Saginaw asks back. He laughs, but then notes that he actually sees fewer lesbians, and wonders if it's the sensible shoes. But he does insist that choosing the proper shoes can make a big difference in foot health.

"I hate flip-flops. Flip-flops are not shoes," he maintains, noting that they offer "no support, no protection — they are not what shoes were designed to be." The only place they should be worn, he says, are in the shower at the gym to prevent fungus.

For athletics, he recommends the right shoe for the right sport.

"There's a difference in shoes in flexibility, weight and the density of the material used," he says. In tennis and soccer, there is a lot of lateral motion. The right shoe provides stability so you don't twist your ankle. "A marathon runner's shoe is almost like going barefoot."

Among his athletic patients, Saginaw primarily treats runners with heel issues and shin splints, both of which he says are treatable. "Typically we put them in an orthotic for running to change what sequence the muscles fire," he says.

But shoes are not the main cause of foot problems Saginaw treats. The three most common ailments involve toenails, heel pain and warts. And his best advice is to practice good hygiene by properly washing and drying your feet and then check them regularly.

Hygiene

Hygiene is one of the best preventative steps in foot care. Dry feet help prevent fungus, and anti-fungal powders may alleviate hyperhidrosis. Even socks offer additional protection from friction inside the shoe and can help prevent cuts and blisters. (Cotton socks are more absorbent than nylon although some nylon in the blend helps them keep their shape and hug the foot better.)



PHOTO BY ARNOLD WAYNE JONES

THE RIGHT FOOT FORWARD: Podiatrist Michael Saginaw says everything from shoe choice to hygiene can affect foot health.

Nails

Ingrown nails can be painful; some people are just prone to them. Saginaw says you can help prevent them by letting the nail grow longer and cutting it straight across, but a foot care specialist can be used to prevent some of the symptoms if the problem recurs.

Fungus — including athlete's foot — can be picked up anywhere but must be diagnosed. Some symptoms, like a trauma to the nail, may mimic a fungus but requires a different treatment. Current treatment includes topical and oral medication, but Saginaw hopes Texas will become the first in the state to offer a new laser treatment for fungus (which is waiting for Food and Drug Administration approval).

Warts

No, they don't come from touching toads, but warts provide a challenge to foot care. (People with HIV are more prone to wart growth.)

"The problem with warts is that they are viral," Saginaw says. "Before putting on a home remedy, it needs to be diagnosed properly. You have to know what you're treating. Warts can be confused with calluses."

Over-the-counter remedies work well for children's softer skin, but adult dermis presents more difficulties. The problem with using a product like Compound W on the foot is the tougher skin that it won't penetrate, requiring more aggressive treatment.

Heel pain

Plantar fasciitis, the most common heel pain, is caused by inflammation of the tissue that connects the heel to the toes. Orthotics are most commonly used in the treatment of this condition, and surgery is needed only rarely to treat the condition. Saginaw says early diagnosis is important.

Bony growths usually on the front of the heel are known as **heel spurs**. Many patients with plantar fasciitis also have these formations. Treatments for heel pain usually involve ice packs, exercise designed to relax the tissues, anti-inflammatory medication and orthotics.

See FEET, Page 15

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You are what you eat

Most of us need more anti-oxidants and minerals in our diets — especially once you realize how beneficial they can be to overall health

By Arnold Wayne Jones

If you've ever been to a farm, chances are you've seen an old wheelbarrow left outdoors for years at a time. It's discolored and rusted through, ugly, brittle and weak.

Well, the same thing happens to your body as you get older. You can virtually rust from the inside out.

"There really are parallels to rusting — oxygen has the same effect on metal as it does on your body," says Rebecca Rice, vice president of communications with the health-food company Via Vente.

Loose oxygen atoms, called free radicals, are released throughout the system. When theyglom onto other atoms or molecules, they can become highly corrosive. Which is where anti-oxidants are needed.

"The body naturally produces anti-oxidants. As a teen and in your 20s, your body produces them like crazy," says Rice, who received her bachelor of science degree in nutrition. "As you go into your 30s, 40s and 50s you're not producing them like you used to."

"There's a lot of research starting to come in on [the wellness benefits] of anti-oxidants," agrees Mark Herrin, owner of and a nutritionist at Sundrops on Oak Lawn Avenue. "We recommend anti-oxidants as a base instead of a multi-vitamin. You see all these benefits by neutralizing the free-radical molecules. It's a good idea to get as broad a base of anti-oxidants as possible."

The proof, says Rice, is an equatorial region where 1 in 64 residents live to be more than 100 years old — and they subsist on diets rich in

anti-oxidants.

Chronic inflammations of all kinds — from arthritis to asthma to digestion — are a leading cause of pain and disease. Anti-oxidants bolster the immune system and decrease inflammations, as do omega-3 fats.

