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July 2010



Dear Friends,

Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?

This month I am continuing the article I began in June. If you missed the June article you can read it in the archives.

When God does a new thing in our lives, it is because He loves us too much to leave us where we are.

I don't fully understand what I am about to tell you, but I am watching it play out before my eyes. Because God is sovereign and knows everything, including our future, He knew that Johnny and I would never willingly leave our home at the bay. Because of Johnny's health, we now need to be in the city on a daily basis. Memorial Day weekend, when we were at the bay for Tal's graduation party, I knew in my heart that we would still have good times at the bay with those we love. But, for whatever reason, and God knows the reason, our full-time living on the water has come to an end. Our job is to trust Him with our future and know that He is in everything that we go through in this life. Our life today is different but it is still good. We have a hope and a future because of the love God lavishes on us every day.

When God does a new thing in our lives, it is always for our ultimate good and for His glory to shine through us.

When we moved to Houston and settled into the townhome community where we now live permanently, I met a wonderful lady named Denise. Denise had purchased a townhome in foreclosure and had totally redone the inside. One day, when I was walking Meathead, Denise invited me inside and I saw firsthand what could be done to make it like brand new.

After we purchased our own townhome, Denise helped me in so many ways. Since I loved everything she had done, she graciously gave me the paint brand and color and told me where to buy it. She did the same thing with her granite selection and tile selections for the bathrooms. Do you know how much time this saved me? A very hard job was made so much easier because of my new friend Denise's willingness to help me.

As Denise and I became friends, I noticed that she was losing weight and she shared with me that she was doing Weight Watchers. I assumed (and you know

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Matthew 6:33:

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

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that assumption is the lowest form of knowledge) that Denise was attending WW meetings each week because she just kept getting smaller. Denise began in January and by the beginning of April she had lost over 30 pounds!

Our Spring First Place 4 Health class began in early April and after our first meeting, Denise and I were visiting and she shared with me that she wasn't going to Weight Watchers. She was just doing their diet by herself. I immediately invited her to my class, and we have been having a grand time riding to and from class together. We are also working out together at the church before class on Tuesdays. I am so grateful for my friend Denise, and I know she feels the same way about me. God has good things planned for me in the place He has me right now. Life is not over because I am not at the bay any longer. God has a brand new life planned for us as He changes the path we have been on for a long time. Denise has now lost almost 50 pounds, and I expect to have her in my life for many years to come.

What about you? Is God doing a new thing in your life? What is His word to you today?

- **Do not dwell on the past!** Your memories will be with you forever, but the past is the past.
- **God is doing a new thing!** Look for the new thing God is doing in your life and thank Him for it even though you don't yet understand.
- **Do you not perceive it?** One day you will understand what God was up to, but it usually takes awhile to perceive what the change is all about. Hindsight is always 20/20.

Blessings!

Carole Lewis

Leadership Summit 2010 ~ July 30-31 ~ Houston, TX

This summer we will celebrate our eighth Leadership Summit. This is a weekend where former, present and future leaders come together to learn from each other and to fellowship together. Those in leadership know that we need this time together to refuel and refresh each year.

I have so many great stories about the Leadership Summit and have made so many wonderful friends from the time we have spent together on Saturday afternoon at the bay. Jan Norris, from Topeka, Kansas, has lost over 100 pounds, and she emailed me recently that she can't wait to ride the Triple Dare at the bay. I know Jan never dreamed she would be looking forward to being pulled behind our boat on a gigantic water toy when she joined First Place 4 Health!

Last year our theme was "Lead Loud." I was in my favorite resale shop one day and I found a beautiful jacket that was "loud" to say the least! It was white and had big turquoise, red and yellow flowers on it. The jacket was beautiful but it was too loud for me. On Saturday morning, I looked at the jacket and debated about wearing it that day. I reminded myself of the theme and talked myself into wearing it. Right before our last session on Saturday afternoon, a lady walked up to me and said, "When I get to my goal, I want that jacket." I couldn't believe my ears. I told her that she was welcome to try it on and if it fit, she could buy it for what I had paid for it. Well it fit, she bought it, and I was ecstatic that I kept with the theme but would not be wearing the jacket again. I have laughed so many times at how God knows me inside out. He knew when I bought that jacket that it just wasn't me. He let me wear it to make a statement and now another lady is truly enjoying the jacket today.

