



# *Inspire Health*

2023

SHELBYVILLE  
TIMES-GAZETTE

# Tabby Stem: healthy eating, healthy life

By **ZOË WATKINS**  
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Like many people, Tabby Stem said she has struggled with weight since childhood. She grew up in an age and household where packaged, sugary foods were the norm.

“So, it’s just been a constant journey to figure out the right foods,” she said.

Stem’s son, Brock, died 19 years ago this month. Grief was overwhelming, which made stress eating an easy way out. Then in 2006, “I had a moment where I said my life needs to change,” she said.

Her journey started with walking. And then moved to a group fitness class. “I went to a Zumba class, and I was like, the music was crazy, and I loved it. And that made me lose more weight,” Stem recalled.

She loved it so much she bought the fitness club in 2009 and ran it for two years. “I’m driven by that woman that’s at home with kids who doesn’t have answers and thinks that she can’t do any better—because that was me. And all these years later, I still want to help,” Stem said.

Now 22, years later, Stem has learned to designate. While she stays busy working at The Express copy shop, Stem admits she gets her main exercise

from teaching those two classes.

“But class time is that big release,” she said.

Today, she teaches a fitness class at the Shelbyville Rec Center on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 5:30. Her class is called DKP.

“Back in the day,” that stood for dance, kick, pump. “Today, it’s more like drop, kick, and punch,” Stem said with a laugh. That is, it involves more kickboxing and martial arts.

“It’s a pretty high-intensity class. But the reality is, anybody can do it and work at their own pace,” she said.

She became a certified personal trainer and group fitness instructor and in nutrition as well. In addition to exercising, Stem has also been vegan for about two years. She admits she’s not one of those “gung-ho” vegans, Stem said she eats vegan for her own health.

“I’ve really always prided myself in being natural,” she said. It’s just like the old adage goes, “an apple a day keeps the doctor away.”

Though doing a group fitness class or changing your diet to veganism can seem intimidating, Stem says, “Just start. Start where you are.”

For example, start with a walk or replace one meal a day with an apple and an orange. “Our society is

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T-G Photos by Zoe Watkins

**Tabby Stem has been eating vegan for about two years.**

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## Tabby

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sick and a lot of it is food and lifestyle driven. But our bodies want to heal themselves," she said.

Stem said she also eats at home more. The trick? Keep meals simple; they can even be as simple as beans, potatoes, and greens. For example, three orders of fries can be over \$10 while a sack of potatoes is only \$2. Stem said she also loves making a big pot of taco soup or even pasta. The big key is portion control.

Now, looking back, Stem has several tips, especially for those young moms.

"First and foremost, take a couple of hours every week to exercise and do something for you," she said. In this way, taking time for yourself allows you to be a better mom, friend, and overall person."



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Tabby Stem teaching DKP.



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# Tre Stewart: body lifter, powerlifter, Olympic weightlifter

By **ZOË WATKINS**  
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Powerlifting requires a lot of due diligence. You go up a little bit in weight then try to get to the peak of your strength.

Then you play with your weight to try and see if you can still lift the same amount of weight after losing the fat.

It's a tough challenge but one local gym owner Tre Stewart is up to.

"You've got to be able to maintain your training schedule and get stronger but still try to stay at a decent weight," he said.

But first, he tested out body building.

Stewart is a Bedford County native who comes from a long line of athletes. They're a "football family," he said, while his great uncle even played for the Cowboys.

Stewart himself did track and field as well as football in high school. Originally, he planned to go to the University of Tennessee-Chattanooga to play football. But freshman year he tore his knee.

Wanting to rehabilitate his knee, he began going to the gym to train and get back into "football shape."

Then one of his gym buddies introduced him to doing bodybuilding shows.

So, Stewart gave it a try and competed in the NPC National Men's Physique competition in Murfreesboro.

"My first goal was to compete. I said, 'I don't know if I'm going to win or not,' but I'm going to find a show six months out and start lifting to see what I can do...Say this is for myself," said Stewart.

