

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sunday, Dec. 1

•Al-Anon closed meeting, 7 p.m. Centreville United Methodist Church, 305 E. Main St.

Monday, Dec. 2

•Alcoholics Anonymous meeting, 7:00 p.m., Congregational Church, 360 S. Washington, Constantine.

Tuesday, Dec. 3

•Food Addicts in Recovery Anonymous (FA), 8:30 a.m., Trinity Episcopal Church, 321 N. Main St., Three Rivers.
 •Three Rivers Food Site open, 9 a.m. — noon, 18 Railroad Drive.
 •Three Rivers Community Kitchen, 4-5:30 p.m., Trinity Episcopal Church, 321 N. Main St., Three Rivers.
 •St. Joseph County Commission, 5 p.m., third floor of the county courthouse in Centreville.
 •Alzheimer's Association support group, 6 p.m., St. Joseph County Commission on Aging, 103 S. Douglas Avenue, Three Rivers.
 •Three Rivers City Commission, 6 p.m., city hall, 333 W. Michigan Ave.
 •Alcoholics Anonymous meeting, 7 p.m., George Washington Carver Center, 436 Jefferson St., Three Rivers.
 •Alcoholics Anonymous meeting, 8 p.m., St. Clare's Catholic Church, 23126 M-89, Centreville.

Wednesday, Dec. 4

•Three Rivers Cemetery Board, 6 p.m., cemetery office.
 •Fabius Park Fire Board, 6 p.m., fire station, Broadway Road.

Thursday, Dec. 5

•Three Rivers Food Site open, 9 a.m. — noon, 18 Railroad Drive.
 •Alcoholics Anonymous meeting, 10:30 a.m., George Washington Carver Center, 436 Jefferson St., Three Rivers.
 •Three Rivers Community Kitchen, 4-5:30 p.m., Trinity Episcopal Church, 321 N. Main St., Three Rivers.
 •Mendon's 4:4 Food and More community kitchen, 4:30-6 p.m., Mendon United Methodist Church, 320 W. Main St.
 •Alcoholics Anonymous meeting, 8 p.m., St. Clare's Catholic Church, 23126 M-89, Centreville.

EMPOWERED

Continued from page 1

How do they find time for fitness? What type of support do they receive from friends and family? Do they ever feel guilty leaving family to adhere to rigorous training schedules? What is the optimal diet for a woman getting and staying fit? What injuries are women prone to and how do they prevent them? What are the benefits of strength training?

My series explores these and many other relevant questions. I also offer a first-hand account of my experiences with remarkable fitness-minded women in group classes, working out in the gym, and training for triathlons.

In addition, the series looks at two popular facilities where women can attend group fitness classes and workout on their own within a safe and supportive environment: HealthTrac, which features a full range of exercise equipment, lap pool, and personal training; and the Pit Fitness Ranch, which boasts a CrossFit gym and multiple acres for a variety of challenging outdoor activities.

What are Les Mills classes at HealthTrac? What does WOD and Leave No Doubt mean at CrossFit? What does it take to run an Ironman triathlon? You'll meet women who can tell you.

The women featured in upcoming articles are at different stages, ages and situations in life. Some are accomplished athletes, others are full-time mothers striving towards fitness goals one step at a time, and some are both. There are those just starting on the road to fitness—full of hope and determination—as well as those who are resolved to get back in the game stronger than ever after a serious illness or injury.

You will hear of their challenges and victories on the road to health

and fitness—and, ultimately, they share something deeper: What it means to become a strong person in mind, body and spirit. It is their wisdom acquired in the gym, on the trail, in the pool or crossing the finish line—whatever the goal might be—that makes their stories compelling and worth cheering them on.

Upcoming profiles of courage and determination on the road to health and fitness include—

- Casey Schnepf, a wife and mother raising four children, who trained through the dark days of winter to complete her first marathon race last May in a joyous and heartfelt finish.

- Bethany Ventrone, a 35-year-old woman with spina bifida, who attends CrossFit for regular and challenging workouts.

- Lydia Sherwood, a mother of three children, who began attending fitness classes at HealthTrac and recently ran her first 5K race—five months pregnant with her fourth child.

- Lynn Steil, who tragically lost both her sons, first Michael and then Kirby, each in the prime of life. For her, attending group fitness classes at HealthTrac is an essential part of her goal to heal.

