

**For Immediate Release**

**Contact: Judy Gruen**

[judy@judygruen.com](mailto:judy@judygruen.com)

**310-486-4573**

“Till We Eat Again: A Second Helping” Dishes Up Deliciously Funny Diet and Exercise Diary

Los Angeles, CA – April 30, 2012 -- Looking for the straight skinny about losing weight and getting in shape? So did award-winning humorist Judy Gruen, who determined to streamline her body and outsource her fat during the months leading up to a college reunion.

In her new book, [\*Till We Eat Again: A Second Helping\*](#), Gruen chronicles her campaign to unearth long-hidden hip bones and earn the right to feel fabulous after 40. In the process she allows a skinny person to pinch her with calipers to measure her body mass index, considers a relationship with a talking scale, and signs up for fitness boot camp, belly dancing classes, too-hot-to-handle Bikram yoga, barre fitness, and other exercises that don't begin with the letter “B.” She also consults “experts,” whose advice ranges from the wise (don't skip meals) to the wacky (don't eat lentils if your blood type is A). To withstand her children's demands for more pasta and less quinoa, she allows herself regular infusions of dark chocolate – for mental health purposes only.

Unwilling to be swayed by friends who glow with health after swearing off white sugar, flour, red meat, and other beloved food groups, Gruen makes small, steady improvements to her diet, and slowly – very slowly – sees results. Relying on common sense, she resolutely withstands efforts to get suckered into “any program that demanded I buy their meals, have group encounter sessions, or perform unnatural acts of multi-level marketing.” Along with way, Gruen discovers many truths about dieting and fitness, including:

1. Being overweight is a bad thing. Being overweighed may be worse.
2. Joining the words “Lose weight, effortlessly!” in the same sentence may be a form of hate speech.
3. It is unfair for restaurants to charge more for an egg white omelet than a regular omelet. After all, they get to keep half the egg.
4. Weight Watchers is a very sensible and effective program, but only if you follow it.
5. Being strong and fit feels great. This is still possible when your weight exceeds what the government says is “ideal.” Honestly, how often is the government right about anything?

*Till We Eat Again: A Second Helping* serves up hilarious inspiration for readers trying to lose five pounds or 50. Download the first chapter on [tillweeatagain.com](http://tillweeatagain.com).

Digital galleys for this book are available through [NetGalley.com](http://NetGalley.com).

Judy Gruen is the author of four books, including *MBA Admission for Smarties*, *The Women's Daily Irony Supplement*, and *Carpool Tunnel Syndrome*. Contact her at [judy@judygruen.com](mailto:judy@judygruen.com), or 310-486-4573. [www.judygruen.com](http://www.judygruen.com) or [www.tillweeatagain.com](http://www.tillweeatagain.com).

## Q&A With Judy Gruen

### *Why did you write Till We Eat Again: A Second Helping?*

Of all the topics that I've tackled in more than 25 years of writing humor, one is "the gift that keeps on giving," and that is the area of dieting and fitness. In fact, the very first freelance essay I sold to a newspaper when I was a young pup was called "Fear of Fat: Don't Let It Make You Skinny." For writers who like to eat but will never be a single-digit dress size, this subject keeps us in its high-carb grip.

I wanted to also explore the ironies of the whole body-image thing. Today, for example, women are on one hand supposed to accept themselves and their bodies, but also look great in skinny jeans and shoulder-less blouses. Let's face it: lots of women, including women like me, just don't look good in skinny jeans and it's not necessarily our goal to do so, either. And the advice we get from "experts" is all over the map. One week high-protein, low carbs are the ticket to svelte, the next it's the Mediterranean diet where we anoint all our food (including pasta) with olive oil. In this book I wanted to share my months-long attempt to really, really-I-mean-it-this-time lose that flab and get in shape. My goal was to entertain and inspire, despite the difficulties most of us have in the ongoing battle of the bagels. And what I found while writing this book was continuously funny.

### *What was so funny?*

I joined one fitness studio where, not surprisingly, the toned body is completely glorified, but they have big fat Buddhas all over the place. With that kind of major beer belly, Buddha is an ironic mascot for a place devoted to health and fitness. Fitness instructors are also often unintentionally funny. They crank up the volume of the music so loud that they have to practically scream for us to hear their instructions. What is the point of that? And nothing beats a heated argument during a Weight Watchers meeting about how many points should count in two egg whites versus three. People get really worked up about this.

### *Did you learn anything while writing this book? Or were you just out to make fun of everyone and everything?*

I definitely learned a lot, and surprised myself in the process. For example, I loved the military discipline of boot camp, and I also found that I loved boxing classes! This told me that as a mother of four, I was carrying around a lot more pent-up aggression than I had realized. It's hard to describe the cathartic release of a well-delivered roundhouse kick after a long day.

I also really got it that making small – and I do mean small – changes can help. Cutting down on the sugar and carbs slowly, and ramping up the exercise moderately, makes the changes much easier to absorb in your life, and more likely to become a lifestyle change that lasts. I also learned that “friends” don’t announce loudly that they have completely sworn off all white sugar and flour and feel better than ever. It’s so easy to become extreme, and annoying.

*You had originally published this book many years ago, under a slightly different title. How different is this version, and why did you release it again?*

In 2003 I published *Till We Eat Again: Confessions of a Diet Dropout*, which won a few modest awards for humor, but unfortunately the publishing experience was disastrous and the book never filled the potential I knew it had. I always believed in the book, so over the last year, I revised it a lot. I ripped out a bunch of stitches, added new material based on current things I was doing with diet and exercise, and made sure to update references to what was now “in” in terms of diet and exercise trends. I’m really, really happy with this revision. It’s funnier and tighter than the original, and reader response so far has been wonderful. I’m excited to share it.

*Your goal at the beginning of the book was to lose 15 pounds in time for the reunion that you write about at the end of the book. Did you make your goal?*

This book is non-fiction, no air-brushing of the truth, so based on that promise, you’ll have to guess and read the book to find out!

*What other books have you written?*

My other books in order of appearance are *Carpool Tunnel Syndrome: Motherhood as Shuttle Diplomacy*, *The Women’s Daily Irony Supplement*, and a business book, *MBA Admission for Smarties: The No-Nonsense Guide to Acceptance at Top Business Schools* (with Linda Abraham). I’ve also written hundreds of humor columns, and am happy to have my work appear regularly on the web sites [Aish.com](http://Aish.com) and [MommaSaid.net](http://MommaSaid.net). Of course, some of my work also appears on my own web site: [judygrien.com](http://judygrien.com).

*Which writers make you laugh?*

Christopher Buckley, Jane Austen, P.J. Wodehouse, P.J. O’Rourke, S. J. Perlman (what is it about humorists with initials?), Steve Martin, Erma Bombeck, Dave Barry, Bill Cosby, Barbara Pym, Alexander McCall Smith. I’m sure there are more, but these come to mind immediately.