



BUSINESS THAT WORKS

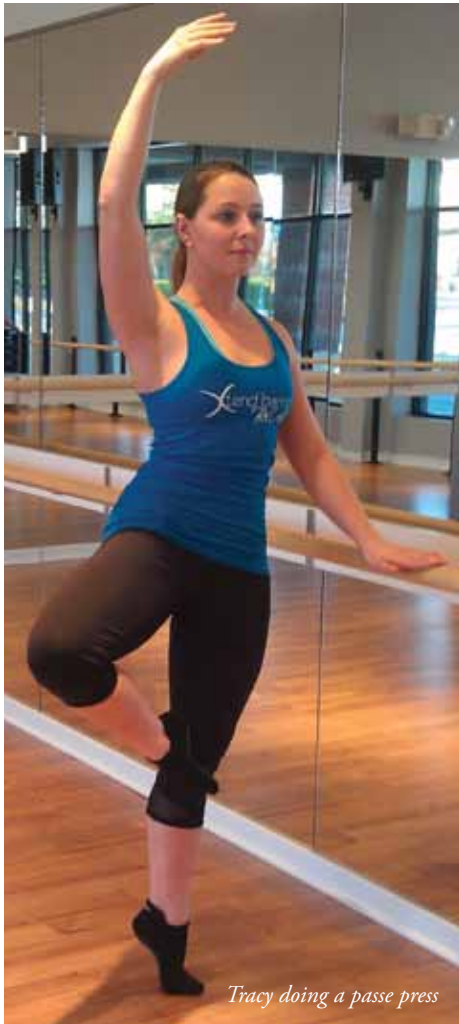
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DEB DEVOE

Raising the Barre
on Fitness in Harford



Tracy doing a passe press



Tanya and Tracy doing yoga strap abs



Tanya and Tracy working thighs and seat during fold over series at the barre

Need to lose a few pre-holiday pounds, but you're just not seeing results with your usual fitness routine? Embrace your inner ballerina and let Xtend Barre sculpt your body for the new year!

Deb Devoe, was more than ready to start the second chapter in her life. Married to her childhood sweetheart, husband Shawn was busy caring for their sons in addition to his painting contracting business, while Deb was on the road almost constantly working in the Fortune 100 world as a sales and marketing executive. Deb's job required her to move every three or four years, and when her family landed in Harford County, she promised her oldest son Ryan, who was starting high school at John Carroll, that they would stay put. Unfortunately, Deb was transferred a few years later. She kept her promise. For eight years, she basically lived away from her family, visiting on weekends when she could. About a year ago, she had an epiphany... it was time to come home.

"I packed up and came home to Bel Air. I didn't have a business plan fully developed but...I knew I wanted to do something I was passionate about," said Deb.

About a decade before, Deb had been diagnosed with very advanced osteoporosis. She was being treated, but traditional medicine wasn't providing the results Deb and her doctors had hoped for. Her doctors convinced her that she needed to build more lean muscle mass to support her fragile bones.

"I tried yoga, I went to the gym... I hired a personal trainer, and just couldn't stick with any of it, because I didn't like it, and I didn't really see results," explained Deb.

While she was living in Cincinnati, she was introduced to barre classes. At first she had a love-hate relationship with them. She felt great leaving the studio, but the classes were harder than she thought, and she was terrible at it, at first. After about a dozen classes, she actually saw changes in her body. Six months later when she went back to visit her doctor, she was told her numbers were no longer

declining. "I knew three things... when I came home, I wanted to sleep in my own bed every night and, be a part of my family and I wanted to continue to take barre classes," Deb smiled. Unfortunately, there were no barre classes to be found in Harford, or any where near here for that matter.

And so begins stage two of Debs life. Hearing her story, I couldn't help but to feel really happy, and excited for her. She opened Xtend Barre Bel Air in Greenbrier Shopping Center this June. It didn't take long for fitness enthusiasts to seek her out, and once the word got out, Deb saw a wide variety of women showing up for the barre class.

Deb did a lot of research when choosing the perfect workout for her studio. "I found the one, that is the most fun, and the safest. There are some that are a little punishing, or aren't really suitable for all fitness levels. Our classes are appropriate for everyone," said Deb. The class we observed during the photo shoot, had women from the age of about 13 (a mother daughter team) to maybe 65. It was obvious this wasn't a room full of fitness junkies, or ballerinas, but a group of real women trying to improve their health. The one thing they did seem to have in common was the amount of fun they all seemed to be having.

