

# THE ONTARIO COUNTY CONNECTION

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## A place to feel good – both inside and out

By Linda S. Burnett  
NAPLES

Everyone knows that fitness is a very important factor in overall wellness. If you don't get enough exercise as you age, you have a decrease in heart and lung efficiency, an increase in blood pressure and body fat, and a decrease in flexibility, bone mass and strength. Exercising has been shown to help with a variety of common medical problems, including hypertension, hypercholesterolemia, osteoporosis, diabetes mellitus, peripheral vascular occlusive disease, and low back pain, as well as anxiety and depression. And knowing all of that, you would think we would all exercise regularly.

The number one excuse with most people for not exercising is TIME. Finding a convenient time to squeeze in 30-40 minutes of exercise at a fitness center or health club for many folks seems like an impossible mission. You're waiting for your schedule to ease up, for the weather to cool off or heat up, for school to start or end, or for some other future event to happen. You can't get time away from your job or the kids. You're just too tired at the end of the day. They're all excuses, plain and simple, and we use them all to avoid exercise. Well, there's a new place in Naples that has eliminated the "time excuse" from the equation for a whole lot of people. The place is called Naples Valley Fitness, and they're open 24/7, every day of the year if you're a member.

"If you're a member, you can use the fitness center any time of day or night that you want to," says owner Rachelle Rector, who also owns the adjoining Divine Designs Salon next door, and operates the fitness center with her life and business partner, Steve Cromwell. "When you become a member of the center, you're given a key card that unlocks the front door, enabling you to exercise whenever it's convenient for you. People come in here and work out at some very strange hours, but that's the point. If those hours work for them, great! As long as they're exercising, who cares about time?"

Rector bought the building located at 141 South Main Street in Naples in March this year as a new location for her salon. She has been in the salon

business for twenty years, and was located above the pharmacy on Main Street in Naples for seven years prior to the move. She had planned to expand her offerings in the salon to create more of a "day spa" environment, and the building that had previously housed Opa's Creamery seemed to be the perfect size.

"Once I got in here, I realized that there was way more space than we needed for services I wanted to offer in the salon," she says. "That's when we started considering adding the fitness center. We figured it was a perfect compliment, one business that made you look great on the outside, and another that did great things for the inside as well as the outside. It's a "feel good about yourself" kind of place!"

In three weeks time, Rector and Cromwell managed to repaint and redesign the entire interior of the building to accommodate their vision. They opened the doors to their new joint venture on April 1st. Both the salon and fitness center are bright and cheerful, spacious and comfortable. The fitness center is completely computerized, and members gain access to the building with a key card that opens the front door. The precise time of their entry is logged into the computer system, and surveillance cameras keep track of the gym area 24/7.

"Cameras were a necessity simply for vandalism concerns," explains Rector. "While there's someone here in the building a great deal of the time, people do use this facility at all times of the day and night. We had to have some sort of security controls here."

Actually, the beauty of both businesses is that the hours are very flexible in both. Rector does not advertise hours in her salon because everything is by appointment only, and both she and the two women who work with her – Holly and Marlene – offer a very wide range of appointment times.

"We're available for our clients when they need us," Rector explains. "If they need to get an appointment at 9:00 at night, we can work that into the schedule somehow. If they need to get here early in the morning, or during lunch, we can do that, too. We're all very flexible and willing to make our schedules work for you. Our motto



Photo by Linda S. Burnett

Steve Cromwell and Rachelle Rector teamed up as partners to open Naples Valley Fitness, a 24/7 fitness club, and the day spa/salon all in the same building.

has always been "Our focus is on you," and part of that focus is being able to adapt to special circumstances for our clients."

The salon/spa offers a complete menu of services, including haircuts and styles for men, women and children, complete hair color services and permanents, pedicures, manicures, facials, waxings, and a full menu of nail services, including acrylic nails and nail art.

Naples Valley Fitness is a co-ed fitness center providing cardiovascular, fitness and strength equipment for men, women and teens. You can workout on your own or consult with one of their fitness trainers to tailor a program to fit your needs. The bright, clean and modern facility features air

conditioning to provide a comfortable work out environment all year long, satellite television and SIRIUS satellite radio, and brand new, state-of-the-art commercial equipment.

"We've covered all the bases with our selection of equipment for the center," says Rector. "We offer state-of-the-art cardio and strength training machines from Vision Fitness and Life Fitness. It was purchased and is routinely serviced from G & G Fitness. Our equipment features heavy-duty commercial grade construction, built in heart rate monitors, and preset workout programs. You can work out at your own pace, or choose a professionally designed program. Not only will our equipment give you the exercise options you need,

but also the comfort of reading racks, and bottle holders."

The center has treadmills, ellipticals, upright and recumbent bikes, benches and free weight systems, multigyms, ab and back machines, leg and calf press equipment, and all kinds of fitness accessories. Membership is flexible and reasonably priced, with individual rates as low as \$35 a month. They even have day passes available to people who are just passing through the area, or are here for only a couple weeks during the summer months. Although they do not provide locker rooms or shower facilities, they do have spacious men's and women's bathroom/changing areas.

"Membership is available for everyone age 14 and up," Rector explains. "Teens age 14-17 will only be allowed with a paid adult membership, however, and they must be accompanied by an adult when using the facility. As a member, you can use the facility at any time that's convenient for you, 365 days a year. It's like having your own gym whenever you need it."

Rector also advises people thinking about getting a fitness or health club membership to check their health insurance coverage benefits. Many of today's policies will pay some or even all the fees associated with joining a fitness facility, especially if you're a senior. Many people who joined Naples Valley Fitness in the last few months were pleasantly surprised to find out that they could be reimbursed for their membership. Check with your employer or health insurance provider to see if they are participating in this proactive approach to health and wellness.

"So far, we're very excited about how well the center has been received," Rector says. "We're hoping to encourage a lot more people to come in and see what we have to offer, and to use the facility at a time that's good for them. Or come in and make a day of it. Have a facial, a manicure and pedicure, have your hair done, and work out for a while, too. You'll leave here feeling and looking good all over!"