"Those are critical," says Herrin. "Everybody who reads this needs to take fish oils. Your body needs it to reduce inflammation and the kinds of oils we mostly get *increase* inflammation."

The kind and amount of anti-oxidants you



PHOTO BY ARNOLD WAYNE JONES

WHAT A FRUIT: Rebecca Rice with Via Vente touts the healing effects of anti-oxidants, which are essential to maintaining healthy body chemistry. Apples, like these at Dallas' Farmers Market, are an excellent source of anti-oxidants.

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can use will depend on what you're trying to accomplish. Runners, Herrin says, need more anti-oxidants than weight-lifters who are trying to bulk up. Dark blue and purple berries fall under a large banner called flavonoids, but within that category are many different classes that target specific goals. Tart cherry is especially effective at increasing muscle strength during exercise, while green tea is in a separate category. But everyone will benefit.

Like Herrin, Rice preaches the gospel of good health in broad strokes. And while she touts the specific benefits of Via Viente, she believes any way you can get healthy whole foods into your system is a good thing.

"You need five to nine servings of fruits and vegetables a day," she says, whether that's through foods, juices or vitamin supplements. "Pomegranate juice is the new superfood — the star food on the scene. Drinking cherry juice is good, too," as is red wine.

Rice counsels people to read labels carefully and know what they are getting. Try to find juices without added sugars, or that are whole

foods (purees of skins, pulp and seeds) for the most complete health effects. Her favorite statistic: Five one-ounce servings of fruits and vegetables have been shown to reduce the risk of stroke by 25 percent.

In addition to anti-oxidants, Rice promotes the need to get essential minerals into the body.

"Minerals get your metabolism going and keep your energy high," she says. "There have been studies that blood pressure will even go down."

"Minerals are essential," echoes Herrin, who notes they work with enzymes to build muscle and reduce appetite.

Asked for one piece of advice for good nutrition, Rice doesn't hesitate. "Everything's about moderation and balance, but you need to get you're anti-oxidants — wherever you can," she says.

ViaViente is currently available only through independent agents. For more information, visit ViaViente.com.

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ON PINS AND NEEDLES

The practice of acupuncture has been around for 5,000 years, but that doesn't mean its procedures can't enter the modern age.

Dr. Karim Harati-Zadeh of Spectrum Chiropractic & Acupuncture is a firm believer in the effectiveness of acupuncture — he performs it on himself at least once a week — but his practice now includes the most contemporary of diagnostic instruments.

Acupuncture involves the insertion of tiny needles into points along the body that represent meridians along which *chi*, or life energy, flows. The meridians mostly correspond to organs in the body that in turn affect everything from digestion to stress.

It used to be that treatment required the patient's feedback, but the electro meridian imaging device (EMI) has changed that.

The EMI digitally measures the electromagnetic frequency of the main meridians, graphing which ones are weak or out of balance, says Harati-Zadeh. Treatment is then tailored to concentrate on the specific points that need to be stimulated or balanced.

The readings sure seemed accurate. When Harati-Zadeh inserted several needles in me, I could sense where three points of entry felt irritated; later, when he performed the EMI test — it looked like a Sharpie attached to an EKG machine — the readings were off the charts at exactly the same places I had specified. The printout even advised Harati-Zadeh which acu-points he should attend to maximize the therapeutic effect of the



treatment.

"When I started a year ago, I was the only one certified in Dallas to do this," says Harati-Zadeh. "It's definitely changed everything. I don't purely depend on what a patient tells me."

And anytime a doctor takes the guesswork out of treatment, it's a good thing.

— Arnold Wayne Jones
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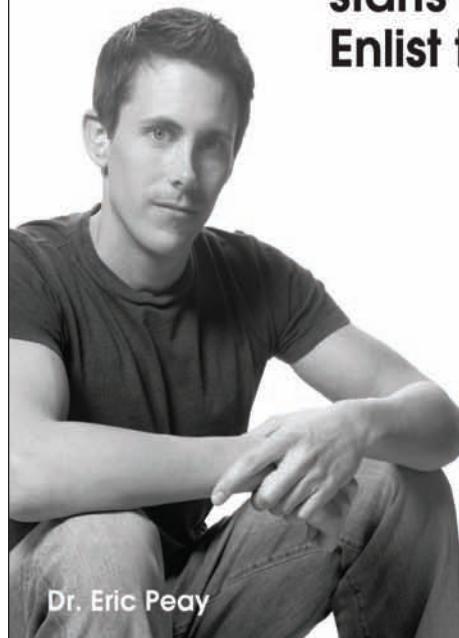
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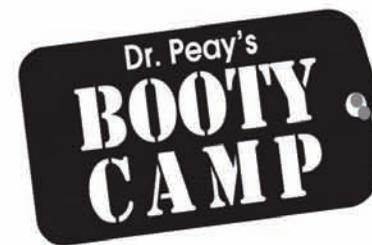
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Fun and fit in Florida

Tired of being a couch potato when traveling? Consider a fitness vacation

By David Taffet

Key West vacations usually include spending lazy days at a guesthouse pool and too much money at Fast Buck Freddie's. Evenings begin with sunset at Mallory Pier, before walking to a restaurant in Old Town and the bars on Duval Street.

