

CWM Publisher “J.J.” Rusch

On April 1, 2000 Joanne Rusch tipped the scale at 217 when she gave birth to her first and only child at the age of forty. (Her daughter weighed in at 9 lbs. 2oz.) Little did she know at the time that motherhood was not the only incredible journey she was about to embark upon.

Six months later struggling to lose the last 25 pounds of maternity weight she had gained, Joanne was cast as a member of Good Morning America's first *Lock the Door Lose the Weight* series, which aired in November of 2000. By the fall of 2001, she had lost that last 25 and more. The experience set forth into motion a series of life altering changes both personally and professionally.

Plagued by weight problems all her life, beginning with a “chubby childhood”, Joanne was passionate about sharing her newfound insights for weight control. She spent the next year writing and developing an inspirational website Scaleitdown.com. Her website and first reduced calorie cookbook, the “Sweets Edition” both debuted in November of 2002. Cookbook editions for: Appetizers, Breads & Soups, Casseroles and Salads followed.

Convinced the missing link to achieving healthier lifestyles fell somewhere between real life application and the barrage of helpful (and not so helpful) information we receive daily, Joanne began devoting herself to inspiring others to seek out personal plans to work in tandem with their own unique lifestyles, tastes and schedule demands and began working with small groups and individuals.

Offered her own column in *Chicago Wellness Magazine*

(CWM) in July of 2004, Joanne spent the next year and a half as an editor and columnist penning her column under, “Find your Fit”, which quickly became her working motto. She also created recipes and participated in promotional projects (on camera and off) for Bush Beans during this time, which ultimately produced a spot for her among notable restaurateurs and chefs in the company’s, “Simply the Best in 20 minutes or Less – Great Bean Recipes from America’s Top Chefs” publication.



Invited back to help kick off GMA's second “Lock the Door Lose the Weight” series in 2003, Joanne's recipe for a reduced calorie Boston Cream Torte was showcased during the broadcast. Pictured from L to R: Joanne, Author & Trainer, Jim Karas, Psychotherapist, Susan Amato and Nutritionist & Author, Joy Bauer.



Food Cop at the Food Show—on location with NBC5 Morning Anchor, Dick Johnson reviewing new products. (Food Cop segments can be viewed by clicking the NBC logo at chicagowellnessmagazine.com.)

At the NBC affiliate in Chicago, Joanne further honed her media skills as a recurring guest of fitness reporter, Michael Sena, where she shared reduced calorie recipes and dishes on his morning news segments. In January of 2006, she was offered a returning monthly guest spot to do healthy based consumer food segments, for which she was soon dubbed the “Food Cop”, by NBC5 morning anchor, Dick Johnson.

Joanne became the succeeding publisher of CWM in mid-2006 and redirected the publication’s focus to a consumer based feel. Educational and inspirational information and ideas on all things which affect our desires and efforts to achieve and live well-balanced lifestyles is the working theme of CWM today.

Wellness in the Works™ was created from Joanne’s desire to inspire positive change in the workplace and community. In 2007, she designed the Wellness in the Works™ programs, presented by the professionals of CWM and their working partners, to compliment existing wellness objectives using several

core strategies: One-on-One opportunities with a variety of health, wealth and fitness pros, Educational and Skill Building Lectures, Workshops and Seminars and Wellness Event Planning and Design.

When offered a co-host spot on FIT TODAY, a new weekly show created by Andrea Metcalf beginning in February of 2008 on CLTV, Joanne immediately accepted the opportunity. She believes the only way to sincerely reach any audience is to speak *to* them, not at them, and is dedicated to doing so when speaking in public as well as in print and on TV.