

Business

New studio offers residents more fitness options

by Michelle Richmond

Tony Pullman was like many people who needed to lose weight and change his lifestyle. He had been overweight his entire life and was tipping the scales 70 pounds above a normal weight range.

"I had tried many times to lose weight," he said. "I was part of the 95 percent of people who constantly gained and lost weight with no long-term success until I went to the Body Firm."

He started in 2002 at the studio in Rocky Hill, which is owned by Carolyn Phillips, with some lofty goals. He lost all 70 pounds, started competing in triathlons and left a job of 25 years to pursue a new dream.

The self-proclaimed former couch potato is now a personal trainer and partner in the newly named Fit Behavior.

The name was recently changed because of legal reasons. His success led him to a career change.

"I was in retail for 25 years and when Carolyn asked me if I wanted to open another studio with her, it kind of threw me off," he said.

"But I had been so successful that I decided that I wanted to educate, motivate and support clients and share some of my success secrets. So I decided to go for it," he added.

"I started working part time in Rocky Hill and I got my personal trainer certification in June 2006. I guess you could say that I gave up retail to become a business owner. It was the right decision."

Ms. Phillips' experience with physical fitness has spanned a lifetime. She currently divides her time between both studios.

"I've been involved with fitness my entire life. My mother was a physical education teacher and I've been competing in sports since I was 10. I competed in gymnastics, body building and volleyball and I raced mountain bikes," she said.

"Fitness should be an extension of everyone's life.

And it's for all ages. Tony started when he was in his late 30s.

"It doesn't matter if you're in your 40s, 50s or 60s. I think he has one client that's 76 years old. Some people come in because they're facing age issues ... and that's OK."

The Body Firm in Rocky Hill has earned awards from the Hartford Advocate readers' poll for number one nutrition program and cardiovascular classes. As managing member, Ms. Phillips was among the Hartford Business Journal's "40 Under 40 Leader's Award" winners.

Once they had decided to expand, the two of them started exploring possible sites.

"It was a question of demographics," said Mr. Pullman. "We found this locale and it was perfect for us."

Programs offered include one-on-one personal training, semi-private classes and weight training.

"People can choose what they want, sort of like from a menu," Ms. Phillips said.

"That way you only pay for what you use. No matter what a person's previous training experience or current fitness level, the best way to ensure that they train in the safest, most-effective manner is for them to train with the guidance of a personal trainer."

At Fit Behavior, clients are given a free consultation before beginning.

"By looking at their current level of fitness, medical history and fitness goals, we can design a program that's right for them. We custom tailor every program," she said.

"We take into consideration things like their lifestyle, personal situations, time constraints, etc. As things change in their lives, we can adjust or adapt the program. It's important for people to change their mindset when it comes to fitness."



Tony Pullman, co-owner of Fit Behavior, changed his life and physique after enrolling in Body Firm in 2002.

Kendra Zizzamia happened to be walking by when they were setting up the studio in Avon and she has become a firm believer in Fit Behavior.

"I've done a lot of group gyms, but I was never doing it right," she said. "I like talking to Tony. He focuses on the proper technique and he's really helped me. They're very accommodating to my schedule."

"They're also very encouraging and even if they're working you hard, they make the task enjoyable," Ms. Zizzamia added.

"You really leave with a sense that you've done a good job. And I've already lost weight, which is great."

Ms. Phillips has recently become a fitness consultant on the Mary Jones radio show WDRG-AM 1360 on Tuesdays at 2:20 p.m. **AL**

Fit Behavior is located at 51 East Main Street. Call 674-9859. It can also be found at 2139 Silas Deane Highway in Rocky Hill. Call 529-9867.

