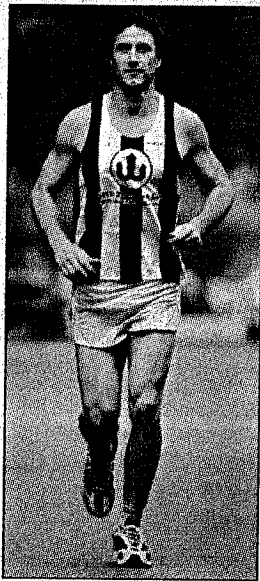


THE BEST REVENGE

A personal look at living well



TOM SAWYER

38, business owner

Favorite exercise:

Running.

Days of exercise a week:

Seven.

Diet do:

Brown rice, steamed vegetables, fresh fruit, tofu with liquid amino acids and brewer's yeast sprinkled on top.

Diet don't:

Processed food, sugar.

Guilty pleasure: "I don't feel guilty about eating anything."

Exercise benefits: "Keeps my heart, mind and body strong and happy."

Exercise philosophy:

"Balance is key. The more exercise, the more balanced you can be to be your best all the time."

First things first: Yes, Tom Sawyer is his real name, one this New Orleanian didn't always appreciate.

"When I was growing up I'd sometimes wish it was something different, like Mike or John," he said. "Then I met my ex-girlfriend, and one of the first things she told me was 'what a great name!'"

For 11 years, the avid runner has been happy to lend his name to the Tom Sawyer Mississippi River Run for Cancer, a 2-mile run/walk in the Warehouse District that benefits the Cancer Association of Greater New Orleans. This year's race gets under way at 7 p.m. Friday at Generations Hall, with more than 500 participants expected.

Last year, the run included the first Judy Harris High School Championship, named after one of the event's founders, who died last year after a long battle with cancer.

"It was a good way to honor her and to create something for the kids," said Sawyer, the event's head coordinator.

Sawyer runs two businesses, a valet parking service and a renovation company. Although his workday is long, he tries to exercise daily.

"I'll run at midnight, 5 or 8 in the morning — anytime I can fit it in," he said. He aims for at least an hour each day.

He shares his love of running with his wife, Susan, and their 4-year-old son, also named Tom. The family also includes two dogs, Huckleberry and Finn.

Sawyer said he likes to think his daily runs have an effect on others. "I hope I'm maybe inspiring someone to get out and exercise."

— **Siona LaFrance**

STAFF PHOTO BY ELLIS LUCIA