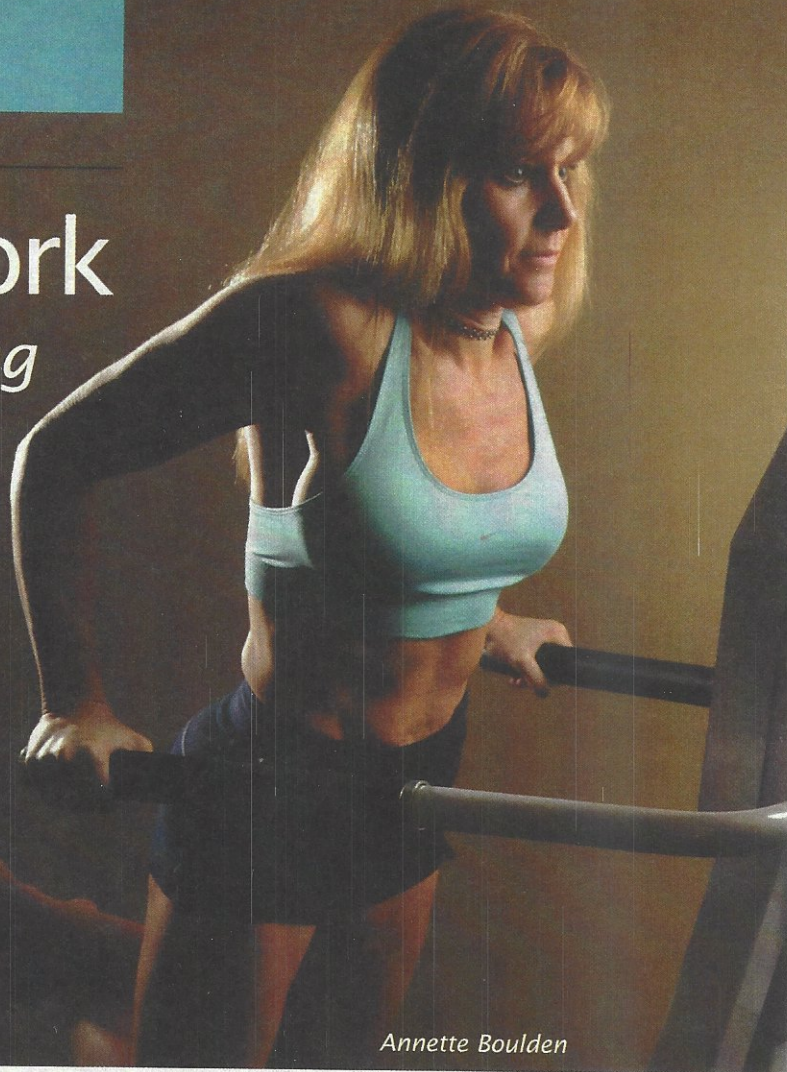
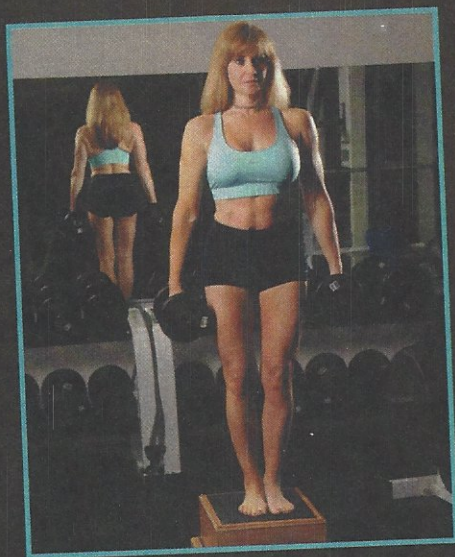


# Bodies of Work

*Moms got something to flex about*



*Annette Boulden*

Annette Boulden strolls into Starbucks and passes the glass case of muffins and pound cakes that she will not allow herself to eat. Boulden is a 5-foot-1 petite woman with blond hair, blue eyes and chiseled muscles. She is wearing a red knit top and blue jeans which emphasize her curvy body. Two men on sofas check her out as she orders a beverage. If she notices, she doesn't mind.

"I've been up since 3:30 this morning. I did some wash, cleaned some, and got my kids off to school," Boulden says. "I am a typical type A, always doing something."

She flashes a wide white smile. "I am heading to the gym after here." She looks a good ten years younger than her 43 years.

Boulden is part of a growing segment of women who are breaking the mold of the female bodybuilder. Over 40 and mom to three kids, she still completes a rigorous training schedule in preparation for fitness competitions.

Boulden was introduced to the sport years ago by her husband Glenn, who was then competing locally. With Glenn's guidance, Boulden took to the regimen immediately. "It was easy to do together," she says. "We helped each other work out." Boulden competed in a couple of

events, and although she didn't register any top wins, she was hooked. "I liked doing good things for my body."

The difference between bodybuilding and fitness is right there in the name. Fitness competition is a slenderized version of women's bodybuilding – competitors don't have muscles that would be considered manly. It is more about femininity and softness, and having a well-proportioned sculpted body.

Like traditional bodybuilding, fitness competitions require competitors to pose within their class and accent their muscles. But bodybuilding is about size; fitness is about well-toned muscles and fit bodies. And bodybuilding is done barefoot. Fitness competitors do so in heels, executing a series of turns similar to a model on a catwalk. Heavy makeup and

tanning products are used since stage lights can wash out a lot of the definition a competitor has achieved.

This branch of bodybuilding is not news to everyone. People who have been reading fitness and muscle magazines for years have been watching the rise of the sport. But in the past, it was attracting female competitors in their 20s. Now a portion of the population flexing their stuff is older – and often called "Mom".

In addition to completing her own fitness routine and working as a personal trainer, Boulden has a master's degree in nutritional education and works as a registered dietician. This month she'll compete in a fitness competition at the South Jersey Wellness Expo in Atlantic City. "My training has helped me to be a better person and to stay focused," she says. "It gives me a natural high."

For 32-year-old Cheyenne Prawdick, her newly-developed passion for fitness is turning a profit.

After giving birth to her son two years ago, Prawdick was struggling with losing her pregnancy weight. "I felt so bad. I