

Business

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Williams opens Wild Rivers Pilates center

By Bill Schlichting

Pilot staff writer
GOLD BEACH — Nearly a century ago, a low-impact exercise regimen was developed by German-born physical-culturist Joseph Pilates, and his workout system is now available in Curry County.

Wild Rivers Pilates

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and Fitness opened earlier this year by Kristen Williams offers the equipment for anyone interested in Pilates exercises.

"Pilates is low-impact exercises where you are not working against gravity," Williams said. "It creates a balance between tension and strength."

Pilates equipment uses springs to create a workout rather than weights. By using springs, more lean muscle is created rather than the bulk created by lifting weights, Williams explained.

The most popular pieces of exercise equipment is the Reformer. Williams said it is called such because "it reforms your body." The number of springs determines

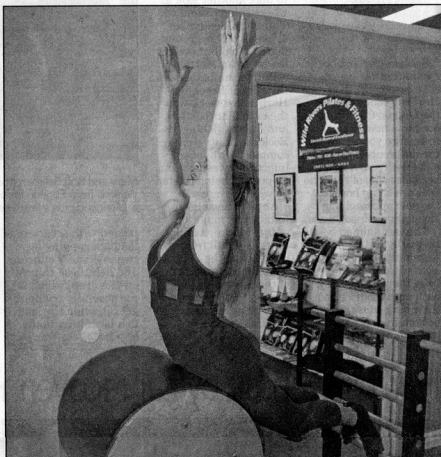
the amount of tension. Exercises are done in a horizontal motion and can be used for an upper- or lower-body workout.

Another piece of equipment is called a Cadillac. The apparatus received its name because when Pilates was fashioning it, he was asked what he was building a Cadillac, Williams said.

Workouts on the Cadillac are done while suspended. Many of the routines are named after animals because they mimic the stretching motions of the animal, Williams said.

Williams said the original intent of the Cadillac was to help wounded British soldiers during World War II regain their strength, similar to physical therapy. Although Pilates was German, he had moved to Great Britain and was detained on the Isle of Man during the war.

Different workouts exercise specific muscles. Some of the most important muscles that the system exercises are the back muscles, Williams said. Strength in the back is



Kristen Williams demonstrates one of many Pilates-based exercises at her studio. The Pilot / Bill Schlichting

gained without putting strain on the spine, which is common with many regimens.

In addition to increasing strength, Pilates creates balance. Many activities, especially sports, tend

to use only one side of the body. Williams said. For example, a right-handed person will throw with their right hand, or athletes may kick a ball only with their right foot. This puts all the strength and flexibility onto only one side of the body.

Inside the gym there is a ROM (range of motion) machine which, Williams said, isn't connected to Pilates, but is close. The machine also works the upper and lower body and is intended for a cardiovascular workout. The machine uses a heavy flywheel. The more the person moves, the more the machine helps in the movement.

Pilates exercises are not all dependent on equipment.

"I give homework that you can use the rest of your life," Wil-

liams said. "You can use it while driving, while walking on the beach or when playing with the kids."

Williams learned about Pilates after injuring a hamstring during her New York City ballet career. She found the exercises to be more effective than physical therapy.

She also found Pilates a lifesaver after suffering two serious strokes. The exercises help restore her muscle movements.

In 1998, Williams and her husband Matt opened a Pilates studio in Santa Barbara. After 15 years there, the Williamses wanted to escape the rat race. They vacationed along the Oregon Coast, starting from Astoria and working their way down. They found Gold Beach and decided to settle there.

Williams said she also found a need for a Pilates studio in Curry County, which prompted her to open Wild Rivers Pilates at 29286 Ellensburg Ave.

Meanwhile, her husband has established a small business, also creating energy, inside the studio. His business, affiliated with DepotEco.com, is selling rechargeable batteries and equipment.

For more information about Wild Rivers Pilates, call 541-425-5161 or visit <http://wrpilates.com>.

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