

## **Congratulations to Margaret Harwood, September's Fitness Member of the Month!**

Margaret has a plan for her health and fitness. You will soon see below that she is an excellent example of focus and methodical pursuit! Since she has retired, she has committed to living a life of good food choices and regular exercise. As Margaret puts it: "After working at BP for 37 years, I now have a new job.... working-out for up to 3 hours 5 times a week. "

In the fitness center, Margaret likes lots of cardio exercise and favors the treadmill for that. She also works on building her strength and muscle tone with resistance training. She follows a program split into 2 separate workouts, performed on separate days. Upper body and core is trained on day 1, lower body and core on day 2. This combination of strength along with cardio has been a good mix for her. As Margaret puts it-- "The longer I work out in the facility the harder the exercises get....so just to do them correctly to get maximum benefit has been increasingly challenging....especially lower body exercises....my weakest area."

As for her favorite pieces of equipment and exercise, she claims: "My "favorite" piece of equipment is the 26lb kettlebell. The last time it was incorporated into my workout regimen...I thought I was having a heart attack!! My second favorite piece of equipment is the pair of 15lb dumbbells...which I do the see saw shoulder press with ...only 8 reps. The exercises I did with this equipment have done the most to increase strength in my legs and arms. However, I have recently been introduced to an even greater challenge—so I need to get back to you on that...."

The fitness she has gained allows her to enjoy the "simple everyday things that I can do -- getting out of a chair with ease, buying 7 water packs of 24 bottles and loading and unloading them from my car myself."

The lifestyle changes Margaret has made go beyond regular exercise. Although she doesn't mention a number, she has steadily been losing weight over the last 2 years. Some of her dietary changes include --eating protein at every meal, rarely eating fried foods and incorporating more fish and green vegetables into her week.

Her biggest nutrition challenge has been "reducing my Dr. Pepper intake gradually....I was drinking 4 per day...I am now down to 1."

Margaret initially joined the BP Fitness Center at Helios to lose weight and because she had been prescribed a statin drug. In addition to losing weight, she states "My blood pressure is down into the normal range. My cholesterol is now in the proper range...so the doctor is taking me off the statin medication. I had knee surgery in 2014 and I am progressively gaining strength in muscles surrounding the knee. " She also credits her 30 minute stretching program she began for knee rehab that has kept her knee pain free.

Everyone needs inspiration and support, and Margaret credits "my former co-workers and friends, Joan Harris and Reyna Cabrera. They have both made a commitment to healthy lifestyle. They accompanied me on various exercise endeavors and shared recipes. Truly they have led by example."

As for the future, Margaret plans on continuing her positive behaviors and continuing to lose weight and ultimately walk a 5K in less than 1 hour. Travelling with ease and comfort is also something she looks forward to. She adds: "I thought I had realized all of BP's benefits, but not until 2010 did I recognize how great it is to have an in house exercise facility. Hopefully, because of the fitness center, I will fully enjoy many years of retirement."

Thanks Margaret for being a great example of fitness and healthy lifestyle changes. Congratulations on being the BP Fitness Center Member of the Month!