

New column

Welcome to the start of a new series of articles that the Wellness Committee of the ISBA is providing through *Res Gestae*. We will be publishing short “testimonials” or “success stories” from lawyers who have improved the quality of their lives through choosing a healthier lifestyle. The mission statement of the ISBA Wellness Committee is “to promote personal well-being among judges, lawyers, their staffs and law students by encouraging healthy lifestyles and supporting leadership for healthier communities.” The Wellness Committee encourages physical activity, stress management, healthy diet and smoking cessation. Thus, while I expect that many of these stories will talk about success through exercise, I hope that we are able to include stories about success with smoking cessation, stress management and improved nutrition as well. If you have a success story or know of a member of our legal community with a success story, please let us know or encourage that person to share the story with us.

In addition to success stories, should you have any fitness-related activities in your local community that you would like to promote through the State Bar’s electronic media, please email the details to me, Terry Harrell, vice chair of the ISBA Wellness Committee and executive director of the Indiana Judges & Lawyers Assistance Program, at terry.harrell@courts.in.gov, and we will be sure to broadcast them.

We are especially pleased that Gov. Daniels, a longtime proponent of a healthy lifestyle for Hoosiers, has agreed to provide the first success story. If our governor can find time for a healthy lifestyle, surely the rest of us can as well! 🏃

No longer campaigning, just running!



Fit to Practice

I don’t remember a time when I wasn’t regularly active in sports of some kind. But I do recall when I realized that physical exercise was not just my favorite form of fun, but a lifelong obligation I owed myself and those around me.

I emerged from college in the early 1970s, just at the advent of the running boom. People like Dr. Ken Cooper and Jim Fixx were popularizing what had been just one competitive sports option (and never one of mine) as something that everyone, at every level of fitness, should consider taking up.



I laugh when I remember my first few months. Knowing no better, I just laced up my beat-up tennis shoes and took off. Someone must have been making real running shoes at the time, but I hadn’t gotten the word. Forty years and at least a dozen pairs of shoes later (okay, a few more than that, but I was never very smart about replacing them often enough), I’m still at it.

Shortly after I started running, I added weightlifting to the regimen. And somewhere north of 50, during a recuperation from one injury or another, I began experimenting with swimming. Just as in my early running days, I surprised myself with my ability to add distance quickly.

I standardized my swims at one mile because that takes me so long that I get the full aerobic benefit without going any further. I tell all the real swimmers that now they know why that basic stroke I use is called the “crawl.”

I arrived in my ’60s in better apparent condition than I would have dared to hope for. I know it has helped me in innumerable ways to be more effective on the job, and to have more energy for the fun side of life.

In our first months, our administration launched the INShape Indiana program,

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to encourage our fellow Hoosiers to avail themselves of the benefits of better fitness. I remember telling the excited crowd at the announcement that, of all the myriad changes we would try to bring to our state, INShape would be the most readily accepted, and the most difficult. No one, least of all government, has found a fully effective means of inducing large numbers of people to alter the habits of a lifetime.

Nothing we've found works as well as positive encouragement from colleagues and friends.

So we are enormously grateful for the State Bar's new initiative and leadership in this realm. Given the respect and visibility your members draw in their communities, Indiana can expect an indirect as well as direct boost to our wellness efforts. Thanks for this project; see you at the gym! 🏋️