Every woman has her personal reasons for making fitness a priority, including to relieve stress, lose weight, gain confidence, become stronger or achieve athletic goals.

Here are other worthy objectives—

- “I don't run marathons. I don't ride bikes. I'm not in it for any competitions,” says Natalie Ford, a 30-year-old mother of two children. “I'm in it for my family. HealthTrac to me means being a better, healthier mother for my family.”

- Thirty-nine-year-old teacher Nicolette Cole is successfully

battling ovarian cancer in part by attending CrossFit where she keeps getting stronger mentally and physically. “I'm not that scared little girl anymore,” she says.

“I enjoy seeing my friends and helping people get and stay fit—and have fun along the way,” says Kelly Judsen, who devotes a big chunk of her time to training and staying current as a Les Mills body combat instructor at HealthTrac where she also leads boot camp, pilates, balance bar and rip-and-ride classes. Is she on the go almost constantly? In a word—yes. She runs a janitorial supply company with her husband, is the mother of two children and commits to volunteer work as well.

Mary Anne Blood, owner of the local retail store Everything Educational, was diagnosed with fibromyalgia at age 57. Now in her 60s, she attends CrossFit in part because the workouts are vital to controlling the disease. There is another important reason: “What I love is that there is an atmosphere of encouragement and inclusion. It is more about passion than ability.”

For Kim McElroy, a busy mother and massage therapist, attending group fitness classes at HealthTrac affords an opportunity to workout with likeminded people: “They are busy enjoying life, taking care of their bodies and minds and don't have time or interest in negativity. I choose to be positive and energetic and live everyday to its fullest.”

It doesn't get much more demanding than running your own restaurant. After all, who has time for competing in marathons and half-Ironman triathlons—and training for them, too? Jodie Walker, owner of the popular Jaywalker restaurant in Mottville, says she makes the time. “It clears

my mind, helps me solve problems, I feel better—everything.”

To provide additional insight and depth into the particular challenges and needs of women on their journey to health and fitness, the views and expertise of several professionals—themselves Women on the Go—are also featured. These include—

- Mariam Konate, associate professor of gender and women's studies at Western Michigan University, provides a global perspective on women, fitness and empowerment.

- Kerry McClain, personal trainer at HealthTrac, discusses the many benefits of strength training for women.

- Amanda Lovell, Three Rivers Health registered dietitian, offers advice on the nutritional needs of active women.

- Maire Howell, doctor of podiatry and wound care at Three Rivers Health, explains the types of injuries specific to women and how to prevent them.

- Melissa Heinrich, doctor of psychology, addresses the emotional challenges women may face embarking on a fitness program or racing competitively.

For these and other Women on the Go, the drive to be fit is part of a larger story. As professor Mariam Konate explains in an upcoming Question and Answer feature, women around the world are expressing themselves through all channels, on all issues, and at all levels—from politics, social justice and the law to economics, business and the environment.

In the 2018 general elections, a record-breaking 103 women were elected or re-elected into the United States House of Representatives. In other countries, such as Iran and Sudan, there's much more at stake—women are braving persecution,

often severe and brutal, to stand up for their rights and voice their views. They refuse to be silenced.

All of this has led many observers to call this new chapter in human affairs the Age of the Woman, and invoke the term empowerment to describe how women are expressing themselves and making their contributions felt.

Becoming and staying fit is one manifestation of this growing sense of empowerment—and a highly important one. It is no coincidence that as women become stronger in mind, body and spirit, they are also changing the world in a profound way.

In this time of rapid communications through social media, who's to say the women profiled in this series won't inspire their counterparts in distant lands?

Hadley Miller, a top athlete at Three Rivers High School, earned a basketball scholarship to attend Grand Valley State University in part through her commitment to fitness along with many hours of basketball drills. “She has the self-confidence to excel in whatever she chooses to do in life,” says her mother, Kerry McClain. “She's empowered.”

And so the next generation of Women on the Go takes shape.

Perhaps the motto of top athlete and third-grade teacher, Bridget Griffioen, best expresses this positive, blossoming spirit, and the bright future it is shaping: “The best is yet to come.”

