

LIGHTEN UP NEWS, December 2002

Funding: The Duke Endowment & Your Donations. Make tax-deductible donations payable to **Lighten Up** and send to us at **Lighten Up**, PO Box 250219, 210 Clinical Science Building, MUSC, Charleston, SC 29425. ph (843) 792-3047

Website: www.lightenupforever.org

Email: lightenup@musc.edu

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION. It is that time of year to look back, reflect, and resolve to make changes. How many times have your resolutions included exercise, eating smart, sleeping more, or getting organized? Be realistic, specific, and positive in your decision for action. Cleaning the slate with a new beginning is an opportunity for hope and change.

Don't let the New Year's Resolution be an excuse for gaining 10 pounds in December!

THINKING OF OTHERS. My Dad, Richard Oexmann, drove from KY and I drove from SC to meet at *Habitat for Humanity International Headquarters* in Americus, GA to begin to share the vision of a partnership to help people build healthy bodies while building houses for people in need. We began at Koinonia Farm, a very special place for spiritual growth and healing, started by Clarence Jordan 60 years ago. Millard Fuller, founder of *Habitat*, first met Jordan in 1965 where they developed the concept of "partnership housing".



Habitat Headquarters, Americus, GA

Koinonia is Greek for "fellowship" and everyone demonstrated this through his or her generous hospitality. Sanders Thornburgh kindly made all of the arrangements while David Castle gave Dad and me a grand tour including the first "partnership houses," pecan orchards, and fields of cotton. There was a generosity of spirit, which reminds all of us of the importance of thinking of others by giving our time and resources.



David Castle & Dad at Koinonia

Habitat celebrates 25 years of faith in action, as 125,000 homes have now been built throughout the world. Ted Swisher, who oversees the US affiliates says, "Every house is a miracle!"



Mary Joan & Ted Swisher

The goal to provide housing for people in need sounds simple but requires a community momentum of time, energy, and resources. *Habitat* is a tremendous inspiration. *Lighten Up* has a simple goal, to encourage people to improve health through eating smart, exercise, and spiritual growth. **Change happens when it becomes a community issue!**

LIGHTEN UP for PEOPLE IN NEED. Through the housing ministries of *Habitat for Humanity (HFH)* and *United Methodist Relief Center (UMRC)* people in need in our community have been identified. Sixty five percent of our population is either overweight or obese and there is no reason to think that *HFH* or *UMRC* homeowners are spared. Sponsor a homeowner by making a tax-deductible donation of \$100. This will pay for health checks, books, and newsletters. The health of a community improves one person at a time.

Send donations to Lighten Up, PO Box 250327, MUSC, Charleston, SC 29425.

I WAS SHOCKED when Paul and I went on a Cruise this October. A young woman consumed a whole pizza, a plate of fries, and 4 desserts in the time it took for the two of us to have an afternoon cup of tea. I could only think that perhaps she was trying to fill a spiritual hole that food would never satisfy. She made me wonder about what her future holds. Would she be one more person suffering from joint pain, high blood pressure, and diabetes? Perhaps she will end up being a candidate for gastric bypass surgery. Read on.

DR. KARL BYRNE, a surgeon at MUSC, performs about 150 gastric bypass surgeries each year for the treatment of extreme obesity. A small pouch, about the size of an egg, is made at the top of the stomach using surgical staples. The intestine is cut and connected to the pouch. Dr. Byrne generously allowed me to see the procedure. The patient was a 45-year-old man who weighed more than 450 pounds (BMI = 63) and suffered from degenerative bone disease. When asked if he had any allergies, his comment was “Only diet”. Many of his health problems will be reversed in time with weight loss.



The surgery has risks but is certainly a reasonable alternative for a select few. The operation lasts about 2 hours and costs about \$25,000. As Dr. Byrne says, “The surgery is the easy part. It works because food is taken out of the equation.”

THE TRUTH AND CONSEQUENCES of a lifetime of obesity, high blood pressure, and diabetes is the increased risk for kidney failure. In the United States, there are 200,000 people on dialysis at an individual cost of \$50,000 per year. There are 80,000 people on a waiting list to receive a kidney. This does not begin to explain the human cost of loss of freedom, pain, and suffering. Prevention through lifestyle change is important!

PONCE DE LEON, a Spanish explorer, arrived in St. Augustine, Florida in 1513 seeking the fountain of youth. He found the Timucua Indians to be tall, athletic, and living many more years than Europeans. He and others concluded: “We have much to learn as we are so immoderate in indulgences both in eating and drinking which shorten our lives.” The message of moderation for health has been around for about 500 years. When will we listen?

Greater St. James AME of Summerville let their light shine by applying *Lighten Up* skills. Lynn Singleton led the fellowship with prayer, Bible study, and health messages. It was faith in action to see the group lose a total of 85 pounds and the blood cholesterol come down an average of 12 points. Lynn always had some words of inspiration and humor to share. “What you put in those lips will show on your hips!” Betty Walker summed up the *Lighten Up* experience by saying, “We’re out of the dark!”



