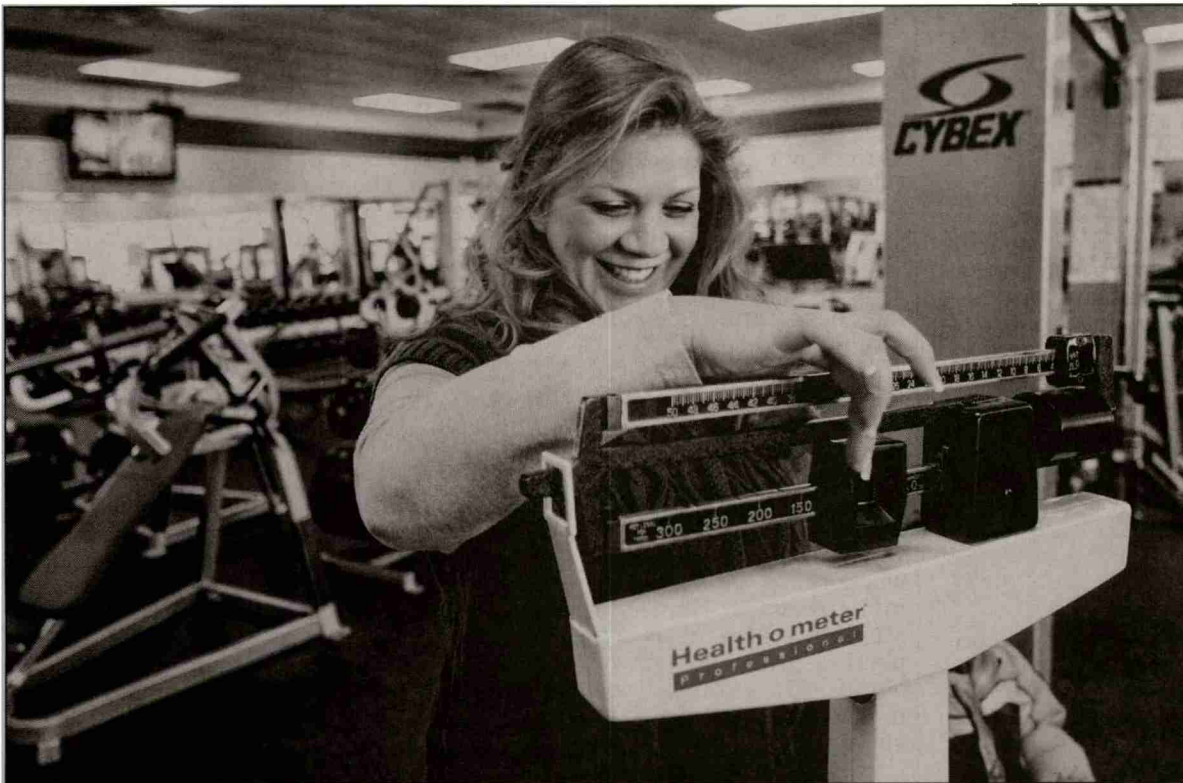


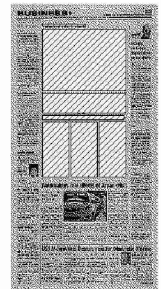
**FOCUS: CORPORATE PROGRAMS**

# Area companies fight to be biggest losers

Winners in weight-loss challenge will get \$10,000



Dana McHugh of Thilmay Papers in De Pere weighs herself Friday at Snap Fitness in De Pere for The Wisconsin Matchup — a statewide weight-loss contest. A total of \$18,000 in cash prizes is up for grabs for top-performing teams in the competition, held in conjunction with National Nutrition Month. **Jim Matthews/Press-Gazette**



BY RICHARD RYMAN

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**DE PERE** — Dana McHugh would gladly trade 30 pounds for \$10,000.

McHugh, human resources administrator for Thilmany Papers' De Pere mill, is among 45 company employees participating in the HealthyWage weight-loss contest. HealthyWage is an online network that pays members to improve their health. It kicked off its contest Friday, in the middle of National Nutrition Month.

Wisconsin Matchup is a statewide weight-loss contest. The top-performing teams get \$10,000 for first place, \$5,000 for second place and \$3,000 for third. Individual participants qualify for \$100 if they start with a body mass index of 30 or more and reduce that to 25 after one year.

The contest continues through June 18. The team with the greatest percentage of weight loss will be the winner. Each participant pays a \$60 registration fee.

"People were pretty excited about the \$10,000 top prize," McHugh said. "It does help to have that little push."

Jim Fink, co-owner of two Snap Fitness franchises in De Pere, said a little motivation, whether getting paid or paying, is helpful.

"If people are paying to exercise somewhere, they don't want to waste it," he said.

Snap Fitness is providing weigh-in services for the contest.

Among companies participating, the network said, are Extencare, Foremost Farms, Midwest Dental, Ruud Lighting and Thilmany.

"It's great the company is supporting healthy lifestyles for our employees," McHugh said.

The Thilmany Papers mill in De Pere has two teams, with five members each. The larger Kaukauna mill has seven teams.

McHugh said she's hoping to lose "a good 30 pounds." Or 30 bad ones. As long as they are gone.

"I hope to change our lifestyle, not only for myself but our whole family," she said, including her

husband and three children in the plan.

McHugh said her five-person team may not be able to work out together because of their schedules, but they will compare notes and give each other moral support.

"I'm sure the camaraderie will be a part of it," she said. "Our mill manager, Lee Hammen, is on the other team. Hopefully he'll be giving us a push."

HealthyWage co-founder David Roddenberry said competition between family, friends and co-workers has proven to be a good model for sustained weight-loss. He said added encouragement, bragging rights and cash prizes are good motivators.

"Academic research shows that obesity has spread through social networks and will likely reverse through social networks," he said.

He said participants in previous compensation-based team contests have lost an average of 5 percent of their body weight.

The website is [www.healthywage.com/wisconsin-matchup](http://www.healthywage.com/wisconsin-matchup).