



Fit for Life

From triathlon competitions and running shoe stores to heart monitor innovations, Sally Edwards is all about exercise and invites you to join

Sally Edwards (wearing an orange T-shirt in both pictures above) is one of the pioneers in the Olympic sport of triathlon and also founder of a half-dozen businesses, including Fleet Feet Sports.

For details about how WHA members can enter a free drawing to win one of Edwards' signature heart rate monitors, see page 5.

To the growing list of reasons why you should get up from your couch and get fit, add one more: It's your patriotic duty. That's just how pioneering female triathlete, exercise physiologist, successful entrepreneur, iPhone app developer, best-selling author and motivational speaker Sally Edwards sees it—and her vision is downright inspirational.

"Exercise is the healthiest thing we can do for ourselves—and our country," says Edwards, who is a member of Western Health Advantage and proudly calls Sacramento home. "I travel extensively, and for many people abroad, the perception is that America is going downhill, that we've lost our energy, that our wealth and lifestyle are leading to degenerative disease and obesity. The truth is, there is a decline, and health care costs are going to be enormous if we don't get people moving and into a healthy lifestyle.

"I'm a flag waver," she adds. "It's our civil responsibility to be as healthy and as fit as possible. If you're not going to do it for yourself, do it for your country."

The “approaching calamity is the perfect storm—the intersection of eating poorly, stress, and sitting-on-our-ass-most of the day-week-month-year. This is a new condition that we have never seen before and it is rapidly overtaking the American ability to live a free and independent life.”—heartzones.com

FROM PLAYGROUND TO BREAKING GROUND

Edwards isn't just spouting her philosophy from a soapbox; it's something she's promoted and lived from a tender age. Now 65 years young, she joined other baby boomers in growing up at a time when exercise was not a national pastime nor was fitness a widely held aspiration, especially for women. Then, as now, she bucked the trend and followed her heart, always working out—softball, tennis, swimming—and going on to play basketball for UC Berkeley. Later, she earned a master's in exercise science and took up running—first 10-mile races, then 26-mile marathons, then 50- and 100-mile competitions.

Along the way, she founded Fleet Feet Sports, which eventually became America's largest chain of retail sports shops. “My big dream was to have retail stores across the country to encourage people to work out,” explains Edwards. “When I was growing up, I had to wear men's tennis shoes and basketball shoes. There were no sports bras, no running shoes made for women.”

Edwards ran her first Ironman triathlon in 1981 (in the sport's early days, she says, when “people didn't even know how to spell it”), wrote the first book about training for triathlons and coined the current use of the term “cross training”—which, of course, is what she has always done instinctively. Now a professional triathlete and member of the Triathlon Hall of Fame, she has completed more than 150 all-women's triathlons over the past 20 years, volunteering to finish most of them in last place so no other woman has to.

Among her other athletic pursuits and accomplishments, she also is past winner of the 100-mile Western States Endurance Run and plans at age 86 to complete her hike of

the 2,600-mile Pacific Crest Trail, which she began at age 60 and undertakes at a pace of 100 miles annually.

THE BEAT GOES ON

What gets Edwards' heart pumping the most nowadays and rouses her passions are her efforts to get America fit, spearheaded by The Sally Edwards Company, a media company “dedicated to uncommonly vibrant lifestyles,” and Heart Zones, USA, a training, education, programming and coaching company. She is CEO of the latter and of Upbeat Workouts, a new iPhone app that matches music to the steps of runners, walkers and cyclists.

Somehow, she also finds time to work on her 24th book, *Zoning, Fitness in a Blink*, the companion to her latest cardio training program, *Zoning Fitness*. “We prosper more when we support other people in their success,” says Edwards, explaining her tireless efforts. “It is a paradigm I use in business and life—how can I help you be better? I encourage people to believe in themselves, to see that deep inside there's someone who wants to be fit. I tell people that daily physical activity is an investment in yourself and to prioritize it so it becomes a habit. With enough support, it's something we all can fall in love with.”

“There is not a pill manufactured by any company that's better than exercise. It's the healthiest thing we can do for ourselves—and for our country.”—Sally Edwards