

COMMUNITY PORTRAIT *by Michael Kirby*

Raw foods put her life back in balance

Most of us would probably say that we could afford to lose at least a few pounds.

Somewhere along the way, a pound here, a pound there, and what seems like overnight we realize that we don't look or feel like we used to.

Many reasons take the blame. Overtime at work cuts into workout time, new babies, emotional issues and age all are reasons for weight gain.

Newcastle's Suzanne Thomas, pretty and slim, found herself in a similar position several years ago.

The 31-year-old was raised in Newcastle and attended local schools, graduating from Del Oro High School in 1996. She double majored at Humboldt State, earning degrees in botany and environmental biology.

After college, Thomas worked for the U.S. Forest Service, Parks Service and did environmental consulting.

"In my job I didn't feel I was making the overall difference I wanted to, and my life's circumstances took me to Florida, leaving my friends, family and everything I knew. I gained about 35 pounds," Thomas said. "I was still eating healthy, but not exercising and I became unbalanced."

Thomas felt the lifestyle and diet she knew slipped away and wasn't connected to who she really was.

Thomas said she began learning about her overall picture of wellness and how the mind plays into the equation.

She was able to identify her problem through study with experts in the



Newcastle resident Suzanne Thomas has learned the secrets of eating a practical raw-food diet and wants to share her insights with others who might be interested in this healthful regimen.

field of energy medicine, personality tests and self-evaluation.

Thomas found that she was an emotional eater.

"I was eating beyond being full, because it tasted good and I was trying to satisfy desires that weren't being met elsewhere," Thomas said. "Even though my diet was still fairly healthy, I was unbalanced."

Raised by active parents, Thomas' mother is a nurse and her father is an

avid outdoors lover, runner and snow skier. Family outings were always outdoor physical adventures, something Thomas felt she was letting slip away.

Thomas returned to California and began a practical raw-food diet, daily exercise and yoga and returned to her ideal weight.

Thomas found and believes that a balanced 50-85 percent diet of raw foods worked for her. She

feels her diet could fit into the lifestyles of most people interested in losing and maintaining an ideal weight.

"It's not so much about just eating raw foods, it's about balance in your life and diet," she said.

Thomas' career took a turn because of her interest in health and she now works in the health and nutrition fields, helping others discover what she found helpful in her own life, obtaining a healthy

lifestyle and maintaining an ideal weight. Thomas has a Web site up and running and many of her ideas are explained there. Advice from experts in the field, recipes and health products can be found on her site, bewellwithsue.com.

Thomas has a book about the benefits of sprouts and a how-to-grow guide due out, and is eager to share her insights with anyone interested in a healthy raw-food diet.