Next up: Meet the Fabulous Four—a group of top women athletes busy with careers, volunteer work and family responsibilities who support and motivate each other through thick and thin to achieve their fitness and athletic goals.

Grand Rapids-area pastor denies Holy Communion to gay judge

From The Associated Press (AP)

EAST GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (AP) — The Roman Catholic Church in western Michigan is defending a priest's decision to deny Holy Communion to a popular judge in a same-sex marriage.

Judge Sara Smolenski said the Rev. Scott Nolan privately informed her on Nov. 23, about a week after last receiving Communion from him at St. Stephen Church in East Grand Rapids. It has been her lifelong parish — she gave \$7,000 for a building project — although she said she hadn't regularly attended the church for months.

“Why now and why me?” said Smolenski, a suburban Grand Rapids judge who married her

longtime partner, Linda Burpee, in 2016.

“How come all these other priests everywhere — good and decent, wonderful priests — they know me and they give me Communion?” Smolenski said.

Nolan said the teachings of the Catholic faith aren't flexible. The church recognizes marriage as between a man and a woman.

“It might look like it is discriminatory or particular or specific or targeted, but I disagree,” Nolan told WOOD-TV, adding that Bishop David Walkowiak supports him.

The Grand Rapids Diocese released a statement, expressing no reservations with the priest.

“No community of faith can sustain the public contradiction of its beliefs by its own members,” the diocese said.

Vice President Mike Pence plans 3 stops in Michigan

From The Associated Press (AP)

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (AP) — Vice President Mike Pence has scheduled three stops next week in western and southwestern Michigan.

Pence plans to visit Grand Rapids, Portage and Holland on Wednesday, with expected meetings with religious and community leaders. The former Indiana governor also will attend a campaign rally with Sarah Sanders, President Donald Trump's former spokeswoman.

Michigan is one of four swing states — Pennsylvania, Wisconsin and Florida are the others — that could determine the outcome of the 2020 election because their electorates are so evenly divided. Trump's success in breaking the Democrats' so-called blue wall in Michigan, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania was key to him winning the White House.



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CENTER PARK UNITED METHODIST CHURCH: 18662 Moorepark Rd. 279-9109. Pastor Derl Keefer. Modern Service 9:00 a.m., Sunday School 9:30 a.m., Traditional Service 10:30 a.m.

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH: 215 N. Main St., Three Rivers. Rev. Heather McDougall - Service at 10:30 a.m.

FLOWERFIELD MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH: 15525

Flowerfield Rd. Sunday School 10:00 a.m., Worship 11:00 a.m. Pastor Josh Mullins. www.flowerfieldmbc.com.

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH: 645 S. Douglas. 273-8953. Father R. Mathias. Masses: Monday & Wednesday 8 a.m., Tuesday & Friday 6:30 p.m., Saturday vigil 4 p.m., and Sunday 11 a.m.

LIGHTHOUSE BAPTIST CHURCH - 436 2nd Ave. Three Rivers, MI 49093. 269-251-0291. Pastor James E. Ingram. Please join for Sunday Services at 10:30 a.m.

NEW HOPE ASSEMBLY: 56652

Buckhorn Road. 278-8135. www.newhopetr.com. Pastor Steve Miller. Sunday worship service 10:00 a.m. Wednesday Family Night 6:30 p.m.

NINTH STREET UNITED METHODIST CHURCH: 700 Ninth St. 273-2065. Worship 10:00 a.m. Bible study 11:15. Rev. Ed Ross.

RIVERSIDE CHURCH: 207 E. Michigan Ave. 273-8723. www.riverside-church.com. Pastor Paul Booko. Sunday services 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH: 56050 Buckhorn Rd., Three Rivers. 269-278-7245.

Sunday School 9:00 am, worship services 10:30 a.m. ALL are welcome. Find us on Facebook.

ST. PETER'S LUTHERAN CHURCH: 1200 Arnold St. at US 131 (church on the hill). 278-8415. Home of "Jude" the comfort dog. Traditional service 9:15 a.m. Pastor Robert O. Bartz. Bible study 10:30 a.m. www.stpeterstr.org

ST. CLARE CATHOLIC CHURCH: 23126 M-86 Centreville, MI. 269-273-8953. Sunday Mass 9:20 a.m., Wednesday 9:00 a.m.

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