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## Zumba craze heats up in Vandalia

**A new fitness center is the first in the area to specialize in the popular, fast-moving Latin dance-workout.**

By Katherine Ullmer

Staff Writer

Monday, January 29, 2007

VANDALIA — Sunday's bitter cold couldn't keep the crowd from finding it hot, hot, hot — wipe-the-sweat-off-your-brow hot — inside the area's first all-Zumba fitness center.

Bodies short and tall, round and lean, young and old, male and female, moved fast and had fun — what Colombians call "zumba" — in synchronized Latin dance steps.

As loud dance music created a party atmosphere, the 200 or so dancers at the Sunday grand opening of Studio Zumba Fitness at 698 W. National Road worked up a heavy sweat with body movements from salsa, rumba, merengue, calypso, cha cha, flamenco and cumbia, with some squats, lunges and bicep curls mixed in.

Occasionally, hands clapped in unison overhead and the crowd, dressed in various modes of workout clothes, shouted with glee.

Area Zumba instructors led the moves from a raised stage in the front of the mirrored room.

Steve Hall, 55, of Dayton, a supervisor at a local mortgage company, has been doing Zumba once a week since last August, when his wife, Romy, made him go to a class.

"We like Latin dance," she said. "He came to one class and now he's hooked. Now he even goes without me."

Geone Neria, 36, of Trotwood said Zumba doesn't feel like exercise.

The studio's owners, Joan and Doug Jones of Englewood, have been doing Zumba since 2003. She's a fitness instructor and he's a body-builder turned Fed Ex delivery man.

They learned Zumba in their living room, became certified instructors and decided Zumba needed a stand-alone home.

They turned a former shopping-center church sanctuary into a studio with a 1,500-square-foot oak dance floor, and plan to offer classes for older adults, Zumba body sculpting, and a class for exotic moves.

The star of Sunday's events was Natalie Brabner, 32, a fitness instructor from Miami, where the aerobic/dance workout craze started about six years ago. She led the group's first workout hour, and then stood back to learn "some Dayton moves to take back home."

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### How to go

What: Studio Zumba Fitness

Where: 698 W. National Road, Vandalia

Phone: (937) 387-0660

Web site: [www.ZumbaOhio.com](http://www.ZumbaOhio.com)

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