

## **Word of Mouth: Start Right Fitness**

By Kelly Bowers, Massage Therapist (January-March 2005 Newsletter)

*This column allows me to highlight other small businesses that I think you might be interested in. These are businesses, like mine, that rely on word-of-mouth referrals. They may not be massage-related but I think they are businesses you just might want to know about.*

I enjoy staying active, though no one would mistake me for any kind of serious competitor. In the last 2 years, I've been working my way into running. Since November, I've been part of a program that has made the so much easier and so much more fun.

Start Right Fitness is a running program for women (sorry guys!). The coach, Carla Gregor, is a long-time runner and truly enjoys the sport. She has multiple programs for women from training to a 5K to help with training for a marathon (I'm in the 5K program).

She is practical, funny, down to earth, incredibly helpful, imaginative, and encouraging. In the past, I have worked with personal trainers on occasion and I have found it sometimes discouraging. Trainers are often super-fit young-ish people who have, generally, always been in good shape. When they say "I know how you feel," I find myself thinking "no, dear, I don't think you do." No disrespect intended, but they just aren't like me.

Coach Carla looks like a *real* woman. She's not 20-something, she's not uber-thin, and she can (gleefully) share every dumb thing she's ever done as a runner. But she still runs and that's just danged inspiring.

Her programs are affordable (the 19-week winter 5K program was \$125 and included a fleece jacket) and varied. We work in groups, always limited in size so she can pay attention to everyone. You keep logs for her, she customizes your running program for you, there are always information sessions at your weekly meetings, and you run. Fast or slow doesn't matter as long as you're moving. She gives you advice on form, stretching, and anything else she thinks you might need.

She even lent me a flotation belt so I could do my running in the water on my recent sailing vacation in Belize. Now *that's* a dedicated coach (and the belt worked really well).

And she's absolutely fanatical about making sure you don't get injured. So there is none of that "run through the pain" business.

I'll be running a 5K in March and I'm quite confident about my ability to finish it. I'll probably sign up for her spring track work group. That's the sort of thing I *never* thought I would do — until I met Coach Carla. It really does make a difference to have a coach and to work with a good group.

You can read more about her program at [www.startrightfitness.com](http://www.startrightfitness.com). She'll be starting a whole new slate of running programs in April. I can happily recommend this program to any woman who wants to run better or just run at all.