

# The Connection

*To provide a high quality plan of health and other benefits that are affordable to the employee and the employer*

## PEBB members share their success stories

### MAKE IT PART OF YOUR ROUTINE

I started eating better and exercising on a regular basis. Little by little I started cutting back on the processed foods, sugars, fried foods, breads and pasta, and salt.

It's amazing how much better I feel now that I'm eating healthier. I have more energy and am thinking clearer....oh yeah, I've lost around 20 pounds and gone down two dress sizes. I'm almost 50 years old and am back at my 20-something weight.

Stresses of life aren't so draining now that I'm eating healthier and exercising!!

**Share your success story!**  
[Mystory.pebb@state.or.us](mailto:Mystory.pebb@state.or.us)



### FIND A GROUP TO HELP MOTIVATE YOU

Last fall, my Agency's Healthworks program at DCBS sponsored a one-month destination walking challenge. My group decided on a realistic goal for the month and chose our destination of Seattle. Walking during lunch hours and breaks we almost made it

to Seattle during the month. Although the agency only sponsored the event for a month, the group decided to continue to walk or exercise through the winter. We no longer restricted it to just walking; we counted any exercise in addition to our normal

routine. There are six of us from our Section at DCBS in the walking group, and so far we have walked north to Vancouver, B.C, on to Calgary and Edmonton, Alberta, and we are now approaching Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

[oregon.gov/das/pebb](http://oregon.gov/das/pebb)



# Taking Steps Together

I have been battling obesity my whole life. I decided that I really needed to make some changes in my lifestyle to reach my new goals. I am sure everyone knows how difficult it can be to change your food intake while your spouse is eating that yummy slice of chocolate cake right in front of you. After some

conversation, we came to the conclusion that we both need to be healthy. So now we are going to the gym consistently – six days a week. The trainer on a weekly basis changes up our routines and gives us recommended diet plans. We are losing weight the natural way.

## Get Your Life Back

I would love to share my success with gastric bypass. I have been overweight all of my life. I have tried just about every diet to lose, been to group, etc., but thank heavens for PEBB to cover the gastric bypass. I had my surgery on January 28, 2008, and as of May 5, 2008, I am down 83 pounds. How wonderful it is to get my life back. I have so much more energy and a lot less pain in my knees.

*-Cathy Cunningham*

I have parents that both have diabetes and that makes my chances more likely. It put a fire under me to start exercising and eating better. Every time I am tempted to cheat, I ask myself if I really want to take shots later in life. It helps keep me on track. Thanks for letting me share my story!!!

*-Donna Beverage*

I have found a way to keep my weight where I want it! I work in an office and sit for eight hours a day. In order to maintain my weight, I bike three miles to and three miles from work every day.

Not only does biking maintain my weight (even though I snack all day), I also save money and time by not playing the parking game and not spending money.

*-Genevieve Beecher*

## Ed's Medical Adventure



**Before heart attack:** a healthy diet, lots of exercise (bicycle commuting, kayaking, gym workouts, cross-country skiing)

**After heart attack:** an even healthier diet (more olive oil; even less salt) and all the same kinds of exercise, albeit at a lower level of intensity.

**But, don't sugarcoat it!** It's a life-changing event, and not for the better. -- Ed Deery

*Read more from Ed about the event and the evacuation that led to a successful outcome - survival!*  
[oregon.gov/DAS/PEBB/survival.shtml](http://oregon.gov/DAS/PEBB/survival.shtml)

# Weight Regulation

*I'm not here to tell you that it's easy*



It was very early on in my life's journey that I got the notion that my body was at odds with the environment it had to negotiate as to what concerns appropriate weight to height ratio to maintain optimum health.

I recall I went on my first effort to lose weight at age 12. I believe I lost 5-10 lbs doing the Air Force Academy exercises and somewhat reducing my caloric intake limited to mealtimes. As I look back at my pictures during that

time, I wonder "why"? Who gave me the message that I was overweight, I certainly looked absolutely "normal."

This started a lifetime of struggle with maintenance. I became the yo-yo queen. All my weight-loss attempts failed when it came to maintenance. I did the 50-pound yo-yo move every year of college (gained during, lost in summer), the pregnancy gains and losses, and a myriad of other life experiences which affected my ability to control my eating. You may find it hard to believe, but I've endured 100-pound weight swings during 10-year periods multiple times in my life. My weigh-ins on my medical records are so bizarre that my last practitioner compared my weight postings to data entry errors.

Hopelessly frustrated with my last five-year-long, 20-lbs-per-year upswing I decided to consult a friend at OHD about gastric bypass surgery. When I started to share with her my struggles over dinner, the tears welled up in my eyes and rolled down my cheek uncontrollably; big, round, heavy ones. We couldn't finish dinner.

My friend, who had not experienced a weight regulation disorder to the magnitude that I had, suggested counseling. I felt that had no promise. My lack of ability to keep weight off had nothing to do with my emotions or my lack of self-control and discipline. Those were in check in all other parts of my life. After all, I had proven the ability to lose weight multiple times.

During my work at OHD, I fortunately had very easy

access to the developing research on weight regulation disorders and the hormonal pathways that lead to disordered homeostasis (balance). I knew what I was fighting: a body that went ballistic in today's food/exercise culture and the communal attitude that this was somewhat related to my lack of self control/discipline. I shed the last notion.

For whatever reason, one day I signed up for weightwatchers.com. The program cost \$15 per month. I had tried Weight Watchers meetings before, and I knew this program was not going to work for me (or I'd lose the weight and put it on again). But something was different this time. Although I had signed up for the Web site, I didn't go to it for months, but those crazy people sent me an e-zine every Monday. The e-zine contained many interesting tidbits about a variety of topics. Finally, I got hooked on the enthusiasm of it all. Remember, by this time, I had "dieted" multiple times and I knew it was no picnic. There were many times I would become discouraged, outraged, hopeless and uninspired. This last journey I experienced all those emotions again, but figured if I were going to endure hardship, I was going to do it with the support of those at weightwatchers.com.

This last effort with the help of WW.com has lasted five years and believe it or not, I'm still not down to the recommended goal weight for my age and height (150). However, I am 93 lbs lighter and feel like I always have a structure to grab when things appear to be out of control. I learned a lot of valuable lessons this journey but one of the most

important lesson was this:

*Falling off the wagon doesn't mean the wagon rolls away. It stays close by for you to climb on again the next day. The journey to acceptable weight management is not a minute-by-minute all or nothing affair. Keep on plugging and you will see results.*

*-Isolde Knapp*

