



Photo by Sherry Tompkins

John Wendling pushes his way through some shoulder presses as he pursues his goal to lose 200 pounds. Beginning at 380 pounds, Wendling is already 75 pounds closer to his goal.

## New year brings new body

By Sherry Tompkins

Lose weight or die. John Wendling didn't have much of a choice.

Two hundred pounds overweight, a heart condition, diabetes, high blood pressure, his life literally on the line, Wendling discovered a new motivation to live.

At 380 pounds, 5' 7" tall, Wendling, of Deseronto, felt as though he was about to have his fourth heart attack. "I knew that I had to do something," says Wendling.

Wendling discovered that he had four grandchildren that he had not previously known about. That gave him four new reasons to live. "Before I found out about Rob and the kids, I didn't really know that I had any family to live for. Now I have a reason to stay around," said Wendling.

The government had just approved performing gastric bypass surgery, so Wendling visited his doctor to sign up.

"The thing is," Wendling says with amusement, "before you can have the surgery, you have to drink shakes for eight weeks."

Out of desperation, Wendling welcomed an alternative to the surgery.

"I had a friend who had just lost 40 pounds by using Isagenix. So I thought,

"Why not try it?"

Isagenix provides a range of products, which are intended to remove toxins and impurities from the body and supply it with the optimum level of nutrients.

Wendling tried the nutritional program and lost weight immediately.

Because of coronary artery disease, Wendling's doctor would not permit him to add exercise to his weight loss regimen for the first three months.

In November, Wendling contracted pneumonia and ended up in the hospital. During his stay he did indeed have his fourth heart attack.

"The table they put you on to do angioplasty has a weight limit: it's 330 pounds," said Wendling. "When I got to the operating room, I was exactly 330 pounds."

During his post-operative appointment on Nov. 17, of last year, Wendling was given a cardiac stress test, successfully exercising for 3.3 minutes. It was then that Wendling was given the go-ahead to begin an exercise program. His doctor wrote a prescription note to a personal trainer, "exercise no limit."

Wendling then enlisted the assistance of certified medical exercise specialist, Andrea DiRocco-Supryka at Belleville's One

to One Fitness.

"The thing that drew me to John was you could see his inner spirit, and inner desire to make a change. That's what will make a difference," said DiRocco-Supryka. She explained that when a person sets out to lose a large amount of weight, there are a great many aspects to the process. There can be medical issues, emotional hurdles, and habitual facets.

Over four months and 75 pounds into the process, DiRocco-Supryka is impressed with John's progress. "John is determined and dedicated," she said.

Wendling's workout currently consists of doing two rounds of 12 laps walking around the gym, followed by two 17-minute sessions on a recumbent bicycle. He then alternates squats, lunges and push-ups on different days of the week.

Currently, a 12-lap round takes him 12 minutes, down from 20 minutes when he began.

"When I began, I was taking 300 units of insulin per day. Now I'm down to 30 to 40 units. I was taking two blood pressure medications and now I just take half as much of one of them and the other one is gone," beams Wendling.

"My lungs are working better; my pan-

creas is working better; my blood pressure is better and I don't get tired as much."

Wendling started a Facebook page to track his progress, [www.facebook.com/GettinThin](http://www.facebook.com/GettinThin).

"A lot of people tell me that I'm an inspiration. That if I can do this at my age, then they can do it too," said Wendling.

Joe Roberts, known as the Skid Row CEO, and a classmate of Wendling's in the business-marketing program at Loyalist College commented in a letter to Wendling, "Sir, you are an inspiration. You are someone's catalyst....all should become reality should we only have the courage to change the things we can."

According to Wendling, Isagenix has only five members belonging to the 200 club, those who have successfully lost 200 pounds or more. Wendling intends to be the next member.

Wendling's success led him to enter the Isabody Challenge, a contest for weight loss. Wendling will be in the men's 50-plus category. The grand prize winner will win \$25,000, a personal makeover and photo shoot, personal training and fitness training.

"I'm going to win," Wendling said with determination.

## Increased funds for United Way to help in development

Over 45 organizations with over 80 programs get agency funding

By Zachary Greco

The United Way of Quinte has just seen its greatest increase in fundraising in the past 10 years as the 2011 campaign hit \$1,807,488. This is a 10-per-cent increase from \$1,636,268 raised in 2010.

The money raised in this year's campaign will be used to continue the support of the not-for-profit charitable sector in Hastings and Prince Edward counties.

The United Way of Quinte funds over 45 agencies in the area with over 80 programs run through those agencies. Gleaners food bank, Big Brothers and Big Sisters, the YMCA and the Canadian Red Cross are some of the agencies receiving support from the United Way.

This year's increased funds will allow for the development of new funding streams that will help other community-wide initiatives. New programs being developed include a youth leadership program, a partnership grants program for community-wide organizations partnering up with one another and an organizational capacity program to help small organizations that don't have the financial resources.