He ended up winning in his first show—which led him to compete for five seasons as a bodybuilder.

He also competed in the World Powerlifting Championships for five years where he earned two World Records for deadlifts and the highest total. It's no wonder; Stewart can bench press 425 lbs., squat 625 lbs., and deadlift 725 lbs.

It's safe to say it's taken every bit of those five years to get to those numbers. "You start with crazy form, then you learn along the way and kind of bump your head against the wall," he said with a laugh.

Now, Stewart is now phasing in as an Olympic Weightlifting Competitor.

If you're interested in learning the trade of powerlift or weightlifting, Stewart sug-



► See Tre, Page 5

Tre Stewart with fellow coach and trainer Matt Henderson.

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## Tre

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gests learning the lifts first. “Technique is a big part, and a lot of people go in there first and start throwing weight around.” Typically, you need someone who can direct and coach, which Stewart also does.

From there, you have to put in the work. Being competitive helps with this, according to Stewart.

All while diving into the world of lifting, Stewart also opened a gym and took on clients. “My passion to get back on the field turned into something I never knew I wanted to do,” said Stewart. He operates CrossFit 931 in Shelbyville, which focuses on high-intensity training, and Flex Up Fitness in Tullahoma.

For Stewart, the gym is like a melting pot; you never know who is going to walk in. You have people come in from every walk of life, jobs, ages, races, and sexes. But they all have the common goal to get healthier and have a better fitness journey.

“And that’s what I feed off of,” he said. “Out here there are so many ways to separate people. But in the gym, the only thing that matters in a gym environment is how hard you work and how you treat other people.”

His advice for getting started? One, set small goals. Start walking and pick up a dumbbell.

He admits that to get it all done—work, training, and living life—requires some lack of sleep.

“But I prioritize it. And even on the days I can’t get to the gym, me and my kids will get on



**ABOVE LEFT:** People in a group training class at CrossFit 931 in Shelbyville.

**RIGHT:** Tre Stewart is a body lifter, powerlifter, and Olympic weightlifter

**BELOW RIGHT:** Adriana Merino and Gabriela Ortiz strike up a pose while training at CrossFit 931.

the floor and do sit-ups and push-ups and squats,” he said. “Just find a way to get something in. Ten minutes goes a long way.”

And two, find a community that you like. One like what you might at CrossFit 931, which is class oriented. “You’ve got people to help you out so you’re never in there thinking you’re going to be lost...Now you can get in there and have fun,” he said. Plus, it also holds you accountable.

But the overall goal of being “fit,” for Stewart, is longevity of life and quality of life. Plus, it always gives him a challenge to work on—something he hopes to inspire other people to do.



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# Senior bowlers find friendship, fun in league

By **DAVID MELSON**  
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A group of older Bedford County bowlers are staying in shape by hitting the lanes every week.

But they're not just keeping fit – they're building bonds and have become a family.

The Swinging Seniors Bowling League meets at 9:30 Wednesday mornings at Lightning Lanes on Davis Lane.

The fun is as meaningful as the final scores, although they take their game seriously. In fact, league member Dean Rhodes scored a perfect 300, earning a special jacket, on the day the T-G visited. All 300 scorers are given a commemorative jacket by Lightning Lanes.

Brooks Faulkner says he began bowling at the well-remembered Primrose Lanes (on Union Street in the building that now houses Piggly Wiggly) in the 1960s.

"If you don't use it, you lose it,"

Faulkner said.

The coveted 300 score is still a goal for him – his high game is a 298.

Faulkner leads the bowlers in prayer before each week's session, noting participants or their family members facing health issues.

"We're just keeping active," said Joe Paul Moore. He and his wife, Louise, are long-term participants in the league. "It keeps old folks from rusting up. They've got a great league out here."

Susie Henderson says she likes hanging out with her fellow bowlers each week.

"It's a great group of people here. It's a lot of fun. Lightning Lanes is doing a lot of things to bring people back – a lot of things for seniors."