Please, please come to our Leadership Summit this year. You never know what God has planned!



Leadership

What Freedom Means To Me



Vicki Heath

vicki.heath@firstplace4health.com

Growing up in a military family, I was exposed to and absorbed a great amount of patriotism. My father was in the military for over twenty years serving first in the Korean War and then Vietnam as a corpsman.



Here is one of my favorite pictures.

Most of my life, I lived on a military base somewhere on the coast of the United States, from Virginia to Key West to California. I learned to love and respect the American flag so you can imagine that the 4th of July is one of my favorite holidays. On any military base, at the end of the duty day, the flag is lowered with a retreat ceremony. Usually the National Anthem is played over the base public address system as the flag is lowered. When us “navy brats” were out playing or riding our bikes, we knew when we heard the music come on, it was the respectful thing to stop, position ourselves to face the flag or music and assume the position of parade rest, standing as tall as we could for our small selves and placing our hands over our hearts. (We added that part). It did not matter if you were jumping rope or you were playing softball with the bases loaded and you were on your way to home base, you stopped and showed respect for the flag.

Showing respect for the flag was just a part of what I learned. I learned firsthand that freedom is not free. It cost my dad three years of his life as he did two tours in Vietnam. It cost me time with my Dad. He left when I was in 5th grade and basically did not come back until I was in 7th. A lot of changes took place in my life in that short time.

Ultimate Freedom

As I celebrate the birth of our country’s independence, I am moved as I always am to reflect on my ultimate freedom – freedom in Christ. The sacrifices made by my father and my family do not compare with the sacrifice made on my behalf by Christ. No one has ever given their life for me. It is the ultimate demonstration of love. The New Testament is rich in freedom theology and just to remind us of a few – let’s recognize this precious, costly freedom by:

Celebrating! Jesus was continually trying to get those who were following him to understand that he offered true freedom – freedom from the law, freedom from sin, freedom from even the penalty of sin. In John 8:36 he said: “So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed!” (NIV). That is worth celebrating with fireworks! Nothing compares to the freedom we have in Christ. Regardless of where our country is headed politically, this freedom can never be taken from us.

Sharing. Matthew 10:8 says “freely you have received, freely give”. (NKJV). God has abundantly shared his blessing with us so that we can be blessed others! Sharing the love of Christ with others as well as sharing our material possessions can be a way of celebrating our freedom in Christ.

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Continued from page 3 (Vicki Heath)

Not going back! This one is a hard one for some of us. Celebrate your freedom in Christ by refusing to go back to the old way of living! Letting those old habits finally die and allowing them no part in our lives is better than any 4th of July parade! Paul wrote to the believers at Galatia, “Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.” It’s crazy to imagine that I would even want to go back to my old way of living or my old way of thinking!

I hope this year’s 4th of July is a really special one for you. Honor Him by standing strong and tall, head held high because you proudly wear the sign of the cross! Place your hand on your heart, pledge allegiance and enjoy your freedom! Yippee! If I had a trumpet I would blow it!

Stay Strong,

Vicki Heath

On Sale now at www.firstplace4health.com!



Healthy Summer Living

Summer is a time filled with sunny days, picnics at the lake, outings, vacations and special celebrations. But it is also a time when disruptions in normal schedules can make it difficult to remain committed to healthy living. *Healthy Summer Living* is a six-week Bible study based on the book of Proverbs that will provide you with the order and structure you need during the busy summer months to stay on course. **\$12.00 (\$14.99 SRP)**

Aluminum Water Bottle

This is a 25 oz. aluminum bottle. With its attached carabiner clip, this bottle is the perfect accessory to take on your next walk, trip to the gym, hike, picnic or anywhere you are on the go.