"This is a credit to the community," says executive director Judi Gilbert. "It is definitely a community achievement and I am truly amazed at the level of giving in a time of such economic uncertainty."

"We should never underestimate the generosity, kindness and compassion of people throughout the Quinte region," said campaign chair David Allen at the annual achievement celebration last Thursday night at the Empire Theatre.

"This number tells a story, it tells me that the people of the Quinte region get it and they understand how to build a community," said Allen in a press release. "It tells me, that even during these challenging economic times that people care, they care about our community, they care about their neighbours, they want to make a difference."

"This year's incredible result certainly says to me that we are firing on all cylinders," said chair of the board of directors Rosemary Judd-Archer.

In the press release, Judd-Archer said the board is moving the organization forward. "Our management team and staff members are focused on achieving results and our donors - individuals, workplace teams and companies - have demonstrated their belief in us through their incredible financial support."

## Cruise offers a week in paradise for student

Photojournalism student shares experience of Disney vacation

By Kayla Allen

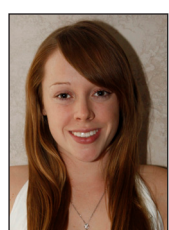
I am scared to be on a cruise the week after an Italian cruise boat sunk after hitting a rock, I think to myself as I look to my right and see the captain of the Disney Magic

It's a difficult moment, but the fear comes to me fast as I see my family walking ahead of me. Vacation is a time to relax and spend time with the people you love, not a time to worry about accidents that have happened. Accidents do occur, but they are just that, an accident.

The warmth on your skin as you walk towards the loading gate for the Disney Magic cruise ship fills you with joy.

Hundreds of little girls run around in their princess dresses and all the little boys walk around with their pirate swords looking forward to seeing Mickey and Minnie Mouse makes you feel like a kid yourself. All the smiles from ear to ear make you wonder if anyone has even heard about the Italian cruise ship, the Costa Concordia, which left six people dead and 29 are still missing.

After you check in at the gate, you make your way through the big yellow Mickey Mouse ears toward the ship. "Welcome the Allen family!" is all you hear as you take your first footsteps on to the Disney Magic. All the cheering and clapping makes you feel right at home. Myself and eleven other family members have now started our seven-day vacation to the Eastern Caribbean islands.



Kayla Allen

While sitting through the mandatory safety evacuation drill before the cruise sets sail, I look down the fourth floor deck and see everyone lined up in lines of four. While parents try to keep their restless children in line, the evacuation leaders all turn on their megaphones and say, "You have now all started your evacuation drill." The safety drill explained how to make your way toward the safety boats if there was ever an accident and how to use your life jacket.

Ten minutes pass and the drill is now complete. Now I know that if anything ever happens to the Disney Magic while I am on



Photo by Kayla Allen

ST. THOMAS, US Virgin Islands - The majestic Disney Magic is seen anchored in St. Thomas on Tuesday Jan. 17. St. Thomas is the second destination that the Disney Magic visits during its seven-day Eastern Caribbean cruise.

board, it's a complete free-for-all race toward the safety boats. I try to keep thoughts about the accident out of my head as I walk

into line at the first buffet on the cruise.

During my vacation I took the opportunity to ask seven different people on the

Disney Magic if they were scared to be on a cruise after the terrible tragedy that happened on Jan.13, 2011.

When Loyalist student Kayla Allen vacationed on a cruise last week, she asked the following to guests of the cruise:

**Question: How do you feel to be on the Disney cruise when last week an Italian cruise ship, the Costa Concordia, sunk after crashing into rocks.**



**Barbara Supien, Tampa, Florida,** "I have travelled 49 times on different Disney cruise ships and I'm absolutely not scared at all. I plan on going on my 50th Disney cruise."



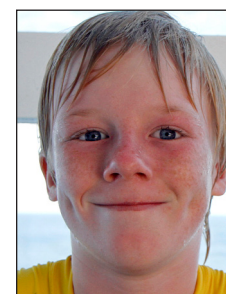
**Chris Depippo, Toronto, Ont.,** "Yes, I am terrified to be on this cruise after I heard that an Italian cruise ship that sunk last week. I hate even going on a sail boat."



**Chris Kelsey, London, England,** "I am not scared at all to be working on the Disney cruise after I heard that an Italian cruise ship had sunk. After all, Mickey is the captain on this boat."



**Garret Depippo, Toronto, Ont.,** "This is my first cruise and I don't ever want it to end. I hope no one has to go through what the passengers of the other ship had to go through."



**Harrison Depippo, Toronto, Ont.,** "This ship is full of fun things to do! You never have time to think about stuff like that."



**Luis Perez,** "No, I have been working on the Disney cruise for two years and that thought never passes through my mind."