



Menorah Park Campus

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#### SUCCESS ATTAINED THROUGH FUN FITNESS CHALLENGE

{Beachwood, OH} Menorah Park's Peter B. Lewis Aquatic and Therapy Center (LAC) staff decided to pose a challenge to the center's Health Maintenance participants: Do you have what it takes to race across America? Thirty two individuals said "yes" to the 2,700 mile event. The *real* Race Across America is an annual bike race from Oceanside, CA to Annapolis, MD. In our *simulated* race, clients were encouraged to use the treadmills, bikes, Nusteps and walks outside to earn their miles. For every mile they completed, they received 10 miles toward the race distance. In addition to earning miles from exercise, participants were given a weekly 100 bonus mile challenge. These challenges included skipping dessert for the week, meeting someone new, and going without TV for two days.

The level of competition was something the staff had not anticipated. The leader-board varied greatly over the duration of the event with many participants coming in extra days to ensure they were in the top 3. There were racers spending up to 1 ½ hours on the exercise bike just to stay ahead of their competitors, and there were clients motivated to walk for just a few more minutes to complete a mile. It was so wonderful to see these people push themselves beyond their preconceived limits to achieve their goals. Ultimately, the top finishers were decided. The first one to cover the 2,700 miles was Laurel "Wild Thing" Conway. Laurel was determined early on to take that first place prize of a free month at LAC. She said the added exercise was a win-win for her. She felt better and even found that she needed less medication. Taking 2<sup>nd</sup> place and a \$25 gift card to New Balance shoes was Stephanie Lendvay. Steph worked out 5 days a week to earn that finish. But the race for third place was the tightest of all. It came down to a near "photo finish" with George Robicsek edging out Haiyee Lin Lie by just a few miles.

Overall, it has been a lot of fun and a learning experience for everyone involved. It is proof that the competitive spirit really never dies. Congratulations to EVERYONE that participated!



Therapists in back row: Lisa Altenbaugh and Tammy Michaels  
 Left to Right front row: George Robicsek, Laurel Conway, Stephanie Lendvay