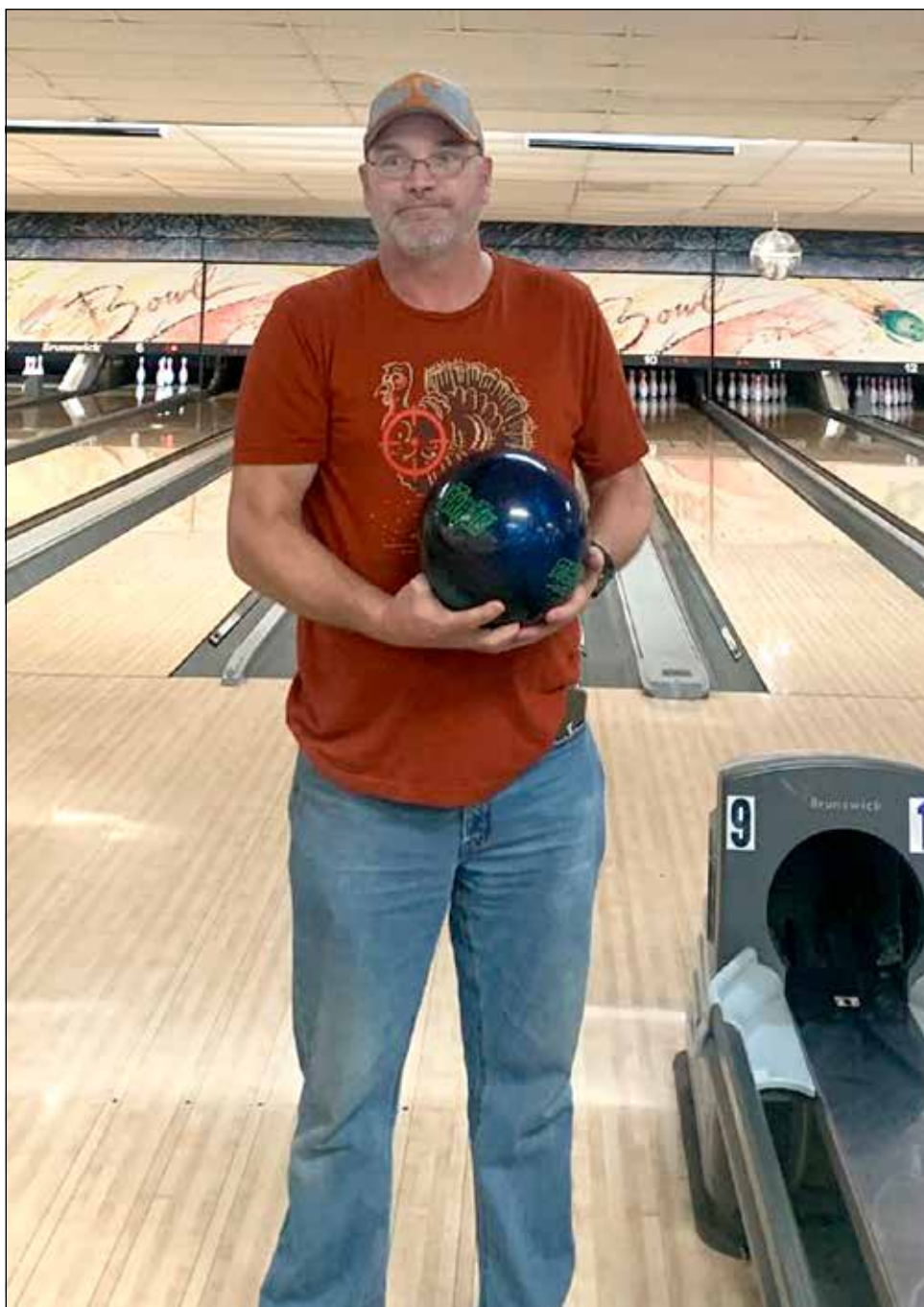
The league's not made up exclusively of longtime bowlers, as Donna Valenzuela can clarify. Some are just learning the game, or are in it for fitness.

