

# THE PATENT TRADER

PLEASANTVILLE

## Fitness instructor helping girls get in shape

Six-week Get Fit Program designed to prep girls for prom

Carlos Perkins  
The Patent Trader

When Larysa DiDio overheard two teenage girls describe the lengths they would go to lose weight — including extreme diets restricted to certain foods — she said she knew she had to do something.

Owning a fitness club, PFX, at 101 Castleton Ave. in Pleasantville, and having a background in fitness training, gave her the perfect opportunity, she said.

"I'm looking at the magazines and seeing young girls trying to be thin like celebrities in (unhealthy) ways," DiDio said. "This can't be good. We have to think of a way to get girls to be healthy and stick with it."

So she created a program, "Get Fit for Prom," which offers high school girls in northern Westchester six weeks to exer-

cise at PFX and take part in other workshops geared for prom preparation, such as learning about skin care and beauty.

A portion of the program fee for "Get Fit for Prom," benefits Operation Fairy Dust, a nonprofit program that donates prom dresses and other accessories to underprivileged young people.

And girls in the Get Fit program will be able to give more by donating dresses and makeup directly to Operation Fairy Dust.

DiDio said girls will enjoy the noncompetitive and nonjudgmental atmosphere she has sought to create at PFX, which she has owned with her husband, Steve, als an athletic trainer, since 2001.

"What I really hope they get out of it is that the girls have an appreciation for the (better) way of getting fit," she said. "And they get healthy for life."

Besides a six-week member-



Larysa DiDio

### How you can help

This spring, PFX in Pleasantville is an official donation site for Operation Fairy Dust, a nonprofit program that accepts new and gently worn prom dresses, as well as unopened makeup and accessories for underprivileged girls in the New York area to help them get ready for prom.

The program is sponsored by the New York Benefit and Aid Committee for Kids.

Donations can be taken to PFX at 101 Castleton Ave., Pleasantville. For more information about the program, call 914-769-5765.

ship to PFX, the \$395 program includes a fitness assessment, sessions geared to 16- to 18-year-old girls, dance lessons, beginning and end celebrations, a hair and makeup "makeover" and a gift bag.

Participants will also have weekly "psych sessions," at which experts come to discuss various issues, such as mother-daughter bonding or what foods are best to order when eating out.

Girls need not have a prom to attend, DiDio said.

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Larissa Crecco,  
Pleasantville

PFX employee Larissa Crecco of Pleasantville signed up, even though the 17-year-old is not attending a prom.

"What attracted me the most is that it not only offered fitness sessions, it offers the total package," she said.

Crecco said that learning healthy ways of becoming fit was better than what she called negative ways of losing weight that were attracting her some of her peers.

"I (hear) my friends talking about wanting to use things like diet pills," she said. "This is the alternative, a way for girls to get fit."

The program has its "kickoff" from 4 to 5 p.m. April 21 at the center. To sign up or learn more, call DiDio at 914-769-5765.

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