

## Those Who Inspire ... Carol Burke

Carol Burke is known for her dedication as a music and computer science teacher in Lorain City schools for 31 years.

Anyone who knows Carol is acutely aware that she has a zeal to get things done and get them done right. Since retiring in 2010, she has devoted her considerable management skills as a volunteer for the Wellington Kiwanis, the Wellington Farmers' Market and, most recently, THRIVE! Southern Lorain County.

### **Family History of Cancer and Heart Disease**

In late 2015, Carol's physician warned her that, because of her family's history of heart disease and cancer, she had to lower her Body Mass Index (BMI), which measures body fat based on weight in relation to one's height.

In her 60s, Carol wasn't obese per se, but she was overweight. The doctor advised Carol that if she didn't do something about her weight she would put her on statins, a class of drugs that helps lower cholesterol to prevent heart attacks and stroke.

But headstrong Carol refused; she wanted no part of a life on meds.

### **Biggest Hurdle: Exercising, Eating Less at the Same Time**

For years Carol took exercise classes with Deb Lansman of Lansman's Shape Shop at the First Methodist Church in Wellington. Then, Deb started holding classes at Inner Circle Personal Fitness. Carol met owner Joe Bockmore at an early THRIVE! meeting. Joe was promoting his highly successful Commitment Challenge, so Carol and her husband signed up for the Challenge in January 2016.

"My husband quit soon after," Carol says with a laugh. Carol's husband is the Reverend Brian Burke, former pastor of the First Congregational United Church of Christ in Wellington and now Interim Pastor of the Amherst Congregation, UCC.

"The Challenge was really structured: I had to drink 64 oz. of water a day, record my food consumption through the computer app 'My Fitness Pal,' and go to the gym three times a week," Carol says.

"For me, dieting over the past 40 years was a disaster. I've never been able to exercise and watch what I eat at the same time," she adds.

### **Carol's Salvation: "Gym Rats"**

Carol credits Deb Lansman for helping her with the discipline to lose weight, get fit and increase her overall strength.

She also salutes the support network that she's gained since joining Inner Circle's Commitment Challenges. "I can't stress enough how important it is to work with teams. We work together, we support each other.

"It would be so much harder for me to lose weight and become fit without my fellow 'gym rats.' We're a family now," says Carol.

Carol has lost 30 pounds since January 2016 and is now rail-thin. She's still active in the gym.

### **Glamor Girl? Nope.**

Asked whether she bought new clothes to celebrate her weight loss, Carol ignored the question. "With my new strength and 'new' body, I can't wait to go zip gliding and rock wall climbing!," she says.

### **Water First for Thirst: Great for Glowing Skin!**

Carol's most recent passion is for "Water First for Thirst (WFFT)," the Columbus Public Health program that urges consumers to drink water over soda pop and other sugar-laden beverages. She tested the program with a small team from Deb Lansman's classes. "Women couldn't believe how great their skin looked after drinking so much water!" says Carol. Her WFFT campaign, now conducted for THRIVE!, was so successful that Wellington's three public schools have asked her to implement the program for their employees beginning April 2017.

Whenever Carol Burke puts her pedal to the metal, great things happen.