"I just decided I wanted to bowl,"

Valenzuela said. "I thought this was a good way to do it."

Travis Arnold, whose father owns Lightning Lanes, manages the operation with two of his brothers. He says they're working to add amenities and events. A long-term goal is to add on the building with more room for live music, Arnold said.

"They're trying to improve it and make it a good place for Shelbyville to come and have fun," Swinging Seniors participant Jim Crawford said.



Dean Rhodes bowled a perfect 300 game the day the T-G visited.

Submitted photo

"I retired and it's just something to do," James Sudberry said. "I enjoy the people. I'm not much of a bowler but I enjoy being out here."

It's about people for Kim Dearing as well.

"I've been bowling here for three years," Dearing said. "It's a lot of fun. It

gives people our age something to do, just doing things with our friends."

Dee Canalejo said the league's just what the doctor ordered.

"My doctor said 'exercise.' There are a lot of pluses in bowling. The people here are very kind and considerate. I'm trying to get better at bowling."

"It's a passion," said Joe Adamson, who's been bowling for more than 20 years. Adamson also said he's drawn by the people.

Jim Crawford, 73, said he's been bowling for 66 years.

"I enjoy it. It gives me something to do. Good fellowship, too, I bowl three days a week."

Like several of the Swinging Seniors, Crawford bowls in all-age leagues as well.

Pat Evans, a bowler since childhood, also likes "just being around all the people."

Yvonne McChristian and husband William have been bowling for "many years," she said.

"I like the fun...and I like challenges," said Yvonne, who sometimes leads dance sessions for the league. "I was still playing softball at 71.

"I love the adrenaline rush. We just have a good time."

