

# Alton fitness center recognized as Business of the Month

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By FRED POLLARD

ALTON - Progressive Fitness and Health is celebrating its one-year anniversary as the River Bend Growth Association Business of the Month for September.

"The RBGA really helped to get my business going," owner and certified personal trainer Susie Sweetman said. "We were able to have a Business after Hours here within a month, and that was a great event for me and my business."

Sweetman opened Progressive Fitness Aug. 23 of last year after many years of working as a personal trainer for other organizations, including Nautilus Fitness Center.

"(Within) six months, I was getting calls every day for training," Sweetman said. "In a bad economy, I have had a quite a successful year. I am very fortunate."

One factor Sweetman said helps her stand out among other fitness centers is the private setting.

"Some people are intimidated by large gyms, so ours fits their needs better," she said.

Beginning in May, Sweetman began offering suspension training classes, a regimen that activates core muscles, rehabilitates musculoskeletal systems and prevents injury.

"Suspension training is really growing in popularity and is a great workout," Sweetman said.

Progressive Fitness also offers the Power-Plate workout, done on a vibrating platform and boosting the involuntary reflex muscle contractions for a more intense workout. The Power-Plate system involves 15-minute exercises two to three times a week, involving strength training, stretching, massage and relaxation to promote muscle strength and improve flexibility.

"Having the Power-Plate is a wonderful aid in helping all ages reach their optimal fitness level," Sweetman said. "This is a way you can build yourself up to progress to more activity."

Sweetman, who also is a "life coach" with the Take Shape for Life nutrition system, has devoted much of her life to a healthy lifestyle. For the energetic trainer's family, fitness has become a way to grow closer.

"My daughter, Bailey, is a certified trainer (here)," she said. "My son Jordan will be finished serving as a Marine in three years, and I would love to have more private gyms and let him manage them."

Sweetman also teaches boot camp for Saint Anthony's Health Center's employee fitness program.

"What I really love about that class is that it is a real team builder," she said. "Everyone gets involved, from nurses to custodians. You have the president of Saint Anthony's working out right there with the security guards. It is a great class to see (people) interact together."

Progressive Fitness and Health, 2600 State St., Suite W, in what is commonly referred to as "the Yungk building," offers suspension training classes from 6:30 to 7:15 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays, 6 to 6:45 a.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays, and 8:30 to 9:15 a.m. on Saturdays.

The center's popular boot camp classes are held at 6 a.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. People who would like to see the class in action can visit [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) and search "progressive fitness health alton."

Beginning in October, Progressive also will offer Pilates, kickboxing, Zumba and yoga classes.

"My certified personal trainers and I offer a variety of workouts to meet every need, and we do so without contracts and with the lowest prices in town," Sweetman said.

From Oct. 21 to 23, Sweetman will lead a Fall Into Fitness and Fun weekend in Alton, including nutritional seminars, sightseeing and personal guidance.

For information, call (618) 920-6816.

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