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Seniors on Muscle Beach? You're Never Too Old to Get Fit

By ARA Content

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by: **ARA Content**

(ARA) – If you think you're too old to benefit from a fitness regimen that includes weight training, think again.

Seven years ago, Beatrice Maullin read about the Crown Valley Senior Olympics competition in her hometown of Pasadena, Calif. She had been working out at a local gym doing aerobics, machine weights and free weights. Thinking that there was no sport in which she could compete, she called to volunteer for the Senior Olympics. But when she saw that one of the events was powerlifting, an exercise in which she had become interested, she decided to enter the competition, despite having only two weeks to practice the proper form.

In April 1995, Beatrice won her first powerlifting gold medal. By the way, at the time she was 74.

Today, at 80, Beatrice has won 25 gold medals, holds the powerlifting world record for her age group (82.5 pounds), and is the oldest woman in the United States to compete in the bench press. She has won the "best overall" title in weight lifting for the past six years and has been featured locally and nationally in newspapers, magazines and television, advocating weight training for women of all ages.

Beatrice was not a fitness enthusiast all her life. "I took dance as a young girl, raised two boys, and ran my own businesses, but it's not the same as working out," she said. "I don't know why I waited this long to finally do something just for myself. There must have been some magic plan waiting for me to take that first step. I can't believe all this excitement and fuss started when I was in my 70s," she says. "I've never had so much fun."

Studies consistently show that weight training for seniors is beneficial in many ways. Increased strength can help improve balance, reduce blood pressure, stabilize blood sugar levels and lower cholesterol. A separate study also shows that women who take up weight training increase their metabolism for a longer period of time — and therefore burn more calories — by training with weights,

as compared to jogging or other aerobic exercise.

And increasingly, fitness clubs are catering to seniors, who often are their most committed members and are by far the fastest growing segment of the health club market. For example, Gold's Gym offers discounts to seniors, including 25 to 50 percent off enrollment fees, and many instructors take special training to accommodate the needs of the older fitness club members, says Derek Barton, vice president of Public Relations and Communications for Gold's Gym International.

"Our mission at Gold's is to help all of our members fulfill their human potential," Barton says, "and that includes seniors. We want them to go for it. We not only have a growing number of seniors enrolling in our clubs, but also a growing number of seniors doing great things, like Beatrice."

Beatrice says that although the recognition and gold medals are nice, those aren't what keep her coming back to the weight room.

"I feel healthier, more exuberant, happier about the time I spend in the gym," she says. "I love meeting people of all ages at the gym, because they understand the dedication it takes to stay in good health. Of course, going to the gym to work out, you must allow extra time to exercise your jaw muscles, too!"

Beatrice has no plans to retire any time soon. In fact, she tries to get out and speak to women's groups as much as possible to spread the word about the benefits of weight training, even though she realizes it may create some competition in her age bracket.

"These new baby boomers are in for a big surprise when it comes to getting older if they have not been keeping fit by exercising," she says. "If they have not, the fit seniors will beat them mile for mile."

Courtesy ARA Content,

; e-mail:

EDITOR'S NOTE: For more information, contact Connie St. John, The St. John Group, (415) 454-2243, e-mail: constjohn@aol.com

Just the Facts – A Golden Age Gold Mine

By Gary Onks

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- * Every 7 Seconds someone in America turns 50
- * Spend almost \$2 Trillion on goods & services each year
- * 43% of all new cars are purchased by seniors
- * Account for over 40% of total consumer demand
- * Seniors average \$24,000 in annual disposable income

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- * 50+ age group is the fastest growing population segment
- * Most seniors open all the direct mail they receive
- * Spend \$14 Billion yearly on grandchildren gifts
- * Control over 48% of all discretionary purchases that occur
- * Seniors are the most affluent consumer group that exists
- * 30% more likely to purchase online than younger users
- * Per Capita income is 28% higher than other groups
- * Over 78 Million adults are past the age of 50
- * 60% purchase home remodeling products & services
- * Women over 50 spend \$21 Billion on clothes annually
- * Seniors own over 80% of all money in savings accounts
- * 79% of America's financial assets are owned by seniors
- * Folks over 50 Dine out 4–5 times per week
- * Account for over 79% of all leisure travel spending
- * Own 62% of all large Wall Street investment accounts
- * Seniors visit malls more often than any other age group
- * Over 70% of seniors are willing to try new brands
- * 92% of seniors shop online & 78% make online purchases
- * Local daily newspapers are read by 71% of seniors
- * 74% of Seniors use the Internet to find health information
- * Over 65% of Seniors stick with brands if they like them
- * 89% of seniors rate "being active" as critical to enjoying life
- * Housing market for seniors tops \$100 Billion each year
- * The net worth of seniors is 5 times that of average Americans
- * Seniors provide over \$90 Billion in care giving services annually
- * There are more people over 65 than teenagers in the marketplace
- * Modern Maturity is the largest circulation magazine in print
- * "Who Wants to be a Millionaire" average viewer age is 55

You've got the facts, now get the seniors and get more sales!

Gary Onks is the author of "How You Can Reach & Sell the \$20 Trillion Senior Marketplace" which is described as: "The 'Art' of pleasing senior customers" ~ Washington Times "A 'Breath of Fresh Air' in senior marketing" ~ CD Publications Sold On Seniors, Inc. <http://www.SoldOnSeniors.com> Phone: (540) 785-4438 or 800-416-8785 <mailto:GaryOnks@SoldOnSeniors.com>

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