- 25oz Capacity
- Leak-Proof Screw-Down Lid
- BPA Free
- Includes Attached Carabiner
- Color: Silver
- 2 7/8" Diam X 9 5/8" H
- Material: Aluminum

\$9.50 (\$12.00 SRP)





Upcoming Events in 2010

Leadership Summit

July 30-31, 2010

Houston's First Baptist Church

Houston, Texas

Speakers:

Carole Lewis, Director, FP4H

Vicki Heath, Associate Director, FP4H

Jennie Afman Dimkoff, Speak Up With Confidence

Contact: Lisa Lewis

Email: lisa.lewis@firstplace4health.com

Phone: 800.727.5223, x1001

Hope 4 You ~ Tennessee

August 21, 2010

New Vision Baptist Church

Murfreesboro, TN

Speakers: FP4H Staff & More!

Contact: Tina Moser

Phone: 615.895.3374

Email: tm.4him@att.net

Hope 4 You ~ Ohio

September 11, 2010

New Hope Baptist Church

Loveland, OH

Speakers:

Carole Lewis, Director, FP4H

Vicki Heath, Associate Director, FP4H

Steve Reynolds, Pastor, Capital Baptist Church

Contact: Janet Kirkhart

Email: janet@newhopeonthehill.com

Phone: 513.382.8231

Hope 4 You ~ South Dakota

September 25, 2010

Brookings Wesleyan Church

Brookings, SD

Speakers: FP4H Staff and More!

Contact: Chris Engen

Phone: 605.690.5075

Email: jeff@dmdj.com

Wellness Week

October 7-14, 2010

Round Top, Texas

Speakers:

Carole Lewis, Director, FP4H

Vicki Heath, Associate Director, FP4H

& more!

Contact: Lisa Lewis

Email: lisa.lewis@firstplace4health.com

Phone: 800.727.5223, x1001

Hope 4 You ~ Texas

November 6, 2010

University United Methodist Church

San Antonio, Texas

Speakers:

Carole Lewis, Director, FP4H

Vicki Heath, Associate Director, FP4H

Contact: Deb Stark

Phone: 210.567.2296 or 210.641.2964

Email: dlstark1220@sbcglobal.net

Hope 4 You ~ New York

November 13, 2010

Elim Grace Christian Church

Oswego, NY

Speakers: FP4H Staff and More!

Contact: Ann-marie King

Phone: 315.343.4166

Email: thekingsbusiness@gmail.com

Coming in 2011

January 29, 2011 ~ Brandon, MS

February 26, 2011 ~ Roseland, CA

March 26, 2011 ~ Oakdale, PA

For more information about any of these events, please visit www.firstplace4health.com.



Balanced Living - Physical

A Strong Base of Support – Your Legs!



Jeannie Blocher
jeannie@bodyandsoul.org

Strong legs are important for sports, leisure activities and for everyday life! Whether you love playing tennis, hiking with your family, or just want to be able to walk up and down stairs, you need to plan fitness workouts that include strength training for your legs.

There are many ways to do this. You can use your own body weight with no equipment at all, doing sets of squat and lunges. We do it to music in Body & Soul classes, and it makes the time pass quickly! This will strengthen the quadriceps on the front of the leg, the hamstrings on the back of the leg and the gluteals in the hips, all at the same time.

Just a beginner?

If you feel like you are just a beginner at leg exercises, start by standing in front of a chair, then sit and stand slowly, feeling the muscles of your legs doing the work. Don't plop into the chair or use your hands to help; move through the range of motion to sit and stand purposefully and mindfully, making your muscles do the work—that is the beginning of your squat routine! For lunges, stand feet together, then take a big step back with one foot. Maintain good posture with the torso erect, activate your abs to stay stable, then slowly bend both knees like you are starting to kneel, go down as far as you are comfortable then rise up, straightening the legs. Build up gradually to a range of motion where the legs are both at right angles at the bottom, always keeping the muscles active to do the work. Don't lock the knees at the top. Build up to more repetitions as you get stronger.

In the gym?

For those of you who work out in a gym, you can use the leg press machine to work the same muscle groups, which is great cross training. Plan to mix it up with some standing squats and lunges, adding weights held at your side or resting on the shoulders for more resistance.

When you are faithful to do lower body strength training, you will be amazed at how much stronger you feel while jogging, walking, biking and doing all manner of sports which require leg action. Not only that, you will stay strong to sit and stand every day of your life!

Let's stay strong together!

