

HOW TO LOSE WEIGHT

and gain it back again *Your stories of exercise schemes that almost worked*

The stationary treadmill

My husband decided to join a gym. He would work out faithfully since he was paying money to do it. He was doing well until gas prices went sky high. To solve that problem I told my husband I would get him a treadmill for Father's Day. Then we could all use it.

We assembled the treadmill and put it in one of our out-buildings. I would sneak out and get on the treadmill and walk. I could not even last five minutes. It concerned me, so I began telling my daughter or husband when I went, so if I didn't return in a reasonable time they could call 911.

Much to my sorrow I never could do any better. Six minutes had become my goal. How sad is that?

After a few more attempts, my husband entered the building and I was walking my heart out (probably literally). He asked me what I was doing. I looked at him confused and said, "Walking on the treadmill."

He said, "Don't you think you need to turn it on?"

How dumb could I be?

Cathy Crumpler, Tri County EMC, Mount Olive

The Pizza Path Diet

When my husband and I were newlyweds, we decided it was time to shape up and get fit. We were going to walk an hour a day, five days a week. At first, it worked. We walked so much we got bored with our old route and decided to detour on the sidewalk in front of a little strip mall. The smells coming from the mom-and-pop pizza parlor made our mouths water. One day on the way home, we stopped in and got a large, everything-but-the-kitchen-sink pizza and took it home. Uh oh!

We were hooked. Twice a week, we would stop off from our "healthy walk" and bring home the goodies. Sometimes, it was two-for-one-day and we'd end up with two pizzas. By our first anniversary, we were both 15 pounds heavier. Oops!

The Pizza Path Diet did not work. We picked a new route through the woods, and by our second anniversary we were right back where we'd started on the rocky road to lower weight and better health.

Sandra Lassen, West Jefferson, Blue Ridge Electric



Thanks to everyone who sent us stories about your attempts at exercise. You can see more on our Web site. Next month we'll publish some of your favorite

summer recipes. (Deadline was May 15.) For more themes and the rules of our "Nothing Could Be Finer" series, see page 17.

How men exercise

Long ago in a land far away, my wife decided she wanted to exercise, so I got her a bicycle. A little later she decided that because we both worked, it would be better to have one of those indoor stationary bikes. She thought I should get some exercise, too, and could use it.

So I got one of those El Cheapos. As it turned out the seat was too little for both of us due to our fat—well, let's just say our back sides. We rode it some, not a lot, and we relegated it to behind a chair in the living room.

Well, my wife saw one of those super-duper triple loopers that had a big seat. Also the hands and arms went back and forth. So we gave away the old one and got the new one.

Some time later I had a heart attack. Thank goodness I just had to have a stint, but the good doctor said I need to walk so, you guessed it, we had to have a treadmill.

Have you ever walked on a treadmill? It's the most boring thing I have ever done in my life, and believe me I have done some boring things.

Now the bike is under the shed with two flat rotten tires. The stationary bike is now behind the chair in the living room, and the treadmill is in the attic.

I also remember the ropes and pulleys you attached to the door handle and laid down and attached to your arms and legs and pulled back and forth. The last time I saw it, it had been cut to make a dog leash. The dogs loved to walk and pulled me all over the place. Funny thing: It's gone. Can't find it, so can't walk the dogs anymore.

I remember El Cheapo rowing machine. It barely made it out of the box. Funny thing: Parts went missing, so we dumped that.

Now for some good exercise. Well, no exercise is good, but some sacrifice has to be made, like hooking up the boat trailer to the truck. Getting all your fishing tackle loaded up, then unloading the boat. (Unless you can get your fishing buddy to do it.) Driving the truck to the parking lot and having to walk back. I always tell them I've got to start the boat's motor and let them park the truck. The motor is hand start, so I have to pull the starter cord (exercise). It's a hand tiller, so have to steer (more exercise). I don't have an electric trolling motor, so I just drift (too much exercise to paddle). Big exercise is casting and winding in our reel (now that's exercise). When we are ready to leave, it all gets done in reverse.

Charles Squires, Washington, Tideland EMC



A teacher's workout

This picture shows some exercise equipment that I bought a long time ago. It might have worked, but I didn't use it like I should. It got very boring very fast. My daughter, Michelle Cox, age 2 in this picture, loved to pretend she was doing her exercises.

