



PhysicallyFIT



" I like being fit because it helps me with my cheerleading."
Morgan, 12

This Edition's Fit Family: **The Cabas** *By Elizabeth Eisenstadt Evans*

Whether you are a professional athlete or a weekend warrior training for your first 5K race, you know the value of having your posse behind you. They cheer you on from the sidelines, meet you at the gym at 6 a.m., and gently bust your chops when you need some encouragement to stay in shape.

What better "amen corner" do you have than your family? Remember the old saying: "charity begins at home"? As we combat an epidemic of inactivity and obesity all over this country, families are recognizing that FITNESS (mental, physical, spiritual) starts at home.

With this edition, PhillyFIT starts a new feature, recognizing the achievements of families in our region who make fitness a priority. We hope that in reading their profiles, you will, at some point, recognize your own family. If you don't, send us an email and describe what you are doing in your house (and out of it) to

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help your own posse become healthy, happy and strong. We're looking forward to hearing from you.

" I have fun playing sports with all of my friends and teammates."

Cory, 13

So sit back and meet the Cabas. Then put down the magazine, turn off the computer, grab the kids and get out there!

Anyone who thinks they are too busy to exercise hasn't met the Cabas. This Phoenixville family of six maintains a pace that would make an ultra-marathon-

er tired-and yet manages to have a blast making fitness a family affair.

Married for seventeen years in October, Chris and Michele Caba have always made staying in shape a high priority. In fact, their first date in college was a run down the ski slopes together. The co-owner of Total Rental, with a rental equipment powerhouse with six locations in Berks, Chester and Montgomery Counties, Chris is also the President of The Party Center. As the mother of four children ranging in age from 13-3, Michele not only helps him but also stays on top of a fitness schedule for the kids that require the attention to detail of an

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"It is easy to be fit when your doing something you like."

Madison, 9

air traffic controller. Thirteen-year-old Cory, a Woodlyne school student, plays lacrosse, runs cross-country and plays hockey. As for Cole, the family's junior member, "He always has a bat and a ball in his hand" says Chris.

Both twelve-year-old Morgan, a student a Phoenixville Middle School, and nine-year-old Madison, at Schuylkill Elementary, are on the competitive cheerleading squad run by Cheer Tyme, the Malvern and Harrisburg-based organization that sponsors competitive cheerleading teams. The cheerleading schedule means that the girls are in the gym four days a week, and on the road traveling to competitions in to cities like Atlanta, GA, and Baltimore, MD.

Cheerleading travel time offers her an opportunity to spend time with her daughters, says Michele, and allows Chris to spend some "guy time" with their boys.

In the summertime, the whole family congregates around the Caba's swimming pool, she added. "Sometimes it's nine o'clock and the kid are still swimming, and we make time for everyone to get together as a family."

When they aren't chasing three-year-old Cole (entering nursery school in the fall) around, the older Cabas run marathons and other road races, as well as working out with a physical trainer at Peak Fitness in Chesterbrook. "I definitely have it on the calendar to head out for an hour or two and take a break, to run or do something else every day," says Chris.

In addition to the time they spent on fitness activities, the Caba's love going to dinner and a movie. Often they will go for a bike ride, get a bite to eat, and find a place to buy an ice cream cone. "If this wholesome family has a food vice, it may be ice cream", confesses Michele. While at their Sea Isle City vacation house, they do a lot of walking...exercises that often ends up at a neighborhood ice cream parlor. At the same time, their kids, who are constantly on the go, are healthy eaters, who don't mind a meal of sushi, clams, or crabs.

Asked for a message to pass on to other parents interested in motivating their family to get fit, Michele suggests they look around at their lovely environs in southeastern Pennsylvania. "Our surroundings offer a great opportunity to be fit. Hop on a bike, talk a walk, exercise and spend family time-it's really in the kids' best interest to teach them fitness, so they can carry it on."



Elizabeth Eisenstadt Evans is also an ordained Episcopal priest. Currently a free-lance writer whose opinion pieces on religion and other topics appear periodically in the Philadelphia A nationally published journalist with a background in features, book reviews and beat reporting, Inquirer, Evans also does marketing and development writing for local commercial and nonprofit institutions. While by no means a gym rat, she runs regularly in her Glenmoore neighborhood, trying to live down the stereotype that clergy always have their head in the clouds.