

Twelve weeks and over a ton of weight lost

By **DONNA BARRETT**

THE CULTURAL CENTER OF CHARLOTTE COUNTY

What started as a fun little competition — and a way to promote our own Fitness Salon — turned into an amazing event. Seeing the transformations of these individuals is truly inspiring.

Twelve weeks ago, 180 people joined the Biggest Losers Challenge, and took their first step into losing weight, and having a healthier lifestyle. As each person signed up, they evaluated their next step — to win the Challenge.

Workout programs were put into place for individuals and for teams. Healthier options were chosen for meals. For the first time, some people were taking time out for themselves, to give themselves a more enjoyable life.

As the last weigh-ins were completed at 10 a.m. on April 1, it was exciting to see that over one ton of weight was lost — 2,102 pounds to be exact. Even more exciting is that fact that thirteen contestants lost over 30 pounds in just 12 weeks.

Goals for weight loss were different. Desires for a slimmer body were achieved in different ways, and for different reasons.

Sandy Campbell and Jeraldine Adzima were losing weight before the contest, and joined in as a way to continue losing more. Being part of a contest ensured that they would stay on track with their new lifestyle.

Competition was the driving force for Dan Hogate and Duane Needham. Strength, determination, and power of prayer made this competition more than just about the money.

For Jeremy Davis it was about getting back to his high school size. He did this by changing the way he eats, which helped him lost almost 40 pounds.

The Cultural Center's own theater manager, Amanda Segur's motivation is her upcoming production of Amanda: One Night Only. This motivation helped her lose 30 pounds.

Every mom can understand Gretchen Guelcher, Kristin Lloyd, Sheila Ulp and Adriane York's need for "me" time. So much time is devoted to their families and careers; the challenge was the perfect opportunity for some fun with friends. These ladies lost a combined weight 161 pounds!

The changes weren't limited to the contestants, the Fitness Salon realized that there were many people in our community that wanted to work out in the evening, so the hours were extended to 7 p.m. during the week.

The requests for healthier food also gave the Cultural Center a chance to broaden their menu options which resulted in more than 12 different types of salads, which they are now serving.

But, the question on everyone's mind — aside from who won — is when will the next "Biggest Losers Challenge" begin. The date has been set, and "Biggest Losers Challenge 3" will start June 22, just in time for the summer! Even more prizes, weight loss tools and advice will be available than in the past. Registration will start in May, so be sure to continue reading Feeling Fit for more information and visit www.theculturalcenter.com

All contestants are to be commended for their dedication to bettering their life, however they chose to do so. The Cultural Center and the Charlotte County Health Department will continue to be here for all contestants and patrons that desire to lose weight. If you want a healthier lifestyle, please contact us, or any other local fitness center in town. Wanting to change is the first step of many to come —only you can decide which path to take for you.

Results for the winning teams are being calculated and they will be notified during an upcoming celebration. To see the results and meet the winner's of the "Biggest Losers Challenge 2," read the April 12 issue of Feeling Fit.

The Cultural Center of Charlotte County is a non-profit organization that caters to the needs of the community. Please contact the Cultural Center to find out what we can do for you at 941-625-4175.

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