Mattie Alston, Mattie Mazyck, Florine Cook

HOLIDAY IDEA. It only costs \$20 to get a health check coupon to stuff into the stocking for someone you love. The person will be entitled to come to any health check to be measured for weight, percent body fat, cholesterol, HDL, LDL, VLDL, triglycerides and glucose. Come fasting to James Island Baptist Church (Jan 11) or Greater St. James AME (Jan 25). If your church would like to be a health check site, call to schedule a minimum of 12 people. Times, churches, and addresses are on the website: www.lightenupforever.org.

TURNING POINTS. Recently, I met Rev. Glen Davis from Wesley Memorial United Methodist Church in Hollywood, SC. He shared that he lost 40 pounds last summer. When I asked what led to the change, he shared that his doctor measured his waist and said that, “Anything more than 40 inches increases your risk for diabetes and high blood pressure.” I encourage you to measure your waist today or use the Body Mass Index (BMI) table to know how you size up. Find out if you or any family members have passed the line into being overweight or obese. My hope is that you will be motivated to make lifestyle changes today!

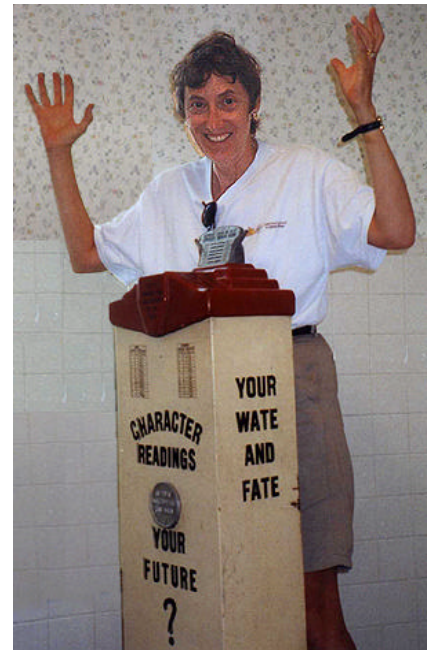
BODY MASS INDEX – Match height on left with weight in pounds to find BMI at top

Height	-----Normal-----					-----Overweight-----					-----Obese-----					Extreme	
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	32	34	36	38		40
4'10"	96	100	105	110	115	120	124	129	134	139	144	153	163	172	181	191	201
4'11"	99	104	109	114	119	124	129	134	139	144	149	158	168	178	188	198	208
5'0"	102	108	113	118	123	128	133	138	143	149	154	164	174	184	194	204	215
5'1"	106	111	116	122	127	132	138	143	148	153	159	169	180	191	201	211	222
5'2"	109	115	120	126	131	137	142	148	153	159	164	175	186	197	207	218	229
5'3"	113	119	124	130	135	141	147	152	158	164	169	181	192	203	214	225	237
5'4"	117	122	128	134	140	146	151	157	163	169	175	186	198	210	221	232	244
5'5"	120	126	132	138	144	150	156	162	168	174	180	192	204	216	228	240	252
5'6"	124	130	136	143	149	155	161	167	173	180	186	198	211	223	235	247	260
5'7"	128	134	140	147	153	160	166	172	179	185	192	204	217	230	242	255	268
5'8"	132	138	145	151	158	164	171	178	184	191	197	210	224	237	249	262	276
5'9"	135	142	149	156	163	169	178	183	190	196	203	217	230	244	257	270	284
5'10"	139	146	153	160	167	174	181	188	195	202	209	223	237	251	264	278	292
5'11"	143	151	158	165	172	179	186	194	201	208	215	229	244	258	272	286	301
6'0"	147	155	162	170	177	184	192	199	206	214	221	236	251	265	279	294	309
6'1"	152	159	167	174	182	190	197	205	212	220	227	243	258	273	288	302	318
6'2"	156	164	171	179	187	195	203	210	218	226	234	249	265	280	295	311	326
6'3"	160	168	176	184	192	200	208	216	224	232	240	256	272	288	303	319	335

STANDING ON THE SCALES takes courage but “truth” may encourage you to change. This fall, my Dad participated in a health check. His job was to measure weight and percent body fat. Dad said, “People stand on the scales as if a snake was going to jump out and bite.” You have to admit that standing on the scales does bring out our fears. Find out how you stand by using the BMI table enclosed. It only takes an extra 15 pounds to double the risk for diabetes, high cholesterol, and high blood pressure.

When I stood on these scales, my “fate” read, “You are easily discouraged. Learn to persevere.” All of us must persevere to make food decisions for health. Accept the challenge and *Lighten Up!*

Have a healthy and happy holiday!



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Lighten Up

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