But after too many sedentary months sitting at a desk in Dallas, I decided this trip would be different. I would use my island weekend for some exercise.

It's not as unusual as it sounds — and we don't mean a quick half-hour in the hotel fitness center or long walks on the beach counting as cardio. A true fitness vacation can be fun and healthy.

I've driven down the Keys from Miami at least a dozen times. Each time, I've passed the sign pointing down a road cut through mangrove thickets that says "Key Deer Refuge." This trip, although I flew directly into Key West and had no car, I decided to pay a visit.

Since my first Houston-to-Dallas AIDS ride, bicycling has been my favorite outdoor activity. When I began training six months before my first ride, I was winded after a mile and returned home. Riding daily for a few weeks, I gradually built up my endurance. Within a few weeks, I was circling White Rock Lake. My average speed increased and by my second AIDS ride, I completed a 100-mile day.

Bicycles and motor scooters are available to rent from a number of places in Key West. I picked up a bicycle from A&M Electric Cars at 526 Truman Ave. because they were open earlier than anyone else. By 8:30, I was on the road.

A bike lane runs most of the stretch from Key West to Big Pine Key, making the ride along a busy highway fairly safe. Over the past 25 years, many of the original hundred-year-old bridges connecting the Lower Keys were replaced. Those spans that were in good enough condition to remain are now open for bikes and pedestrians only.

If you're new to riding, a trip along the Keys is a good way to begin. Highway 1, the road that connects the chain of islands to the mainland, is completely flat and easy to ride. At the highest point, no Key is more than a few feet above sea level. The only inclines are the bridges.

Still, outdoor cycling is not the same as spinning class — the skills and exercise you get are very different. A relatively long and tall bridge that connects Summerland and Ramrod Keys was the only portion of the ride that was treacherous. The shoulder, just a half-lane wide, kept me out of 60-mile-an-hour traffic. A short guardrail prevented me from toppling into the water. I held my handlebars tight fighting the strong, morning ocean breeze and the 18-wheel-



One of the bridges can be treacherous, but a cycling trip along the Florida Keys can be an excellent way to stay fit while on vacation.

ers that passed.

A nice mental trick that makes a long ride easier is to think of the entire ride as a number of short trips. Stop to rest, eat and drink every 10 to 15 miles (about equal to a spin around White Rock). Although I planned to ride a total of about 70 miles, my goal for that morning was just 30 miles.

I average 12 to 13 miles an hour on a bicycle (much faster than when I first trained, though several miles an hour slower than I rode in my last Lone Star Ride). I stopped often to take photographs, and two gas stations along the 30-mile route served as additional rest stops for

bathroom breaks, drink refills and snacks to maintain energy. I arrived on Big Pine Key in about three and a half hours.

For the next two hours, I pedaled slowly and stopped often, riding only about 10 miles. At the Blue Hole, I left my bike for a short hike around the island's only fresh water pond where an alligator peered at me from beneath the water.

On the Gulf side of the island, I saw my first of the diminutive Key deer that stand only three feet tall at the shoulder. The mother and fawn allowed me to approach within a few feet as they browsed the underbrush. I rode across Watson Boulevard to No Name Key, a small,

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remote island off Big Pine. A deer dashed across the road; when I caught up with him, he was grazing in the thicket.

Although already a little tired, I began my ride back to Key West, thinking of it as just three 10-mile rides from Big Pine. With less wind and light traffic, the Ramrod-to-Summerland span felt less dangerous. I took two rest stops, on

Cudjoe Key at Mileage Marker 20 and Big Coppitt Key at marker 10, my afternoon ride back to Key West took less than three hours.

Including my exploration of Big Pine and No Name Keys, I rode about 75 miles before returning the bike that evening, and then faced the hardest part of the day as my leg muscles tightened: the walk back to my guesthouse.

Wii

Continued from page 10

ses, but also my partner, who heckled from a safe distance of my Wii Woop-Ass moves.

In the end, I actually felt like I got a pretty good workout. I don't know that Wii Fit would ever replace my regular workouts with actual humans and non-pixelated fresh air, but I was oddly motivated to prove to this hunk of plastic, wires and memory chips that I was a contender.

