

**Business briefs**Salon opens in Gulf Coast  
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A GUIDE TO THE GREATER FORT MYERS BUSINESS INDUSTRY

# Elite offers total gym experience

"I found it when I was looking for space and putting together my own vision plan. The owner was selling. It worked out perfectly."

— said Sue Foanio

**BY MICHELLE L. START**  
Florida Weekly Correspondent

When the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks occurred, Sue Foanio was teaching martial arts.

But before long, American Airlines had Foanio and other instructors working with pilots and flight attendants in all their hubs, including Miami.

The airline set up mock aisle-ways and seats in hotels near all of their eight major hubs. The martial arts teachers taught flight crew members how to protect themselves and other passengers without using a traditional weapon.

"We taught them how to use the seat belt, their trays and pillows as weapons," said Foanio, who just purchased and reopened Elite Physique in Fort Myers. "We taught them how to do it in 18 inches of aisle-way and how to deflect attacks. We did that for a few years."

Foanio is offering martial arts classes every Wednesday night at the gym. She has already renewed the Forever Fit program for seniors and is planning to offer fitness programs that are geared toward expectant mothers. Additionally, she is hoping to start up a yoga program in September and a massage therapy program in October. Eventually, Foanio wants to partner with organizations like Children's Home Society and the Lee County School District to offer self-defense classes.

"Elite Physique had been here, but the owner was ramping down," she said. "I found it when I was looking for space and putting together my own vision plan. The owner was selling. It worked out perfectly."

Almost immediately customers noticed that the gym felt roomier, said



PHOTO MICHELLE START

Surrounded by friends, Sue Foanio cuts the ribbon for the grand re-opening ceremony.



PHOTO MICHELLE START

Cheryl Lynn Dratler shows yoga moves to Lauren Allegerzza, Connie Foanio and Christie Smith.



PHOTO MICHELLE START

Mark Simons, 34, works out on the elyptical machine.

John Staloczyk, 43, who has been working out there for about four years.

For Mark Simons, 34, who just rejoined the gym, the draw is the environment.

"I like how the environment is friendly and non-confrontational," he said. "It is an easier environment to work out in."

Foanio is hoping to start up a yoga program in September and a massage therapy program in October.

The classes are focused more on martial arts and self-defense. I think it breeds more involvement from the members when you put those kinds of classes together."

The friendly environment was evident during the grand reopening, where customers, officials and employees all mingled together, eating snacks and posing for ribbon cutting photographs.

Every 15 minutes, demonstration classes were held.

At one point, yoga instructor Cheryl Lynn Dratler had Nancy Allegerzza, Lauren Allegerzza, Connie Foanio and Christie Smith all performing yoga exercises that worked the neck and shoulders. Nearby, Enid Lapham balanced on a stability ball, lifting weights.

Foanio said the reopening was to let people know the gym is under new ownership and to get them interested in the various programs being offered. ■

## Bonita Bay magazine wins award

**SPECIAL TO FLORIDA WEEKLY**

IN Good Company, Bonita Bay Group's new lifestyle magazine, has received the Florida Public Relations Association's Golden Image Award of Distinction. The publication, which celebrates life, friends and nature in Southwest Florida and Bonita Bay Group's master-planned communities, earned the award in the four-color magazine category during the association's annual meeting earlier this month.

IN Good Company is published twice annually in partnership with Gulfshore Life, a Southwest Florida lifestyle magazine. The inaugural 88-page issue debuted in February and captured the experience of living in the company's communities through photo essays, resident and club profiles, and articles high-

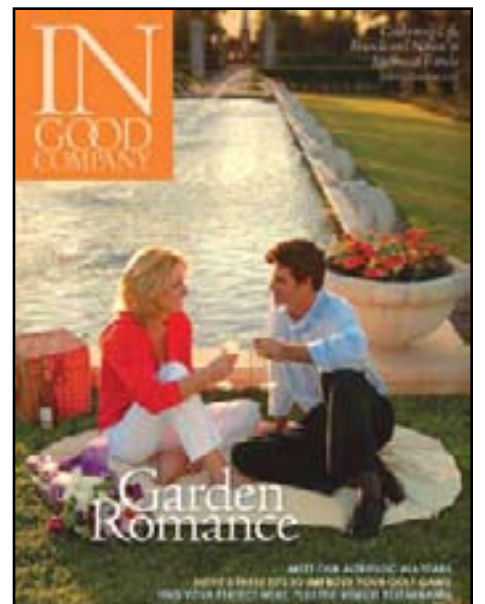
lighting the local lifestyle.

IN Good Company is mailed to residents and prospective residents and is also available at community sales centers and clubhouses, at local businesses and physicians' offices, and is sold at major bookstores.

The Golden Image Awards - celebrating its 50th anniversary - represents Florida's highest honor in public relations, recognizing outstanding work from hundreds of entries submitted throughout the state.

Bonita Bay Group is a diversified company involved in the planning, development, sales and management of master-planned communities, freestanding recreational amenities and commercial facilities. ■

IN Good Company, Bonita Bay's lifestyle magazine, received the Florida Public Relations Association's Golden Image Award of Distinction. The six-month-old publication highlights activities in Bonita Bay's developments.



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