Jeannie Blocher

President, Body and Soul Ministries
www.bodyandsoul.org



If you're looking for a great strength training DVD, try the FP4H Strength and Flexibility DVD. Now anyone can create a stronger, healthier temple of God without putting excess stress on the body. With the aid of certified fitness instructors, this workout DVD demonstrates how to build muscle tone and increase flexibility. Learn effective stretching techniques and the benefits of a workout routine utilizing weights or elastic resistance bands for creating stronger, more defined muscles, all in about 30 minutes!

~~\$19.99~~ \$16.00 **On Sale!**



Dedicated To Success



Steve Reynolds
sreynolds@capitalbaptist.org

“This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.”
Galatians 5:16

Our society seems obsessed with fitness or at least the appearance of fitness. Why on earth would I say that when a large segment of the nation’s population is obese? Well, it’s because of the reported billions of dollars spent each year on diet pills, diet foods, fitness clubs and surgeries to help people with their fight against the “battle of the bulge.” Many of us have a desire to be fit but aren’t always willing to do what it takes to achieve our desired outcome.

The problem is the gap between our beliefs and our behavior. We know what is right, but we don’t do it. James said, *“Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin”* (James 4:17). I had to recognize my abusive eating for what it was--sin. I had to bring my beliefs and behavior together. For me, the first step was to dedicate my body to God. No more playing the games of, “Well, this one bite won’t hurt” or “I’ll buy this treat for the kids, but I won’t touch it.” I had to finish with all that. I had to learn to honor God with my body.

Bringing the Holy Spirit Into It

Dedication is one of the most important aspects in the challenge to losing weight and living healthy. I truly believe we must dedicate our bodies to God if we are ever going to have a Bod4God. I continually refer to the scripture Galatians 5:16, *“Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.”* I had to bring the Holy Spirit into my life when it came to eating and exercise. I had to depend on the Holy Spirit to guide me in my choices of food. I had to ask Him to strengthen me when it came to exercise.

Flesh is Weak

The Bible says that the *“flesh is weak”* (Matthew 26:41). My flesh is particularly weak when it comes to eating and exercising. As I mentioned earlier, the Bible also says if you walk in the Spirit you won’t fulfill the lust of your flesh. That simply means that you will allow God’s Holy Spirit to control you and your intense desires for something. In all practicality, how does this work? Well, I had to learn to listen for the voice of the Holy Spirit and allow it to prompt me to make good choices for my body--what I ate and the amount I ate. If I truly wanted to live healthy, I could no longer stuff whatever I craved into my mouth with wild abandon. I had to stop and think about what I was about to eat.

Most of us look for the easy way out – pills, fad diets, etc. Yet we know to be successful, desire alone is not enough. We must set goals and then be dedicated in our efforts to reach the goal. This is especially true in the matter of weight loss. There is no magic pill or piece of exercise equipment that will perform the task. Hard work, some sacrifice and dedication is the requirement.

Steve Reynolds

Steve is the Senior Pastor of Capital Baptist Church in Annandale, VA. He is also the author of the book *Bod4God* and the creator of the *Losing to Live Weight Loss Competition*. Steve has lost over 100 pounds and has led his church to lose over 4 tons of weight.



Success Stories



Joyce Ainsworth Brandon, Mississippi

People say a picture is worth a thousand words. I agree! A picture also reveals truth, just like the scales do. That is probably why I never really liked having mine taken. I have avoided the truth, like so many of us have a tendency to do. I hear so many people say I want to be small again or the size I was back when, but the truth is I have always been big. All my life my “family heritage” has been that we are all big. I have never known anything else. I, like so many others, have used all the excuses in the book of why being overweight is acceptable and for me unavoidable, a lie I told myself for way too many years. I have also tried every diet and weight loss program that was ever created. Sure, I would lose a small amount of weight, but then I would go back to my old lifestyle, and guess what? All the weight came back plus a little more.

A few years ago, out of sheer desperation, I started attending a First Place class and I said to myself, “This is your last hope!” I was so miserable, discontented, and unhappy with myself. The smile on my face was a fake and was covering much pain and suffering. I kept asking the Lord to free me from this desperate battle that I seem to constantly fight within myself. How could a Christian struggle with this bondage?

