

Gym Rat Rantings

by Bob Ring



Sign Up for Life

Shelley asked me to prepare some promotional material for the Fit Center, so let me try this out on you:

The Fit Center is for adults over the age of 50 and those with medical needs. When you sign up, you join a family of 2600 people! A lot more than you thought, eh? So that's 2600 of us old people, like Hamlet, who are even now suffering the "slings and arrows" of our outrageous fortunes and are still alive to complain about it. The average age of Fit Center members is 65; the oldest, Liz, is 98 years old! Can you believe it? I don't know Liz, but I want to get on her exercise program.

The Gym offers both land and water programs. Studio classes include such favorites as "Sticks and Stones Will Build up Your Bones," "Breaking Backs," and "Joga" ("J" replaces the "Y" within 100 miles of the border.) Other land classes involve unspeakable combinations of bicycles, huge rubber balls, chairs, mats, rubber bands, heavy lead poles, hand weights, steps, balance pads, whips, and get this ... mirrors. Each time you wear silver sneakers (obtainable at your local Medicare store), you get a coupon worth \$10 towards the purchase of golden sneakers.

There are an equal variety of water classes, mostly involving splashing (e.g., hip-hop cardio-splash). The primary requisite for the aqua classes is a willingness to bare your body (most of it anyway) in front of us "looky-loos" outside the pool area. Silver sneakers are replaced by silver water wings in the swim area. Based on the number of people I see in the pool, the most popular aqua class appears to be "Free (for all) Swim."

For those of you who can actually move around already, the cardio-weight room is the place. Here you will find a variety of fancy machines, designed to stress and strain your entire body. Shelley has spared no expense with this stuff, having purchased top of the line Marquis De Sade equipment. Some of it works some of the time too!

After you become a member of the Gym, Staff members will evaluate your aerobic capacity, flexibility, and balance in order to recommend a specific exercise program. For instance, in my case, I scored in the 95th percentile in my age group for aerobics, but under 5% for flexibility and balance. (I've done better at three o'clock in the morning at the side of the road with a flashlight in my face.) So, of course, the hot shot Staff told me that I needed a class for inflexible, unbalanced people.

To be continued next month with Gym procedures