

Business Quarterly

'You just want to come back' to Kathy Henkel Fitness

By Patricia D'Ascoli

On a brisk November morning, a dozen sneaker-clad women ranging in age from 26 to 64 are finishing their weekly "PUMP" class at Kathy Henkel Fitness.

As they cool down to the sound of Elton John singing "Blue Jean Baby," all the women look triumphant. They have worked hard for an hour at Henkel's attractive studio on West Street in New Milford, but it's something they enjoy doing.

On the fitness studio's website, "PUMP" is described as "one hour of pure weights — working the entire body and all muscle groups."

Weight training is, in fact, central to Henkel's fitness philosophy.

"It's essential for every woman," said Henkel, who noted weight training helps build lean muscle and increases bone strength.

Most of the women attend classes at the studio on a regular basis.

That's for two reasons.

The first is that Henkel believes optimum results can only be achieved by working out at least four times a week.

The second is the women feel a sense of camaraderie and support from one another; this aspect of "getting fit" is just as important as the workouts.

Brittany Gmuer, who lives in Southbury, has been a member since March and has taken a variety of classes.

"It has been the most

positive experience that has happened to my life," she said. "When I leave there I am always in a great mood. It is completely uplifting."

Henkel opened her studio in 2010 after her employer, Positive Energy, went out of business.

That turn of events was, in a way, fortuitous, as she had always wanted to run her own business.

"One door closes and another one opens," Henkel said. "It was meant to be."

Prior to working at Positive Energy, Henkel worked at Gold's Gym and The Club in New Milford for many years.

All told, she has been in the fitness industry for more than 25 years, although she studied fashion merchandising in college and worked in the cosmetics industry for a decade.

She said she has been athletic her whole life, however, and easily segued into a fitness career.

"It's my passion," Henkel said. "Once I started teaching, I realized it was something I really enjoyed."

She is particularly passionate about helping women achieve their fitness goals. While weight loss is important to many of her members, Henkel encourages women not to focus on the scale.

"It's not about weight — it's just a number."

By building lean muscle, women will lose inches which is, in the long run, more important than trying to achieve a certain weight, Henkel said.



DEBORAH ROSE/SPECTRUM

Kathy Henkel, owner of Kathy Henkel Fitness in New Milford, has been in the fitness industry for more than 25 years.

And there are many ways to "get fit with Kathy."

Regularly scheduled classes include "Energy Sculpt," a combination of cardio and strength training; "Hoop and Core," a ballet inspired class that lengthens, strengthens and stretches; and "Shred," 50 minutes of challenging exercises with a kettle bell.

Barbara Roper, who has been taking classes with Henkel for years, travels to the studio from New Fairfield almost every day.

"I go six to eight hours a week. Her classes are so phenomenal," Roper said. "There's no way to describe the energy."

Henkel, who is certified by the Aerobic and Fitness Association of America in group fitness and personal training, offers her members regular fitness challenges throughout the year, such as the Little Black Dress Challenge.

In January, members can participate in the Skinny Jean Challenge, a motivation for the women to fit into their favorite (slightly tight) pair of jeans.

During the month of December, members can experience Holiday HIT, a high intensity training circuit, which Henkel has dubbed the "Twelve Days of Fitness" with 12 different exercises incorporated

into the circuit.

Although people are busy at this time of year, Henkel encourages her clients to stick to their fitness schedule through the holiday season.

With both day and evening classes, it's easy to do that.

Women have the opportunity to try classes like "Muscle Mix," an hour of weights, mixing up muscle groups week to week; "Rock Out," a total body conditioning class using drumsticks; or "Burn it Up," power sets using pump bars.

Most of the women who try a class usually decide to join, Henkel noted.

"You just want to come back — I was hooked and joined after the first day," Gmuer said.

Henkel offers the first class for free, with no commitment to join.

For those who decide to join, there are a variety of options from which to choose, including five-, 10- and 20-class passes, as well as monthly unlimited class passes.

In addition to the classes Henkel conducts at the studio, she also participates with clients in events such as the Run, Santa, Run 5K Run/Walk, held recently in New Milford.

Earlier this year, she achieved a fitness milestone when she and several friends completed Tough Mudder, the premier obstacle course series.

"I'm in the best shape I've ever been in," said Henkel, who admitted she's proud of her recent accomplishment.

Perhaps her greatest triumph, however, is in the success stories of the women she trains.

Roper has lost five dress sizes as a result of working out at Kathy Henkel Fitness, and she gives Henkel credit for helping her achieve this goal.

"Kathy is such a motivator," she said. "Such an inspiration — you want to do better."

Kathy Henkel Fitness is located at 143 West St., Unit Q in New Milford. For more information, visit www.getfitwithkathyhenkel.com or call 203-947-0265.

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Chamber looking forward to 2014

Continued from SXXXXXX
For those of you who might read my quarterly column on a regular basis or just happen to catch my December column, I will leave you with my favorite closing:

Now — the perfect time.

No community or business ever stands still; you either proceed or recede.

Other communities are active now, competing for trade territory, industries, new businesses, better highways, more housing, and everything else that will make them a better, more prosperous and more pleasant place in which to live.

As we move toward the new year, now is the perfect time to join the Greater New Milford Chamber of Commerce.

More industries, more

residents, more tourists and more people shopping in our community will mean more business for you and a stronger community for all of us.

If you are already a chamber member, now is the time to participate. A vibrant, healthy, active Chamber of Commerce is made up of vibrant, healthy and active members.

You will quickly discover the Greater New Milford chamber is a dynamic organization of enthusiastic individuals who are committed to promoting local business and our community.

Happy holidays!
May 2014 be a safe, healthy and happy year for you, your family and friends and our community.

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