No ellipticals, treadmills, or stationary bicycles crowd the new fitness center at 778 Portland Road in Saco. Weights, bars, and rope—instead of machines—stand out against the black floors and walls. The 2,500 sq. ft. open-concept facility is dedicated to what Saco resident Kathryn Larochelle '04 describes as “people-powered fitness.” Kathryn, along with Roger Levasseur, opened CrossFit Rising Tide in April 2015 after their membership in a CrossFit in South Portland inspired them to bring the fitness regimen to Saco.

Founded by former gymnast Greg Glassman in 2000, CrossFit combines weightlifting and gymnastics. The CrossFit phenomenon now boasts more than 11,000 affiliate gyms worldwide and a signature competition called the CrossFit Games that crowns the “Fittest On Earth.” Maine hosts 24 CrossFit gyms, also known as “boxes.”

Roger described the program as “functional fitness in one hour, scaled for anyone’s ability and constantly varied.” He programs each workout session and provides coaching. On any given day a workout might include kettlebell swings, push-ups, squats, running, lunges, or bench presses. New members take five one-hour introductory sessions to become acclimated with the movements and build a foundation for proper technique. A free community class is offered on Saturdays from 10-11 a.m.

Kathryn describes that, in the years since Thornton Academy, she’s found a life-altering passion: “I did not used to be athletic. CrossFit changed me. It gave me confidence.” After high school she attended Spa Tech Institute for cosmetology and worked as a hairstylist for nine years. She still cuts hair in a studio called Salon at Rising Tide, located right next to the CrossFit.

Kathryn said the best part of being a member is the strong sense of community, “everyone is very supportive of one another... we’re like a family.” She is excited that several Thornton Academy alumni have already joined her CrossFit team and she is proud to watch members improve their fitness and gain strength. “People are often changing their goals from ‘I want to look a certain way’ to ‘I want to feel a certain way.’”

The 60 members of CrossFit Rising Tide range in age from 14 to mid-60s, and come from many different backgrounds and abilities.

Lori Smith ’88 Leads Field Hockey Team to Class A South Regional Championship Crown

Thornton Academy’s varsity field hockey team enjoyed its most successful season in school history in 2015, earning the program’s first regional title with a 4-1 win over Cheverus under the direction of head coach Lori Smith ’88. Lori has a Master’s degree in Technology in Education from Lesley University and teaches Web Design, Digital Layout and Design, and Computer Applications for Thornton’s Technology & New Media Department.

About this past year’s field hockey season Lori said, “The way the community rallied around us and the excitement surrounding it was something I’m sure the players will remember forever. This team was so much fun to coach...they displayed so many qualities we seek in young people on a daily basis, so it was very rewarding to see them earn a trip to the state championship.” Lori played four years of field hockey and ran four years of indoor and outdoor track & field when she attended Thornton. She began as the JV field hockey coach in 1995, serving as an assistant to Jodi (Ladakakos) Field ’89. Lori then took the reins as the varsity coach for four years, before taking time off to be with her twin boys (Dylan ‘15 and Andrew ’15). She returned as the freshman team coach in 2001 and by 2002 assumed the head varsity coach position again.

The program went from being in the bottom half of the conference most seasons to the top half and consistently earning at least a playoff preliminary game since 2008. “I think TA Field Hockey is looked upon as one of the premiere programs in the state now. You can see it in the numbers of players we’ve had recognized at the All-State banquet (two players for the past three years and two players this year for the NEHCA All-Region team). There is also a well-established youth program through the dedication of Angela Bolduc, Erika Lowe Dube ’97, Sue Monder Spah ’67, and several other volunteers,” she said.

Lori received a plaque for her 100th win from Director of Athletics Gary Stevens.

“People are often changing their goals from ‘I want to look a certain way’ to ‘I want to feel a certain way.’”

Lori is proud of the strong alumnae support for the field hockey program. Casey Adams ’99, Lori’s former assistant coach, attended every game this year with her toddler son. Then there’s Helen ‘Pookie’ McAuliffe Corriveau ’81, who Lori calls a “Super Fan.” “She is always so positive and giving of her time. After the season ended, she surprised me at school with a huge box of treats and notes from other alumnae congratulating us on our season!” Lori loves seeing the passion for field hockey passed down through generations and she enjoys teaching students who are children of her former classmates. “It reminds me how many years of my life have been spent inside the brick walls of TA and reinforces the old adage of ‘it takes a village to raise a child.’ I think parents appreciate seeing a familiar face working with their kids.”

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