

## 15 MINUTES

### 12-round fitness

Fifteen years ago, Cody Sweet, then 20, was living in San Luis Obispo. He was a big fan of mixed martial arts (MMA) and Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) legend Chuck Liddell. Liddell happened to train at an MMA gym in the area, so Sweet joined. He ended up falling in love with the sport—so much so that he moved to Thailand to hone his MMA skills and became a trainer there. Sweet eventually moved back to California, graduated from Chico State with a degree in business, and on Dec. 17 opened Sweet Fitness Kickboxing. Over 100 people joined within the first month. Visit his gym at 1390 E. Ninth St., Ste. 170, online on Instagram and Facebook, or call 521-3059.

#### What sets you apart from other gyms?

We offer an awesome, fun, high-energy workout that people love. You can beat the crap out of our heavy bags for 47 minutes, or 12 rounds. People say, "I was in a really bad mood before I got here, but afterward I feel great!" It's hard to be in a bad mood when you're exercising to good music in a physically exciting environment. We also have a grand opening special of a free week of classes.



PHOTO BY VIC CANTU

#### What are your workouts like?

People sweat, burn calories and have fun. We have heavy bags, but no actual sparring, so nobody gets punched in the face. We go 12 full rounds of three minutes each, with one minute rest in between. The first two rounds are warm-up exercises, then eight rounds of kickboxing techniques. The last two rounds focus on abdominal exercises. We always try to mix things up and do something new.

#### What inspired you to start Sweet Fitness?

I love being in a gym, interacting socially, and feel I'm really good at making gyms fun and awesome. After I moved back to the U.S., I made plans to open a gym and it evolved into this. I also love to coach, and being a business major with an option

in entrepreneurship, I felt I was really good at marketing.

#### Can you tell me more about living in Thailand?

I had heard that Thailand was a really great place to train for MMA and that it was inexpensive to live there. I loved Bangkok—it's my favorite city in the world. I stayed five years, then coached Western-style boxing in the Philippines before moving back to the U.S.

#### What are the main reasons people join your gym?

First, they want to get fit and lose weight. Secondly, to have a fun, interesting hobby after work or school. And thirdly, they want to be a part of a group or a community, and make new friends. People don't get all three at other gyms.

—VIC CANTU

## THE GOODS



by  
Meredith J. Cooper  
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### Leaders of the pack

When it comes to succeeding in the workforce, one often is faced with opportunities to rise in the ranks. That's all fine and good, except a significant number of people moving into management positions have never been trained in leadership.

That's according to stats from CareerBuilder, which in 2011 surveyed employers and workers throughout the U.S. and concluded that 26 percent of managers said they weren't ready for the added responsibility and 58 percent had never received any management training. Michael DaRe uses those stats to advertise his leadership classes, which are set to begin through the Oroville Adult Education Career & Technical Center next week (Jan. 28).

"Teaching leadership is my passion," DaRe told me by phone. After retiring as a corporate field manager for 7-Eleven, he and his wife moved to Oroville, where he hooked up with the adult education program and last fall launched an 18-week leadership class at its Chico center. "We learned very quickly that 18 weeks is just much too long," he said, "so we revised everything."

This term, he'll offer two eight-week management classes—one in Oroville, one in Chico—with others geared toward new managers and retail management specifically set to start later in the year.

DaRe says his entry-level courses are great for those with limited educational backgrounds or those hoping to propel their careers. He also says he sees a lot of moms and military veterans looking for refreshers before re-entering the workforce. Interested students can go to [orovilleadulted.com](http://orovilleadulted.com) for information.

**KUDOS** The Good Food Awards are given out each January to craft food producers and farmers around the United States as a way to celebrate foods that are "tasty, authentic and responsibly produced." Congratulations are in order for Lassen Traditional Cider's Ben Nielsen, who was just recognized for his 2017 Farmhouse Dry.

I scanned the list of finalists for familiar names. Forgive me if I missed someone, but the only other local craft foodmaker among them was Chico's Pacific Culture, a finalist in the "pickles" category for its Kabu Chimayo Turnips. Well done!

**MOVIN' ON UP** Local chef Mary Chin has been creating pre-prepped meals in Chico through her My Oven's Meals catering business for a while now and it was time for an upgrade. You can still preorder for the week (\$30 minimum), but now you also can find her mobile kitchen, aka "The Box," when the mood strikes. Chin specializes in fresh, healthy, farm-to-table meals. For more on weekly orders, go to [myovensmeals.com](http://myovensmeals.com) and find her on Facebook for where The Box will be parked.

**PICKIN'** In March, Mike Wolfe and Frank Fritz—you know, those goofy guys who drive around the country digging through people's old barns on *American Pickers*—are coming to California. In preparation, they're putting a call out for potential places to pick. If you think you qualify (must be a private collection, not open to the public), call (800) OLD-RUST or email [AmericanPickers@cinetflix.com](mailto:AmericanPickers@cinetflix.com).

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