



# Success Stories

*Healthy Living Matters. Prevention Works.*

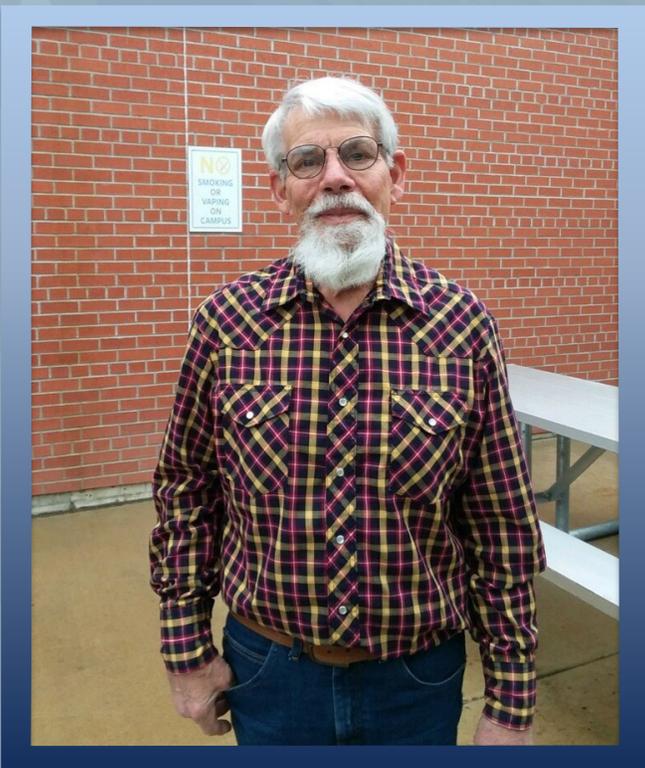
## Motivated to get Active

**GARY SCHWALM ADMITS THAT HE WAS NOT COMPLETELY AWARE OF WHAT HE AGREED TO WHEN HIS DOCTOR RECOMMENDED HE TRY MOVE!, BUT HE DECIDED TO TAKE IT SERIOUSLY.**

Committed to following through, and with his wife by his side, Gary has lost more than 85 pounds with the Fort Harrison, MT, MOVE! Program.

## Keeping his word

While it may not be the typical story of considering a doctor's recommendations and then choosing an action plan, Gary Schwalm certainly made the most of his participation in the MOVE! Weight Management Program for Veterans. During a routine visit to his primary care provider at the VA Montana Healthcare System, Gary agreed to try MOVE! While driving home, his wife asked him if he knew what he had agreed to. "Because of my hearing loss, I have trouble catching everything that is said. My reply to her was, 'I don't have a clue.' She told me with a startled look, 'You signed up for a weight loss class.' After a few seconds of thinking 'What am I going to do now?' I replied 'Well if I did then I am going to take it seriously.'"



### ***Motivated to MOVE!***

Gary's desire to increase his physical activity is what led him to MOVE! He shares, "I only had weight issues after retirement from the Lancaster City Fire Department. I had back surgery in November 2018 and my mobility had gotten better, but it was not where I wanted it to be. [I was motivated by] the desire to get more active."

### ***Perfect attendance***

Starting in May of 2019, Gary and his wife began attending MOVE! Group Sessions. When he shared this story with us in March of 2020, they were still attending and had not missed a single session throughout the year. Talk about taking it seriously! So far, Gary has lost 86 pounds and 9 inches around his waist and plans to continue participating in MOVE!

### ***Everything worked***

Gary's long-term goal was to reach 160 pounds. Starting at 250 pounds, this would be a 90-pound weight loss. Sharing what worked best for him, Gary said, "Everything!...Healthy eating, portion control, not snacking, exercise, keeping a food log, and my own determination and willpower." Gary also acknowledged his MOVE! team member, Holly Alastra, for sharing invaluable information; his wife for preparing healthy, low calorie meals; and his friends for their support of his efforts.

**“If you want to lose weight [MOVE!] is a great way to start. Set realistic goals that you think you can reach, but most of all, take it seriously. You can do it!”**

**– Gary Schwalm**