

Oak Cliff People  
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**All-Hours Fitness Club a Hit at Start | Anytime Fitness opens doors in North Oak Cliff**

By Chuck Cox, Staff Writer

It may be the perfect time for Anytime Fitness in Oak Cliff.

Since opening its doors on Dec. 17, the new 24-hour fitness club, located at 611 N. Bishop Avenue, has been a sweeping success. And it is the only location in North Oak Cliff with round-the-clock access to workout equipment, which includes strength training and cardiovascular equipment.

In the two months it has been open, Anytime Fitness has already nearly reached 50 percent of its set limit of 1,000 members. The club will have its official grand opening from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 23. The ribbon cutting will be held from 11 a.m. to noon. The first 20 new members to enroll on Feb. 23 will receive gift packages valued at \$100.

Co-owners Jacqui Bliss and Renee Reed have been thrilled with the response the club has received from the community, which was apparently eagerly waiting for a place to workout at all hours of the day.

"Everybody has been so nice and welcoming," Bliss said. "People are hoping it makes it, so we're doing really well. They tell us, 'Thank you so much for coming here.' They comment about the equipment and how clean the place is."

Anytime Fitness has about 1,000 clubs nationwide, including other area locations in Midlothian and Waxahachie. Franchises are also being planned for both Plano and Frisco. Entrepreneur Magazine named Anytime Fitness one of the "Hottest New Franchises of 2006."

All four staff members of the club, which includes Bliss and Reed, are also personal trainers. The club is staffed into the evening on weekdays, and from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. on Saturdays. Members have constant access with a key card.

There are several security measures in place at the club to help members feel secure late at night, including security cameras, panic buttons with direct access to 911 and an alarm that sounds when more than one person enters the building with one key card.

Some of the services available to members besides personal trainers include tanning facilities, private showers and dressing areas and reciprocity at all of the Anytime Fitness locations nationwide. The workout equipment includes elliptical machines, treadmills, bicycles, circuit and cross-training machines and free weights.

Bliss and Reed owned a workout club in Indianapolis for more than three years before deciding to open up in Oak Cliff.

"I have always loved work in fitness," said Reed, who was a women's assistant college basketball coach for 10 years. "I came to the realization I didn't want to be a head coach, so why was I continuing the rat race of being an assistant? After that, I moved to Indianapolis and got into the club there."

The duo started thinking about opening an Anytime Fitness last year. Reed, who has family in Dallas, moved to town in August, and Bliss was here by September.

"We found out this is a really neat neighborhood," said Reed. "Not only does it have the physical requirements we needed, but the demographics were right, there's a need here and it all came together."

Member Brent Wise, who lives just up the street from the club, is glad Bliss and Reed settled on Oak Cliff to open up Anytime Fitness.

"We have been so waiting for a gym to open here," said Wise, who works 24 hours on, 48 hours off as a firefighter. "We tried having a membership over near White Rock Lake, where we spend a lot of time. They were great and wonderful establishments, but with the kids here and everything it just wasn't convenient enough. This is wonderful. I'm like a kid in a candy store here."



Staff photo: Christina Barany  
Co-owners and personal trainers,  
Renee Reed and Jacqui Bliss  
inside their gym, Anytime Fitness.