

# the SUNDAY STAR

July 11, 2004

SERVING THE COMMUNITIES OF DUARTE AND MONROVIA

Vol. 4, No.

## Creative routines at Arcadia fitness studio motivate exercisers to live healthy lives

By Hillary Wolfe  
CORRESPONDENT

**ARCADIA** — Bins of surgical tubing, nylon straps and flexible hoops are stacked neatly next to nutrition books and a box of recipe cards.

On the walls are testimonials, articles and photos of satisfied customers. And on the trampoline in the middle of the floor is Michelle Silence, instructor and co-owner, along with husband Jim, of Move It, a fitness studio in Arcadia.

"There's some things you won't see in other clubs," said Silence, pointing to foam rollers. "Some really strange equipment, but it's all here to motivate people and make it fun for them."

Silence opened her first studio in Monrovia about 20 years ago, and that's where she met her husband. Time constraints from the birth of their children and her participation in a master's degree program caused her to close the studio, but Silence continued to teach at churches and fellowship halls, her husband said. Then, two years ago the couple reopened in Arcadia.

Jill Brantley, 58, has been coming to Silence through all the changes, about 20 years.

"She's hands down the best," said Brantley, who lives in Azusa and had tried several other exercise programs before discovering Silence. Brantley's biggest complaint about other studios was boredom with repetitive routines, but she

Please see FITNESS / 2



Photo by HOYEN TSANG

**MICHELLE SILENCE**, owner of Move It fitness studio in Arcadia, teaches a low-impact class on July 7.

## Fitness

Continued from Page 1

said Silence's fun approach has never let her down.

"It's who she is. She has an incredible creative gift to make up routines on the spot. It's an incredibly supportive class," Brantley said.

"Exercise by itself for a lot of people can be boring," admitted Silence. "It's so much more than that."

About 10 years ago, Silence and her husband developed Kid-Fit, a six-week program they bring to preschools to teach young children about the importance of exercise and good nutrition. They visit about 18 to 20 schools in Los Angeles County. Silence's husband attributed child obesity to growing up in a culture that discourages going outside to play or eating healthy meals.

"Nowadays, only grandpa knows you're supposed to exercise and eat vegetables," he said.

That's why Silence tries to encourage overall wellness, including a lot of community building. "Every month we try to put up information including health questions we get in class," she said, pointing toward the bulletin boards. "We make a food sample and give a recipe."

To really educate her adult students, Silence tries to cover all aspects of fitness, including eating right, stress relief, relaxation, self-defense, life coaching, even figuring out what kind of foot a person has so they can buy the right shoe.

Mostly, she keeps it personal so people feel noticed and important.

Silence said she has two types of clients. First is the person who has never exercised a day in their life. She said her approach creates a safe environment for them, so they feel comfortable. Second is the person who has exercised on and off, but never stuck with it. That person is looking for variety and challenge, she said.

Lucy Young from Monrovia has been with Silence for 18 years. "She's incredibly innovative," said Young, 61. "We're really a family here. We've been through highs and lows and in-betweens. What she does is challenge us. You never know from day to day."

Kay O'Meara, 56, of San Gabriel said, "It's so accepting and so inclusive. It's like coming to a family gathering."

"We're all different shapes



Photo by HOYEN TSANG

**SILENCE'S** low-impact exercise class is just one component of Move It. Her fitness studio also covers good eating habits, stress relief, relaxation, self-defense and life-coaching.

and sizes, but we're a strong group of women," said Kathy Gazarian, who started coming consistently in 1995, but who came on and off before that since 1988. "Two and a half years ago, I had coronary bypass surgery," she said, crediting her speedy recovery to her overall fitness level, and to the "phone calls, visits and support of the ladies."

That inclusive feeling is what drew Kathy Kiralla, 51, from Alhambra, to the studio. She has been coming since January, after being diagnosed with diabetes.

"I like it a lot because it's always different," she said. "I was really impressed with the women. They were very welcoming. It makes you feel really comfortable. You don't have to feel self-conscious."

Silence said she tries to accommodate diabetic clients by keeping supplies for them in the changing room.

"Exercise is the treatment for diabetes," said Georgia Nichols, 58, from Arcadia. "I'm a person who never exercised all my life. I can come every day and it's really been beneficial."

Nichols said her regime has brought down her cholesterol, her triglycerides and her blood pressure. "I enjoy it and I enjoy doing it," she said.

Another diabetic sufferer, Mary Lou Carrillo, 67 from Arcadia, came to the studio two years ago when her doctor said, go exercise NOW. "I lost 28 pounds and quite a few inches," she said. "I can see my legs, tie my shoes, feel my shoulders. That's a blessing."

Although, almost all the studio's clients are women, men also may enroll in the classes.

Silence also teaches a Larger-size class that is specifically a weight management program.

The cost is \$60 per month for three hour classes a week. Single classes are \$10, and for \$90 a month, people can attend unlimited classes.

Move It is at 40 E. Live Oak Ave. in Arcadia. For class times or more information, call (626) 359-8535.

Hillary Wolfe can be reached by e-mail at [hillwolfe@hotmail.com](mailto:hillwolfe@hotmail.com).