

Join us in getting healthy

By Erin Harrel

Last year came and went, and I didn't get back in shape. While I know I'm a better parent and person when I am healthier, I find every excuse in the book not to get back on the right track. What a poor example I set for my beautiful children. Good thing I have such a wonderful sense of humor and great educational values to pass along!

All kidding aside, I'm getting serious — again — about this fitness thing. My family has joined five other families — moms, dads, kids, even a few grandparents — in a commitment to Parent & Child's yearlong Family Health Challenge. We're all looking forward to 2006, and throughout the year I'll update you on our struggles and accomplishments.

The Omni Club is giving each fami-

ly nutritional guidelines to follow and will check our progress weekly (my much-loved Hooters wings and Taco Bell are not on the list).

Omni Club personal trainers are going to help us stay on track. With its plush environment and fancy juice bar, the whole Omni Club facility makes working out an inviting prospect. And they have babysitting, too — a real bonus for those of us with busy little ones!

We're not going to publish anyone's weight, either starting or finishing the challenge. We're only going to report the amount of weight and inches lost during the fitness challenge. (We have to maintain some sense of self-respect, and I'm not one to encourage lying. If the driver's license bureau had a scale, I would be in big trouble!)


Brian Patrick, general manager of The Omni Club, promises a slimmer

body in 90 days — IF we stick to it.

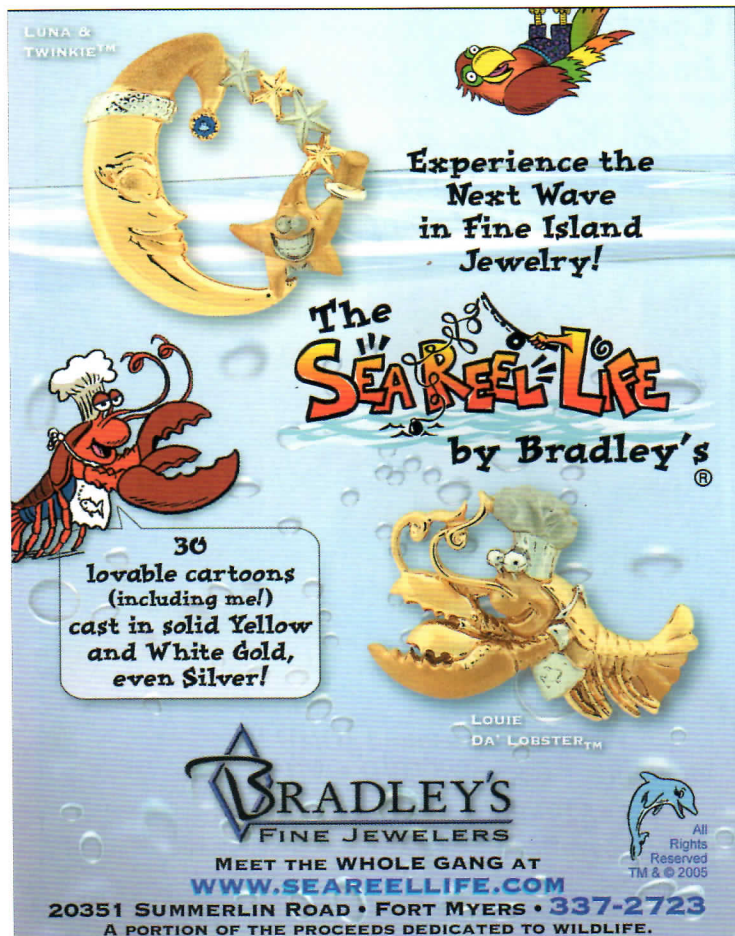
Change is not easy, especially for busy families. Planning and preparing meals takes time and thought — and it often slips to the back burner in between getting kids to the ballpark, to scouts, dance, piano and gymnastics.

But this doesn't have to be the case. In the months ahead I'm going to be learning how to change, and I'll share everything I learn with you. Watch for tips and fun, healthy recipes, too.

For now, why not make a choice to get you and your family on the right track this year? Encourage family bike rides and nightly walks. If nothing else, it gives kids time to talk about what happened during the day.

Take the challenge with us, and we'll all make 2006 our best year yet! 

— Erin Harrel lives in Cape Coral with her husband and three children.



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