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Rhythms!



It took losing everything in Hurricane Katrina for Raymond Weber, 42, who suffers from diabetes and high blood pressure to realize the importance of taking care of his health. "After I lost everything, I had to take control of my health before I lost myself, too." Weber states. "It takes more than medication to keep my illnesses in control. I stick to my diet of fruit and vegetables. Instead of frying foods, I broil or bake them. For exercise I ride my bike every three days for at least half an hour. Besides playing music, my kids, ages 6, 13, and 16 keep me active. I want to be around for them! What I would say to other musicians is quit drinking and smoking, because it's not going to do you any good!"



Although drummer Vincent Thomas, 30, always struggled with his weight, he had no previous health problems. "So... on the day before Thanksgiving 2007 Catherine at the NOMC told me I have type II diabetes. I was shocked, sad, and depressed! I never saw it coming," said Thomas, "The next day was horrible, I realized couldn't eat a thing at Thanksgiving dinner!"

After some diet ups and downs, Thomas had his biggest health scare, when he could not finish a gig during Mardi Gras 2008. Now Thomas has taken hold of the disease and his overall health. "I follow a diet of greens, fruits, vegetables, and plenty of water. No carbohydrates or fried foods. I also joined a 24-hour gym near my house, not only can I walk there, but I can workout after my gigs," says the determined Thomas. "Staying healthy is up to me, my life depends on it."



Mark Fowler is a musician whose "day job" as the director of the Tipitina's Co-op, yet managing his Type 1 diabetes is a vital part of his daily life. "I have learned to avoid stress eating and eating in between meals, instead I drink decaffeinated herbal teas when I come home from the co-op, after meals, and before I go to bed," states Fowler. "Besides watching what I eat at home, I realize I burn so much energy when I play that I always bring half peanut butter sandwich with me to the gig made with good organic peanut butter on whole wheat bread."



Juanita Brooks has spent the past 30+ years as a singer, performing gigs all over the world and as a single parent of four. "About 15 years ago, I began the battle with my health. It wasn't until I embraced a healthy lifestyle," explains Brooks, "that I regained my health and my dignity by shedding a substantial amount of weight. The final step of my road to becoming pain free came on November 8, 2007 when I performed at the "NOMC Doctor's Appreciation Reception" at the Palm Court Jazz Café. I sang away years of pain in a melody of appreciation for these wonderful doctors who empowered my recovery."