Michelle Cox Wall is now 35 years old, married, a school teacher, and lives in New Bern.

Linda Cox, Deep Gap, Blue Ridge Electric

Woman's best friend

A friend and I decided to exercise every day. At the tennis court, she served the ball. I raised my racquet to lob it back, but the ball went straight through my 40-year-old racquet, tearing the strings apart. We dissolved on the court in hysterical laughter.

We decided to exercise the next day by bicycling instead. We rode only a block when a lady opened her door, and her dog rushed out and bit my friend's ankle. The lady kept saying, "My dog doesn't bite!" And I kept saying, "But she's bleeding!"

After giving treatment and a tetanus shot, the doctor telephoned the lady to keep her dog quarantined for 10 days to be sure he didn't have rabies. After 10 days, we called to see how her dog was. The lady said, "Aren't you nice to ask how my dog is?"

My friend said, "How I am depends on how your dog is!"

After all that, we decided it might be safer just to stay at home and read a book.

Judy Blitch Gartside, Broxton, Ga., Haywood EMC

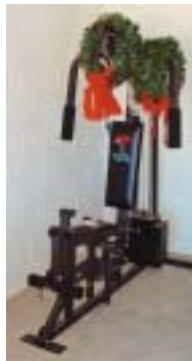
The Weider Model #8620

About five years ago, Sears was running a closeout sale on exercise equipment. My husband decided he had to have the Weider Model #8620 Home Gym. He saw this as his golden opportunity to transform himself from a "scrawny" into a "brawny," and at a bargain basement price. I, on the other hand, was not convinced. His pointing out that I was always talking about losing weight and toning my thighs and posterior, needless to say, didn't win him any points.

Well, Sears delivered our new purchase the next day. After studying the manual for several days, my husband climbed aboard his Home Gym and energetically commenced his workout. He could hardly get out of bed the next morning, but bravely climbed back on this torture device and worked out a grand total of two more times.

Since then the Weider Model #8620 has sat forlornly in the garage adorned with an assortment of Christmas wreaths 48 weeks out of each year. The only exercise it promotes is once a year in the spring when my husband and I drag it out onto the driveway for the annual community garage sale, and, at the end of the day, drag it back in.

Claudia Thomas, Apopka, Fla., Blue Ridge EMC



Aunt Mabel's Shaking Table

In the mid-1960s, the exercise craze put our small mill village in a frenzy unknown to these parts of the South. We lived on the outskirts of town beside my Aunt Mabel. She somehow acquired a bonafide contraption that was guaranteed to shake the fat right off your bones. It looked like a low, skinny doctor's examining table (the table was skinny, not the doctor) with the legs of a flat lawn chair. Amazingly, it was divided into sections so the "patient" could shake only the part of the body that needed the most reducing.

Well, let me tell you, word got around that Aunt Mabel had the answer to many women's prayers, and they waited in line for hours (yours truly included) for their turn on The Shaking Table. Aunt Mabel even charged by the half hour, and certainly no one begrudged her one penny of her profits.

I'm sure she never made enough to pay for her incredible find, and I don't think one inch fell off of any of us bottom-heavy ladies. But a good time was had by all, and I have an "olden days" story to tell my grandchildren. 📌

Vicky Stroup, Lincolnton, Rutherford EMC

send us your best **EARN \$50**

Here are the themes in our "Nothing Could Be Finer" series. Send us your stories and pictures about these themes. If yours is chosen for publication, we'll send you \$50. You don't have to be the best writer. Just tell it from your heart.

August 2009

Advice From Parents

As a parent, how would you like to see your local schools operated? *Deadline: June 15*

September 2009

Stupid Moments in Sports

Send stories and photos of sports moments that did not make you proud. *Deadline: July 15*

October 2009

My Favorite Photo

Send a photo of a North Carolina person or scene. *Deadline: August 15*

Rules

1. Approximately 200 words or less.
2. One entry per household per month.
3. Photos are welcome. Digital photos should be a minimum of 1200 by 800 pixels.
4. E-mailed or typed, if possible. Otherwise, make it legible.
5. Include your name, electric co-op, mailing address and phone number.
6. If you want your entry returned, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. (We will not return others.)
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