I weighed in at 339 pounds. I had much to lose; so much so that I almost gave up hope. However, with the help of some great leaders, a wonderful support system and much commitment and sacrifice, I made it through that first session of First Place and I can honestly say God has radically changed my life! Jeremiah 33:3 is my life verse and when I committed to First Place, He began to make that verse, *Call unto me and I will answer thee and I will show you great and mighty things that you do not know* very real to me. That is a promise from the heart of God to me that has sustained me through this journey. I am not alone!

What a Journey God has allowed me to travel! I have taken quite a few classes since then and now help lead and teach First Place here at Crossgates Baptist Church in Brandon, MS. In September 2006, we started our first class here at Crossgates. I weighed in at 226 pounds.

At this point I have lost 155 pounds (a whole person), but may I say the things that I have gained far outweigh what I have lost. God has given me “new life” and it started on the inside. Because of the change made there, God has changed the outside, too! The most important thing I have gained is freedom from the bondage of overeating. I am no longer enslaved to the power of food. I have learned that balance is necessary in all parts of my life. This is not a diet but a lifestyle change, and the truth is my old life was never a good one and certainly not one that I want to ever go back to!

My journey is not over and I am thankful that the Lord is not finished with me yet! The most important thing for you to know is that I am committed to serving Jesus Christ through this program. I believe this program works, but it only works because of Jesus! He is the center and focus of this journey that we are embarking on together.



We first published this story back in April, 2008. As of today, Joyce has now lost 186.5 pounds! Come hear the rest of Joyce’s story at Leadership Summit 2010. God definitely wasn’t finished with her yet!



Devotional

Wear Your Joy

The LORD has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy.

P S A L M 1 2 6 : 3

“You say you’re a Christian? Please let your face know!” I laughed when I read this on a church sign while driving home from the grocery store. Although meant to be humorous, the saying packs a powerful message for us. Does our joy in the Lord show on our faces? When unbelievers are around us, do they want what we have? Can they see our joy? Do we have thankful and grateful attitudes, or do we whine and complain about everything?

I used to be a chronic complainer. I often found myself joining in when my friends and family complained about everything from the weather to the high cost of prices at the grocery store. I realized through studying God’s Word that ungratefulness has no part in a Christian’s life. It’s hard to be joyful while complaining about things. Likewise, I am learning that it’s hard to complain while praising the Lord and being joyful!

We have so much to be thankful and joyful about! Regardless of our circumstances, the fact that we are saved by grace alone should be enough to fill us with joy. Add to that all of God’s great promises and His blessings and provision for us. He has done great things for us and we should be filled with joy, simply because we belong to Him!

PRAYER

Father, You have blessed me with so many wonderful things. Help me speak words of praise and thanksgiving and not complaint. Give me a grateful attitude and a joyful spirit in all circumstances. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Journal: Write a prayer, praising God for the blessings He has given you.

—Joni Shaffer

Taken from *Living Well, First Place 4 Health* devotional book.



Light & Healthy Summer Favorites

Sloppy Joes

Serves 6

1 lb. ground round, select grade
 1 large green bell pepper, chopped
 1 large onion, chopped
 1 1/2 cans (10 3/4-oz. each) reduced-sodium tomato soup
 6 whole-wheat hamburger buns

Cook the ground beef, pepper and onion in a nonstick frying pan until the meat is browned and the vegetables are tender (about 7 to 10 minutes). Drain and return the mixture to the frying pan. Add the tomato soup to the ground beef mixture and stir well; simmer for at least 10 minutes. When ready to serve, place 2/3 cup of the mixture on each hamburger bun. Serve with 1 cup melon cubes and 1 oz. baked chips.

Nutritional Information for complete meal with sides: 324 calories (44.3% calories from fat); 16g fat; 19g protein; 26g carbohydrate; 2g dietary fiber; 52mg cholesterol; 422mg sodium.

Lemonade

Serves 4

3 cups cold water
 1 cup lemon juice
 3/4 cup sugar substitute
 lemon slices

In a 1-1/2-quart pitcher, stir together water, lemon juice and sugar substitute. If desired, chill in the refrigerator. Serve with ice cubes and garnish with lemon slices.

Nutritional Information: 15 calories (0% calories from fat); 0g fat; trace protein; 5g carbohydrate; trace dietary fiber; 0mg cholesterol; 1mg sodium.

