

Iron

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She ran the medical office in addition to raising the children. She enjoyed working alongside her husband and watching how he treated his patients.

"He really cared about them," said Catherine. "He loved children and they loved him."

Dick also loved Catherine. He looked out for her like a husband and doctor would. When she was in her 60s, a scan showed her bone density was below average, a condition called osteopenia.

Dick suggested she start some strength training, in order to hold off osteoporosis and remain upright and healthy.

They both started working with Dean Munsey, a trainer at Emergence Physical Therapy in Redmond. Munsey had competed in powerlifting events across the West for decades. He noticed right away that Catherine had good form and was working hard to build strength. He thought training for a competition might give her extra incentive to work hard and keep showing up.

"She says she's not competitive?" said Munsey. "She's very competitive."

It took months to win her over. The final hurdle was convincing her to wear a form-fitting singlet, the required outfit for all weightlifting competitions.

"It is not flattering at all," said Kuehn.

But the competitions were. Kuehn was soon winning titles for her age group, then setting world records. She didn't brag about it — so her husband did it for her.

"He'd introduce me to people as 'My wife, the world record holder,'" Catherine recalled.

Dick died in August 2021 of complications of heart disease and kidney failure. Catherine cared for him through his last days. During the pandemic she dared not leave home — not even to lift weights. She had to avoid COVID at all costs.

"If I brought it back to him, he would have died on the spot, he was so weak," she said.

It was a difficult stretch of time and losing her husband made it much more so. But Kuehn said there was no doubt that she'd come back to the weight room.

"I didn't want to get all stooped," she



Trainer, Dean Munsey, from left, works with Peggy Neil of Bend and Catherine Kuehn of Redmond at Emergence Physical Therapy in Redmond.

Dean Guernsey/The Bulletin

said. "Plus, I missed it"

Munsey said she has all of her strength back and then some. She trains with a friend, Peggy Neil, who is a decade her junior but works hard to keep up. Adrian Robles practices with them as well. Robles has cerebral palsy and uses resistance training to build his upper body strength.

"He's the real star," said Kuehn.

All three are part of a Central Oregon team heading to Reno this weekend, hoping to bring back titles and world records.

"Oh, that'd just be great," said Kuehn. "Can you imagine? Me? Another record?"

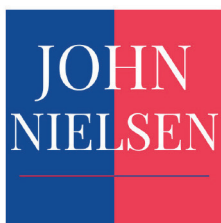
■ Reporter: ttrainor@redmondspokesman.com

Catherine Kuehn, 94, of Redmond watches her weightlifting teammates during training at Emergence Physical Therapy in Redmond.

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