And I'm happy to report that after a few more days of persistence, I successfully lowered my Wii Fit age to a young-and-beautiful 46. Ugh. But I'm not going to stop until I'm down to 23 and able to execute a perfect warrior I pose or flawless hula-hoop routine. I may trip when I walk in the real world, but in the universe inside my television, I'm Michael Frickin' Phelps.

FEET

Continued from page 11

Breaks

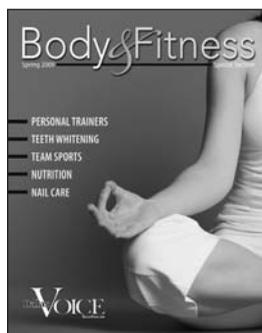
"It's not true that you can't do anything for a broken toe," Saginaw says of a common myth about broken bones in the foot. Self-treatment can cause more harm than good. Toes flex independently of each other and taping one to the other is not proper treatment. Instead, broken toes should be splinted separately.

Neuropathy

Numbness or tingling in the feet is known

as neuropathy, something common in people with diabetes or taking HIV medications. With the feet insensitive to pain, you are less likely to notice cuts, blisters, calluses and warts that can lead to infection if left untreated. Self-inspection is the best prevention for smaller problems developing into bigger ones.

Ultimately, Saginaw keeps his advice simple: "Listen to your body. If it hurts, don't do it. You can't work through an injury."



Editor:

Arnold Wayne Jones

Creative Director:

Michael Stephens

Contributing Writers:

Chris Edwards
Steven Lindsey
Howard Lewis Russell
David Taffet

Photographer:

Arnold Wayne Jones

Artist:

Chris Edwards



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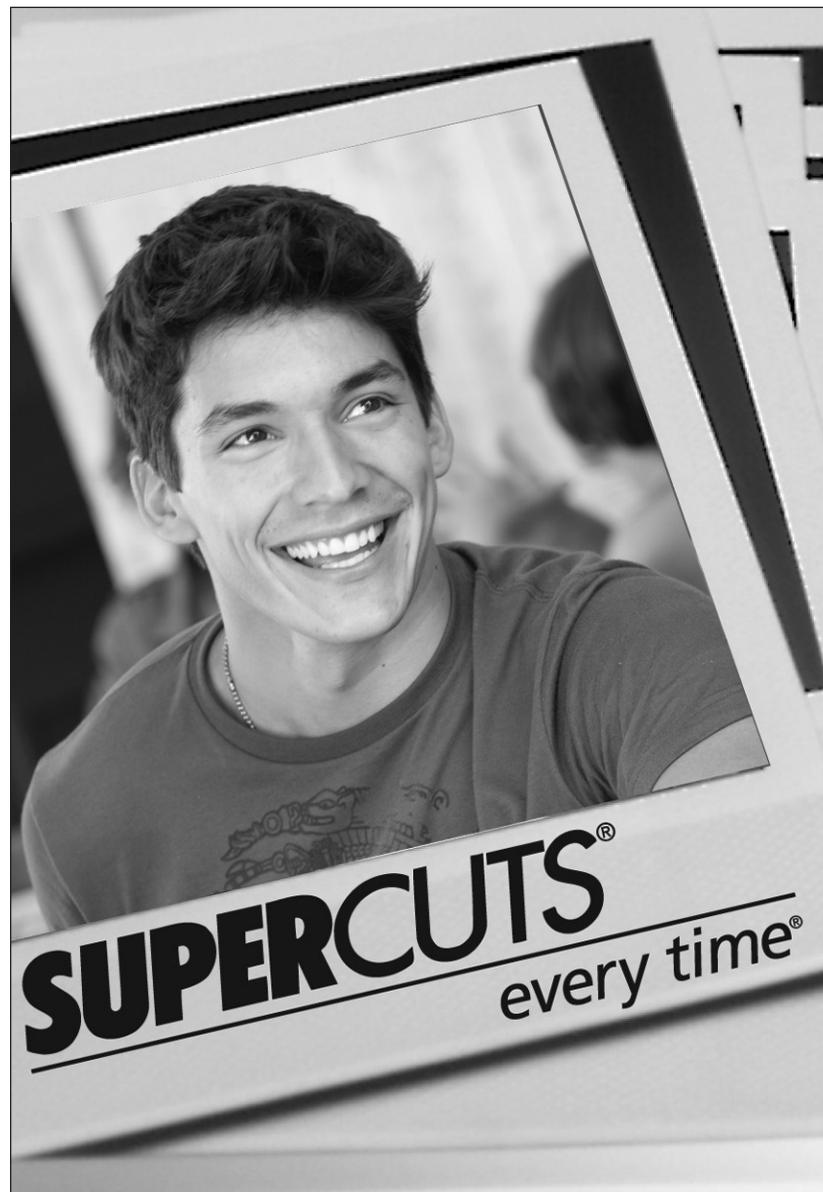
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