



By **Judy Weeks**

**NAPLES** — “Where are you on your path to wellness?” is the theme for Seminole Pathways III. The starting point for Naples community residents was the weigh-in for the weight loss contest on Sept. 6.

Allied Health nutritionist Charlotte Porcaro discussed nutrition and exercise with those who had made a decision to make a difference in their health. While taking blood pressure and blood sugar readings, she compared the tabulations with ideal guidelines and stressed the need to make a commitment to work on achieving these important goals.

Waist lines were measured following the weigh-in and a ratio determined weight loss objectives. Stress management, eating habits and smoking can have a profound effect upon success in all health programs and is particularly essential with regard to weight loss.

Tribal members, community members and descendants, who are 18 years or older and who live or work in Naples, can compete in the Pathways III Weight Loss Program. The competitors are divided into senior, Tribal member or spouse and descendant categories of male or female gender.

“Losing unnecessary weight is its own reward,” Porcaro said. “However as an incentive, prizes will be presented to individuals who lose a minimum of 10 pounds by the weigh-out on Nov. 22. Top prizes go to male and female participants who lose the most pounds overall in each category. Persons of ideal weight or who have used surgical weight loss methods will not be permitted to enter the contest.”

A schedule of events for the next 14 weeks, a walking calendar and list of foundation walks provided stepping stones on the pathway to wellness.

Upon the arrival of the school students, Porcaro assumed her role of health educator and delivered a presentation on personal hygiene, what it takes to keep a body healthy and who contestants can talk to if they have questions or concerns. Proper nutrition and exercise were major factors in the delivery and questions and answers were encouraged.

A majority of the adult and juvenile community members participated in the presentations and then shared fruit, vegetable and healthy snack trays at the conclusion.

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