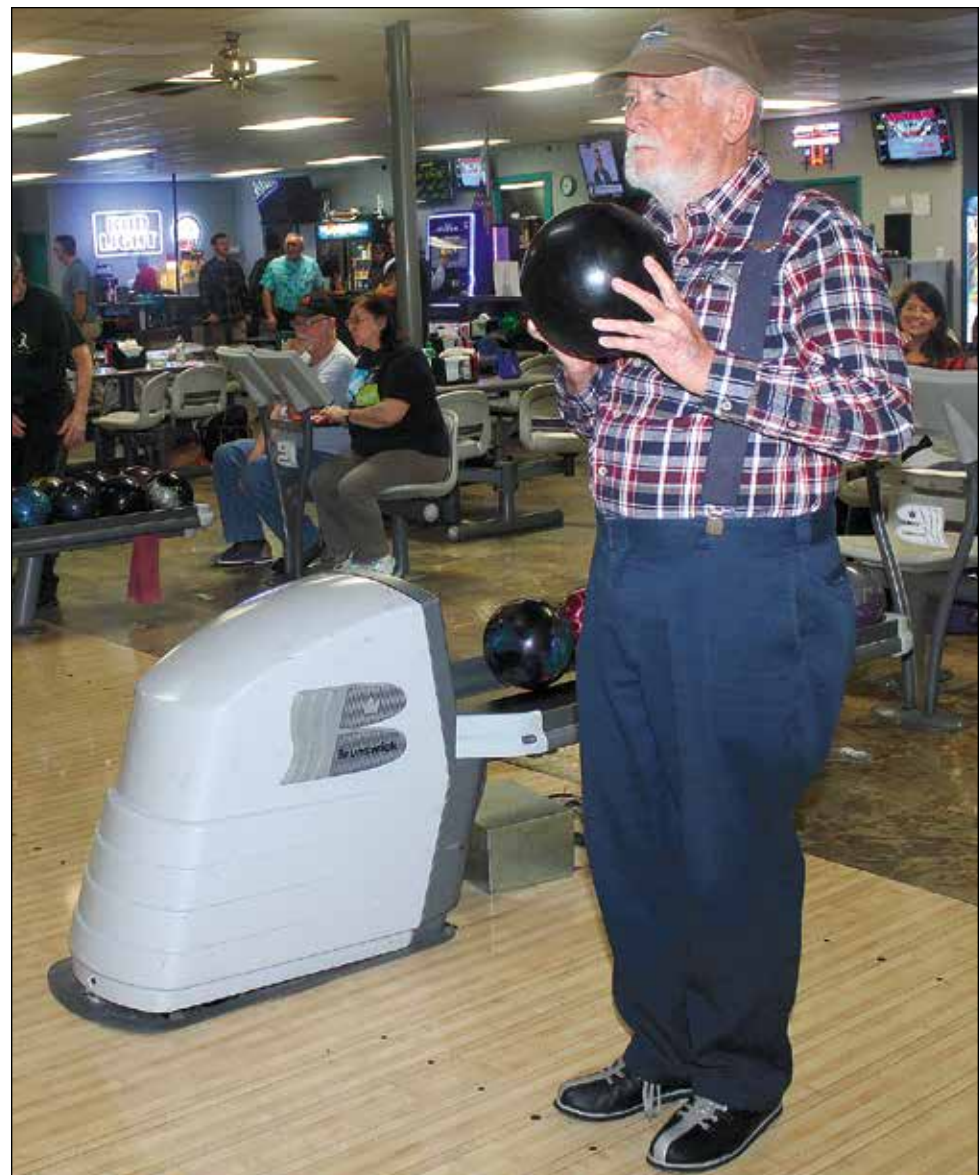


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**ABOVE LEFT:** Yvonne McChristian, still bowling – and mentoring high school students, she said - in her 70s.

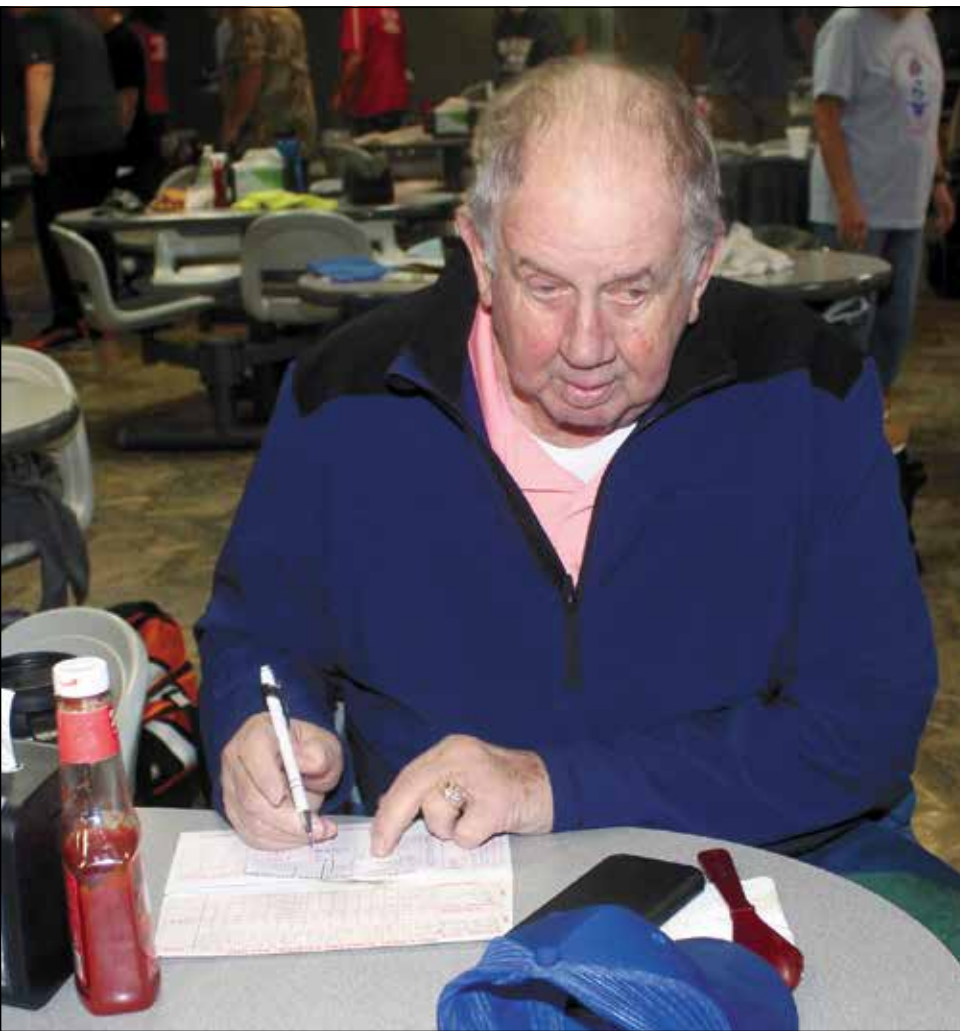
**ABOVE RIGHT:** James Sudberry gets ready to let one roll.

