

Ahwatukee boot camp gets women moving

by *Lisa Halverstadt* - Jul. 30, 2008 08:00 AM
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It's 6:20 a.m. on a Tuesday morning and 30 women have been sweating for almost an hour.

They stretch, push up, curl and run outside the Ahwatukee Community Center at 4700 E. Warner Road. Instructor Dawn Franklin calls out orders.

"One-two-hold-down-two-hold-up," she yells as the women do push-ups on the facility's basketball court. When several groan, she laughs.

"Don't cry," Franklin said. "We're almost out of time."

Since last January, Franklin has led the five-day-a-week Ahwatukee Boot Camp for Women at the community center. Starting Aug. 18, she will begin teaching similar classes at the Foothills Golf Club at 2201 E. Clubhouse Dr. Boot camp participants can also sign up to attend the classes at either location three or four days a week. The courses run in four-week intervals.

But the classes aren't a typical workout.

On a recent Tuesday, Franklin hung resistance bands from a gazebo and a fence. Then she laid out cones, hurdles and other gear on the community center's baseball field.

When participants began their workout at 5:30 a.m., they started by running a mile, doing some stretches and dashing through Franklin's obstacle course.

It's not easy but it's worth it, said Shashawn Osborne of Chandler who began the classes in July.

The 27-year-old mother of four said she hopes to drop some pounds and gain more energy to keep up with her children.

Taking a break from a set of crunches, Osborne said she felt the burn while still enjoying herself.

"This reminds me of girl's gym class but better," Osborne said.

Of course, most of the women didn't join Franklin's boot camp just to have fun.

Like Osborne, they hoped to lose weight and get healthier. Many participants do.

Though she started the camp in early July, 39-year-old Ahwatukee resident Trisha Zilles said she's already dropped a size.

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And fellow Ahwatukee resident Cindy Iverson, 46, dropped six sizes and six minutes off her mile run before being forced to take a break from the classes.

Iverson, who plans to start up again in a few weeks following a surgery, said she came to look forward to each class.

"I hate getting out of bed but the way you feel afterward is enough to get you out of bed the next day," she said.

The camaraderie between participants is also helpful, Iverson said.

She recalled once dragging behind the rest of the group as they hiked up South Mountain. After reaching the top of the mountain, several women came back down to join Iverson as she trekked up the mountain.

"People cheer each other on," she said. "I think that's a huge thing to keep people going."

Despite her role as drill sergeant, which comes complete with camouflage capris and a matching hat, Franklin agreed. The women encourage each other to meet their goals and are the first to ask why another woman missed a class, she said.

For Franklin, who has been a personal trainer for more than eight years, that's

especially exciting to watch.

That doesn't mean Franklin has time to relax during her classes. The certified personal trainer, who completed a course in [California](#) to become authorized to teach the Adventure Boot Camp, spends much of her time running after the participants.

"I just tell them to give it 100 percent," she said.

Information: AhwatukeeBootCamp.com or 623-640-2680.

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