Red White and Blue Berry Parfait

Serves 6

1 8-oz. carton of vanilla low-fat yogurt
 1/2 tsp. vanilla extract
 4 oz. Cool Whip Lite™
 3 cups fresh raspberries and/or cut fresh strawberries
 3 cups fresh blueberries

In a large bowl, stir together yogurt and vanilla. Fold in Cool Whip Lite. Place in 6 12-oz. glasses or dessert dishes, alternating the layers of the berries with the layers of the yogurt mixture.

Nutritional Information: 129 calories (21% of calories from fat); 3g fat (2g saturated fat), 21g carbohydrate; 8g dietary fiber; 2mg cholesterol, 26mg sodium.

Salt

Cajun Fries with Parmesan

Serves 8

1 package (28 oz.) frozen shoestring french fries
 1/2 cup freshly grated parmesan cheese
 2 tablespoons minced garlic
 1/2 teaspoon Cajun seasoning
 Kosher salt

Bake fries according to package directions. Transfer hot fries to a large bowl. Add cheese, garlic, and Cajun seasoning, tossing to coat well. Season to taste with salt.

Nutritional Information: 203 Calories (31% from fat); 5.3g Protein; 7g Fat; 30g Carbohydrates; 2.6g Fiber; 198mg Sodium



Leadership Summit 2010

An incredible two days of celebrating, networking, brainstorming, idea sharing, praying, training and worship are planned. All First Place 4 Health networking leaders, workshop leaders, active, former and potential leaders are invited to attend.

When?

July 30-July 31, 2010. Save the date! All the scheduling details are being finalized. As soon as the schedule is complete, we will post it on our website, www.firstplace4health.com, under events.

Who?

You can look forward to hearing from First Place 4 Health staff members and others!

- ★ Jennie Afman Dimkoff, Speak Up With Confidence
- ★ Carole Lewis, First Place 4 Health National Director
- ★ Vicki Heath, First Place 4 Health Associate Director
- ★ and more!

What?

Here's just a sample of the motivational and informative seminars planned:

- ★ FP4H Food Plan Made Easy
- ★ Show me the Meeting!
- ★ How to Grow Your Ministry
- ★ The Three R's - Relax, Renew, Restore
- ★ Managing Your To-do's
- ★ Web Tools/Social Media - Help!
- ★ New Ways to Motivate & Encourage

Questions?

Go to www.firstplace4health.com and click on Events and then Leadership Summit. More information will be posted there soon. You can also call Lisa Lewis at 1-800-727-5223, x1001.

What are people saying about last year?

Thank you for ALL of your hard work that made the Summit such a great success! This was my first Summit, and God showed me so much about Himself, others and myself. I am so excited to see all that He is going to do in and through us this fall...and beyond! I look forward to next year, and I'll be bringing more people with me! **Kristen, Springfield, MO**

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discover a new way to healthy living

FirstPlace4Health.com

Wellness Retreat

October 7-14, 2010

**Round Top Retreat Center
Round Top ~ Texas**

Round Top Retreat Center in Round Top, Texas, is a beautiful Victorian-style retreat center located “Deep in the Heart of Texas.” It is operated by the Goad family, who began this ministry on a full-time basis in 1984, to provide a home environment with all the charm of a country setting, where people can share God’s Word.

Limited to First 60 Registrations!

WELLNESS WEEK INCLUDES:

- ~ Nutrition Information
- ~ Complete Fitness Testing
- ~ Inspirational Speakers
- ~ Rest and Relaxation
- ~ Daily Exercise Options
- ~ Healthy Delicious Meals

Contact Lisa Lewis at
800-727-5223, x1001 or
lisa.lewis@firstplace4health.com
or visit
www.firstplace4health.com for
more information.

Refund Policy – If First Place 4 Health cancels Wellness Week, a full refund will be given. All other requests for refunds must be received in writing by September 15, 2010. Upon receipt of request, the refund will be granted, minus the \$100 non-refundable deposit. **No refunds will be given after September 15.**

Space is limited! Make your reservations today!

**Weekender Packages available for this event. For more information, visit
www.firstplace4health.com and click on Events.**