From left, Alene Broomfield, Marie Faris and William McChristian cheer a fellow bowler's good performance.

T-G Photos by David Melson







ABOVE LEFT: Joe Paul Moore works on scoresheets.

ABOVE RIGHT: Lightning Lanes co-manager Travis Arnold and Jim Crawford.



LEFT: It's a family affair for (from left), Roger Burrahm, Dakota Burrahm (too young to be a league member, but enjoying hanging out with the crowd), Delphie Burrahm and Dalphine Shadrack.

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Fun and fellowship abound in the Swinging Seniors Bowling League.

T-G Photo by David Melson

# FIT, *Fun &* Healthy





Me enjoying the view at Savage Gulf State Park.

Submitted photo

# Don't start fresh

## Pick up where you left off

By **ZOË WATKINS**

Well, it's the end of January, which begs the question: are you still sticking to your New Year's Resolution of "getting fit"?

I feel like this was the first year where more and more people were agreeing that New Year's Resolutions are overrated. The consensus is that we shouldn't wait for one day to start getting our lives together.

Instead, we should start today.

There's something so nice about starting fresh—like opening a brand-new book, or starting on page 1 of a brand-new journal, or slipping on a brand-new coat. For a moment you feel fine and put-together and hopeful.

But why can't we feel that way all the time or with what we have already?

Well, first of all, you're not supposed to feel like you've got your life together all the time. If you do, you're not living! The journey is messy, and it's supposed to be. Life is made up of a bunch of course-corrections.

The point is that you get to your goal—even if it takes years. Starting where you left off is better than starting new.

For example, when I was in high school, I dreaded running. But I wanted to get better. So, every New Year's I would start running around my neighborhood. Then about half-way through the month I would stop. Maybe I would pick it up in May or June, but I would definitely stop by the fall, saying, "Eh, I'll start at Level 1 in January."

It wasn't until I kept a routine that I saw results. When I got to college, and started running seriously, I kept at it. Even on the days I didn't feel like running I did something, whether it was walking or even just stretching. And if weeks went by where I didn't even do anything—like around the holidays—I didn't hold it off until January. I got back at it on Dec. 23 or Dec. 31. A day can make a difference.

The point is, I never made myself go back to Level 1—that is, starting on a specific day and just jogging for 5 - 10

minutes. Instead, I picked back up where I left off.

I'd say, "My last mile was 9 minutes. Let's see if I can do that again."

After a couple weeks of not running, of course I couldn't get my mile under 10 min. But I had an old goal in mind. I didn't just say, "Well, I'll just jog for five minutes. That's a good enough."

It felt a bit like reusing an old notepad with writing on it from years ago, versus just buying a new one.

Though doing something "easy" is better than nothing, it never pushed me forward. I needed that old track record to keep me going. It helped me realize I've done it before, I can do it again—and maybe even better.

With all that said, forget about "starting fresh." Continue where you left off. Tie up loose ends. Use that old notebook that's only half-filled. Finish that book you've been meaning to instead of getting a new one. It may look messy, but that's called progress and completion.



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