

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Darlene Yblood (214)706-1649 darlene.yblood@heart.org
Suzanne Grant (214)706-1467 suzanne.grant@heart.org

“Yo-Yo” dieter adjusts lifestyle with Choose To Move program

DALLAS January 7, 2002 – At one time when she was younger Ann Draper weighed 270 pounds. She lost 110 pounds, only to regain it back. “Food was my friend,” explained Ann, and the weight came back quickly.

Exercise was nothing new to Ann. In past years, she had her most positive weight loss success while walking two miles each day. However, problems with her feet and hip put an end to that. Later, she had shoulder surgery and never fully regained complete use of her right arm. That forced her to retire early, at age 58. Soon after, she moved to Texas from Florida to be near her daughter and family. Relocation also took its toll on her priority to maintain a healthy lifestyle. “I was staying with family, not controlling my diet, and not exercising. I knew I was needing to take better care of myself,” reflected Ann.

It was at that time that Ann received information through the mail about the American Heart Association’s FREE physical activity program, **Choose To Move**. By participating, she received a program handbook filled with tips and tools to help achieve her fitness goals.

Ann found that water aerobics at a local YMCA fit the bill in providing a means of exercise without adding stress to her feet and legs. She still has some difficulties with the arm exercises, due to her shoulder, but manages to keep up with her classmates “most of the time.” “Even if you’re not athletic, you can do this,” cheered Ann.

To her credit, Ann has lost 33 pounds and would like to lose another eight. “I won’t be any tiny little thing then,” commented Ann, “but I’ll be at a good, healthy weight for me. I will be able to wear nice clothes well and look and feel good in them.”

Choose To Move, sponsored by Bayer Aspirin, maker of the new Bayer Women’s Aspirin Plus Calcium Aspirin, is the American Heart Association’s FREE 12-week physical activity program created especially for busy women. **Choose To Move** helps women recognize small, manageable changes that they can easily fit into their lifestyle and individual schedules. No gym membership or expensive equipment is required. Through the program, women learn how to increase their physical activity and how to make wise nutrition choices without adding to the stress of “one more thing to do” to their list of obligations.

“For me it couldn’t be just another diet,” said Ann, “It needed to be a mindset and lifestyle change that included good nutrition and exercise.” For several months when she

started out, Ann kept a food diary of everything she ate and drank. Her log included the food item, plus the calories and fat grams. Ann said that per day and that after a few months of keeping records, she has been able to simply keep track on her own. “It became a habit to eat three well-balanced meals a day and to know what kinds of food each meal should contain,” said Ann.

Ann, who has been a widow for about 20 years, enjoys spending time with her family and traveling. And what about when she travels? How does she maintain her revamped lifestyle on the road? For exercise, Ann books hotels that have indoor pools so she can be sure to fit in her exercise time each day. And for her meals, she says that portion sizes and counting calories and fat grams “is second nature now.”

The goal to “be healthy” far overshadows any other reason for Ann to stick with the **Choose To Move** program. “I knew that I needed to stay active in order to maintain my overall health,” she said, adding, “By doing so, I’ve kept control of my cholesterol and blood pressure. I know that I have a choice,” reflected Ann, “And my choice is to live a long life for my children, my grandchildren and myself.”

Ann participates in **Choose To Move** at the intermediate “Strider” level. Women at all physical fitness levels are invited to enroll. Beginners, who for the most part may be sedentary, can enter at the introductory “Mover” level. Women who are already physically active five or more times a week for more than six months, participate at the advanced “Trailblazer” level. After completing one 12-week phase and a self-evaluation, participants can continue in the program and move up to the next level.

Women are invited to sign up to participate in this self-administered fitness program by calling **1-888-MY HEART** or by registering on-line by logging on to www.choosetomove.org.

###

About the American Heart Association:

The American Heart Association spent about \$382 million during fiscal year 2000-2001 on research support, public and professional education, and community programs. Nationwide, the organization has grown to include more than 22.5 million volunteers and supporters who carry out its mission in communities across the country. The association is the largest nonprofit voluntary health organization fighting heart disease, stroke and other cardiovascular diseases, which annually kill about 960,000 Americans. For more information about heart disease and stroke, call 1-800-AHA-USA1 or visit our Web site at americanheart.org.

About Bayer Aspirin:

The American Heart Association supports the use of aspirin along with a regimen of diet, exercise and smoking cessation to reduce the risk of recurrent heart attack and stroke. Bayer Aspirin maker of the new Bayer Women's Aspirin Plus Calcium is proud to sponsor the American Heart Association's Choose To Move physical activity program for women.