So what exactly is an Xtend Barre workout? The "barre" refers to the ballet barre (that thing that ballerinas are always hanging on to) where you will find yourself strengthening and toning your thighs, seat and hamstrings with pliés, relevé and passe presses. Cool accessories like, light weights, yoga straps the playground ball, and stretch bands add a fun twist to an already intense workout. This high-energy routine is described as "dance and pilates amplified".

The Xtend Barre workout was developed by Andrea Rogers, a dancer and choreographer. After retiring as a ballerina, she expanded into the world of personal fitness. She developed the barre technique in an effort to provide cross training and get better results for her clients. She began to incorporate dance

elements and music into her pilates sessions in order to offer challenges in coordination, rhythm, and cardiovascular fitness. Andrea found greater results by offering Xtend Barre than by maintaining a routine of pilates alone. Most importantly, her clients were gaining energy, enjoying elements of dance, and having fun!

Every 55 minute barre class is different, but they all follow a specific transition from a warm-up to exercises that work all your muscle groups to exhaustion, and then finally the relaxing stretch to end the session. The workout targets all the major muscle groups, and includes cardio. Classes begin with an invigorating warm up to get your heart rate going, and the loud music carries you into the more intense parts of the routine. Like ballet, there is a lot of repetition and by the end you will have become very familiar with your muscle groups. The movements are simple, so they are easy to pick up, even if your version is a somewhat clumsy imitation of Debs' highly trained instructors.

Then, the upper body portion targets the shoulders, biceps, triceps, and upper back muscles. Next, the total body is challenged, with an intense seat and thigh series, with the support of a ballet barre. Xtend Barre then engages the core deeper with an intense abdominal series performed on the floor, that really targets those pesky outer thigh areas. A calming stretch series relaxes the body and mind, concluding the class.

This total body workout serves to strengthen, lengthen, and stretch the body from top to bottom, and from inside out. The end result is a long and lean physique... without added bulk. By mixing different muscle groups into every exercise, Xtend Barre strengthens the body proportionally to avoid overuse of a single muscle group. Unlike traditional weight lifting or even Pilates, Xtend Barre does not focus on isolating one muscle group at a time.

"This is not a dance class, I didn't know a plié from a relevé, when I first started, but I've come to appreciate them and what they can do for my body," said Deb

Just as with Deb's personal experience, I found a lot of testimonials on the web, where women were claiming to have found great results with the barre classes. Not only in sculpting their bodies to defined perfection, but in their overall health as well. The results seem to be real and usually fast, especially in combination with Pilates which is a perfect complement to Xtend Barre. The class is fast paced, yet focused and the clients never seem to get bored. Because you use your own body weight as resistance, the Xtend Barre workout can help to increase bone density and can be more effective in developing lean muscle mass than traditional weight lifting exercises. Creating a stronger core to support a healthy body, a lifted derriere, improved posture, endurance and overall energy, increased flexibility and greater body awareness are just some of the benefits of this exciting class.

"We have one client who comes in four times a week. She had been suffering from knee pain for years, without finding any relief, and now she is virtually pain free," said Deb

If you are at all curious about this new way to exercise, I urge you to stop in to Xtend Barre Bel Air and talk to Deb. She is running an introductory special, offering the first class free, so you have nothing to lose (maybe a few pounds) if you give it a try. If you find that your muscles are complaining after your work out, you can always go next door to Deb's second business, Massage Height, for a relaxing massage. As soon as you walk in the door, soothing aromas, cool colors and relaxing music envelope you. "I punished my body with all the traveling I did, and I found that massage is an important part of overall health and well being," said Deb. So do something nice for yourself this holiday, and visit Deb at Xtend Barre Bel Air & Massage Heights! Or consider doing something nice for someone else, and pick up a few gift certificates for friends & family, they make great stocking stuffers!

Check out Debs' website at www.xtendbarrebelair.com



Tanya is at the barre doing one of the exercises from our ball pulse series



Tanya and Traci during warm up doing arm circles with the ball while in a plié



Tanya and Traci during the lower body portion of class doing the lower and lift that is part of our hip to hip series