

Miami Herald, The (FL)

2007-05-17

Edition: ZN14

Page: MB4

Beach Buzz: Exotic Dancing

Summer will be here before we know it. There's no better time to get into shape, both physically and mentally.

A class coming to Miami **Beach** promises to help women on both fronts (sorry guys -- it's for ladies only): The Art of Exotic Dancing for Everyday Women. "It's a great way to tone up and learn exotic dance moves while boosting your body image and self-confidence," said Renee O'Connor, the program's trainer and instructor for the Miami area. She says the classes are not intimidating and designed to empower women of all ages, shapes and sizes.

"My 60-year-old mother has taken the class," O'Connor quipped. "She loved it." A three-hour beginner class will be offered Sunday at Energy Fitness Center and Spa, 1815 Purdy Ave. The center will also offer classes June 23 and July 14. Future classes on Miami **Beach** are in the works.

Created in 1998, The Art of Exotic Dancing for Everyday Women is a national program that includes local workshops, instructional DVDs and a book, all focused on instilling self-confidence and self-expression in women through exotic dance. Exercises including walking, hip rolls and floor exercises.

The 34-year-old O'Connor -- a Kendall resident for now though she's moving to the **Beach** next month -- has an MBA in marketing. She said she took her first AOED class in late 2004 and was so impressed with the program that she not only become an instructor, but recently acquired the company's Miami territory. AOED offers a series of other classes, as well as customized activities including birthday and bachelorette parties, bridal showers and "girls night out" soirees. Workshops are \$99 each, and advance registration is required. To sign up or learn more, call 305-321-9506, e-mail renee@artofexoticdancing.com or visit www.aoed.com (online \$20 discounts are available with the discount code "Renee").

Beach Buzz runs every other Thursday, and focuses on people and businesses throughout the **Beaches**. To reach Debra K. Leibowitz, call 305-531-7887 or e-mail adsetcinc@atlanticbb.net.