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Harmony Zone Fitness gears up for new year

Submitted by Anonymous on Fri, 01/22/2010 - 01:00

By: Hanna Disch

In these economically troubled times beset with layoffs, cutbacks and downsizing, it's refreshing to see some growth in local business. Harmony Zone Fitness's web site proclaims, "It's all about MORE in 2010 at HZF," and it's not lying.

As of Jan. 1, Harmony Zone Fitness has added a second owner - running coach Gretta Clapp - approximately 2,000 square feet of space and new equipment. They've expanded their class schedule as well.

Regarding taking on a partner, owner Rebecca Higgins said, "As a sole owner, I felt like I needed to add a partner with strengths different from mine."

Higgins has a strong marketing background, is a certified personal trainer and teaches classes. She needed to add staff and adding a partner gives her someone who is really vested in the business and motivated to help it grow and succeed. Also, Clapp's running background worked well with HZF's need for a running coach. "She is a perfect fit," said Higgins.

Clapp, who also teaches at MATC in the vet tech program, had been an HZF member for a couple years and was good friends with Higgins. "I think it's just something that I'm passionate about - exercise, fitness and wellness," said Clapp. "So when [Higgins] was talking about bringing on a partner or needing someone to help, it sparked my interest right away... This is where we ended up, and I'm very happy about it."

Harmony Zone Fitness occupied its original space for three and a half years, starting out as a typical fitness center and evolving into more of a studio with classes and personal training. As that part of the business really took off, Higgins found that they were having to turn people away at peak times. Adding a second studio space enabled them to double class size.

The additional space also allows for more classes, including a form of kickboxing called Kickboxercise, Zumba classes, pre and post natal fitness classes, and additional yoga and Pilates classes.

As well as serving as a quiet place for yoga and Pilates, the new space also contains a wellness lounge. This area gives

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clients a place to sit, read and talk with other members. Higgins hopes that it will foster a sense of community and help clients find support not just from HZF owners and staff but from each other as well.

Higgins explains that they really want to get into wellness, and to help people realize that there is a lot more to fitness than just exercise. She sees nutrition, relaxation and people taking time for themselves as important parts of fitness.

Harmony Zone Fitness embraces a spirit of flexibility, with month to month memberships and no long term commitments required. One way this flexibility shows is in their approach to replacing equipment. This is done not only when equipment wears out, but also as they see what members are using and needing.

For 2010, they've added two new free motion machines, which are universal machines that allow for working out almost any body part. Over 2,000 exercises can be done on one machine. They also purchased a new treadmill and getting heavy bags for a boxing corner, which will allow their many members who are interested in boxing to do that on their own without having to wait for a class.

Within the next two months, Higgins and Clapp are also planning to add a retail area where they will sell water bottles, T-shirts, running jackets, shirts for their running clubs and possibly some healthy food items.

"If people have checked us out in the past and thought they weren't interested or we didn't offer exactly what they were looking for at that point, they should come back and give it another try," suggests Clapp. "Because we've definitely expanded in our classes, we've expanded in our space and we've expanded our staff. We're definitely a place to come and check out."

Harmony Zone Fitness is located at 280 W. Netherwood. For information call 835-9094 or visit their web site: www.harmonyzonefitness.com (<http://www.harmonyzonefitness.com>).

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