

WHY I HAD TO HAVE FIVE POUNDS OF

FAT

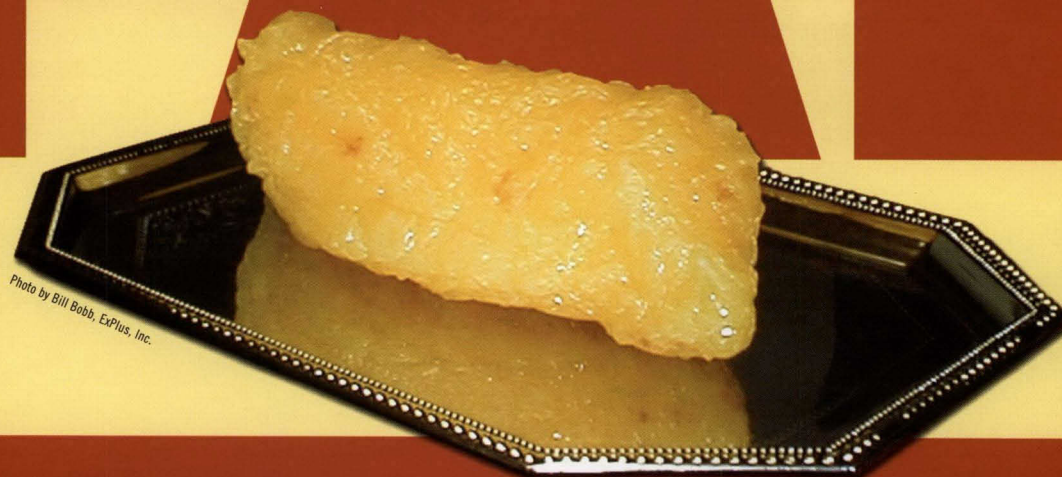


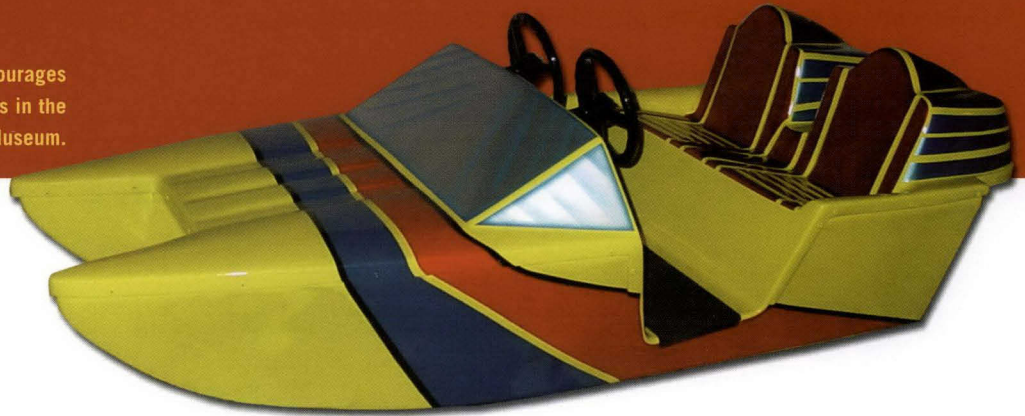
Photo by Bill Bobb, ExPlus, Inc.

Five pounds of fat – well, imitation fat – can be found in the “Sport and the Body” section of the new Sports Museum.

By Linda Tabit
Museum Associate and Interactive Specialist

MOST WOMEN WANT TO GET RID OF FAT; MY MISSION WAS TO GET SOME. NO, I’M NOT UNDERWEIGHT, BUT I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF INTERACTIVES IN THE NEW WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA SPORTS MUSEUM AT THE HISTORY CENTER. INTERACTIVES ARE HANDS-ON OPPORTUNITIES THAT HIGHLIGHT A TEACHING POINT IN AN EXHIBIT.

This kiddie ride hydroplane boat encourages imaginary play for young visitors in the "At The Races" section of the new Sports Museum.



It can be as simple as a photo album of Westinghouse High School football players to show change over time, or as complicated as a bicycle that generates electricity to illustrate energy used by professional cyclists. The "Sport and the Body" exhibit has a section on nutrition, and we needed five pounds of fat for our display. I should explain that this is a plastic replica of five pounds of fat, and yes, it is really disgusting. I know our school-age visitors will love it, and it may just teach all of us a thing or two about maintaining an appropriate weight. Losing just five pounds of fat can make a huge difference to your health. So how did I discover this need for five pounds of fat?

Franco Harris is the Chair of the Champions Committee of the Western Pennsylvania Sports Museum. He's also the owner of a company called Super Bakery that makes nutritious muffins and doughnuts. Harris isn't just a name on a list. He is actively involved in helping us acquire funding, support, and artifacts for the new museum. As a former Super Bowl superstar and owner of a company dedicated to providing delicious and nutritious food, Harris is keenly interested in teaching the benefits of a good diet. He generously offered the assistance of Super Bakery's Corporate Dietician Kim DeNovellis, RD, LDN. She has been instrumental in the development of many of the interactives you'll encounter in the "Sport and the Body" section. DeNovellis and I had extensive conversations about

what we'd like to teach in this section and the best format to use to make our point.

DeNovellis, a Penn State graduate, wanted to teach visitors about proper serving sizes and the dangers of overeating. In one of our talks she told me about a professor with a disgusting paperweight on her desk. It was a replica of five pounds of fat, and as soon as I heard about it, I had to have it. One week and \$61.35 later, I had five pounds of fat on my desk. Since then, I've had to endure comments like "Linda, where's your fat? Could you bring your fat to the meeting?" And my personal favorite: "Linda, can I show someone your fat?" Just what every woman wants to hear.

Ah, it's all in a day's work at the History Center. I hope you'll visit the new museum and enjoy all the exhibits and interactives we've developed. Young visitors can put together a well-balanced meal using play food in "Set the Table" and learn colors in a game called "Strive for Five" about eating fruits and vegetables. Other visitors can use their large motor skills to get a workout in "Quarterback Attack" and the "Energy Cycle." We also have "A Little Bit of Bocce" with special bocce balls and a chute so visitors with limited mobility can participate in this competitive game. Come to the Western Pennsylvania Sports Museum to learn about the history of sports in this region. But don't forget to see the five pounds of fat. ☼

History Center visitors can try their hand at bocce in the Italian American section of Community Sports. These bocce balls are designed for indoor use and help develop and strengthen large and small motor skills.



Photo by Jason Currie