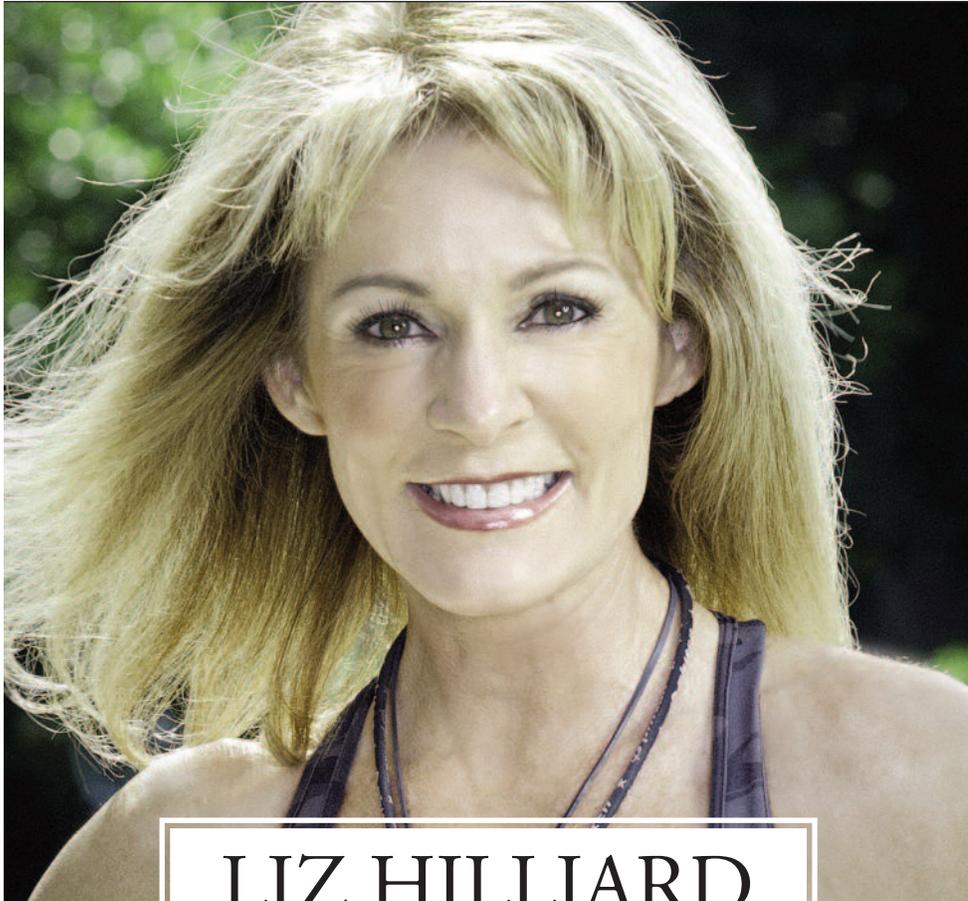


THE Mecklenburg TIMES

Charlotte, N.C. | May 2013



LIZ HILLIARD

Evangelizing for physical fitness

Liz Hilliard wishes Title IX had been in place when she was a standout on her high school basketball team.

"I was the leading scorer in my conference and all-conference for three years," she says. "I loved basketball and was really good at it, but there were no sports scholarships to be had for girls in 1972."

Hilliard didn't let a little thing like the lack of sports for women slow her down.

She kept fit, did some modeling and wrote about fashion for SouthPark Magazine until 2001 when she started working as a personal trainer.

In 2008 she developed a cutting edge method for strengthening and shaping the body, and named it the Hilliard Studio Method. It

has taken off like lightning.

It all started when Hilliard's daughter, Clary, eager to look her best for her wedding, was frustrated because she was not seeing results from her running and yoga routine.

"So I traveled extensively over the East Coast and West Coast of the USA, taking every Pilates class, barre class, yoga and weight-training class available," Hilliard said. "I lifted heavy weights with a personal trainer for six months. My body was changing and getting trimmer at a rapid pace by adding weightlifting and resistance to my traditional Pilates exercises."

She adopted that new routine, and the Hilliard Studio Method was born.

Today mother and daughter manage the

50 MOST INFLUENTIAL Women

business and teach the Method together.

"Being physically fit is a natural part of who I am, and I feel it is a natural part of everyone," Hilliard says. "It has gotten short shrift in our society as something self-indulgent, but it is a necessary part of health."

Entrepreneurs of all disciplines experience failure and rejection as they start new ventures and grow their businesses.

Hilliard is no exception, and she strives to avoid negativity.

"I learned early to handle success and failure with an even hand," she says. "I honor my failures and learn from them."

She sees success as the reward for rising above her shortcomings.

"Failure is not fatal, and success is not final," she says.

For Hilliard, success is helping other women achieve their fitness goals, and her overflowing Saturday morning classes are the fruit of her hard work.

She takes her greatest satisfaction from teaching a thoughtful, flowing class that comes from her heart and reaches into the souls of her clients.

"My satisfaction lies in helping others achieve their success; seeing and feeling the positive energy radiating from my clients who have just accomplished a task they never imagined they could do."

Hilliard describes herself as a passionate lover of life, a dancer, fashion model, tennis player, swimmer, diver, skier and even a Fourth of July mullet-throwing champion.

"I grew up with the smell of pigskin on my hands, shooting hoops and playing football in my backyard until dark with my older brother and his friends," she says. "I excelled at being a tomboy."