

StrollerStrength keeps infants in mind

By JAN HOGAN
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Strap your baby into the stroller and put on your walking shoes. J&D Fitness Group, a local personal training company, is offering a way for parents with infants to keep in shape.

Co-owner Judy Paris, who has 25 years of physical training experience, has developed a new program called StrollerStrength.

The early-morning outdoors class takes clients on a trek along the paths of Peccole Ranch, mixing strength training, flexibility exercises and mild cardiovascular exercise.

The idea is to keep babies close without adult participants sacrificing their own fitness goals.

Paris designed the program and used it in various communities when she lived on Long Island, N.Y. In January, she trademarked the brand and brought it to Las Vegas.

The program does not have mothers hefting strollers over their heads. Nor are babies handled as part of the class. Why not?

"First, it's unsafe, and second, it's hard to maintain form if you're handling a baby," Paris



said. "It's just too distracting."

Seven people are signed up for the class, but the whims of mothering being what they are, two people participated during a recent session with their tots.

Sarah Ramirez, formerly a pharmaceuticals salesperson, brought her 1-year-old daughter Rae.

Between running and hiking, Ramirez has always been physically active, she said. Now an at-home mother, she said she wanted to "get in shape. I think everybody who has a child struggles to get that last little bit of weight off."

Margarita Smith, a registered nurse from Santa Barbara, was in Las Vegas to visit her son and daughter-in-law. She brought her 2-year-old granddaughter Lisa Bond to the class.

Paris started things off with a walk, pushing the strollers at a brisk pace on the trail behind Peccole Ranch's clubhouse. Participants pulled the strollers off the path for the first stop and Paris had the women bending and stretching.

Part of the stretching had them reaching toward their babies, then applauding when the children responded. Then they took resistance bands to a lamppost and did some work on



Shelly Donahue/ViewFrom left, personal trainer Judy Paris of J&D Fitness Group takes mom Sarah Ramirez, with 1-year-old daughter Rae, and grandmother Margarita Smith, with 2-year-old granddaughter Lisa Bond, through a workout routine in the StrollerStrength program at Peccole Ranch. The routine is aimed at helping new moms get back into shape. Paris owns and operates J&D Fitness Group with her husband, Doug Sheppard.



Shelly Donahue/ViewLisa Bond, 2, watches as her grandmother Margarita Smith, right, participates in a stroller baby workout called StrollerStrength with personal trainer Judy Paris, left, and participant Sarah Ramirez. The class recently took place at Peccole Ranch, but will be moved inside to Piggott Elementary School's gymnasium when hot weather hits.

their biceps.

"Do a couple for me," a pedestrian called out as she trekked past.

Participants also hustled the strollers down the walkway, but this time they stepped in lunges, each one testing the quadriceps muscle. At the next stop, a cement picnic bench was used for triceps dips, leg lifts and slanted pushups.

In fact, each stop used the paseo area's design. A curb, for example, was used for calf muscle work. A wall provided the base for more quadriceps work.

With each exercise, Paris tweaked body stances and made remarks of encouragement.

"Exhale up, inhale down," she called during biceps curls.

The children seemed entranced by the exercises and none became fussy.

Rae even got social and offered a bag of snacks to Lisa.

"Give me five," Smith said to her grandchild, after finishing a particularly tough step-up exercise.

"Her mother takes her to a place to play with other 2-year-olds," Smith said. "But today, she likes this."



Shelly Donahue/ViewSarah Ramirez participates in a stroller workout. The class at Peccole Ranch is designed for new mothers to do with their babies.



Shelly Donahue/ViewLisa Bond, 2, watches as her grandmother Margarita Smith, right, participates in a stroller baby workout called StrollerStrength with personal trainer Judy Paris, left, and participant Sarah Ramirez. The class recently took place at Peccole Ranch, but will be moved inside to Piggott Elementary School's gymnasium when hot weather hits.

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The hour-long class finished with another brisk walk back to the starting point.

When the summer heat hits, Paris has a permit to move the class indoors to Piggott Elementary School's gymnasium.

For more information about the program, visit www.janddfitness.com.

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