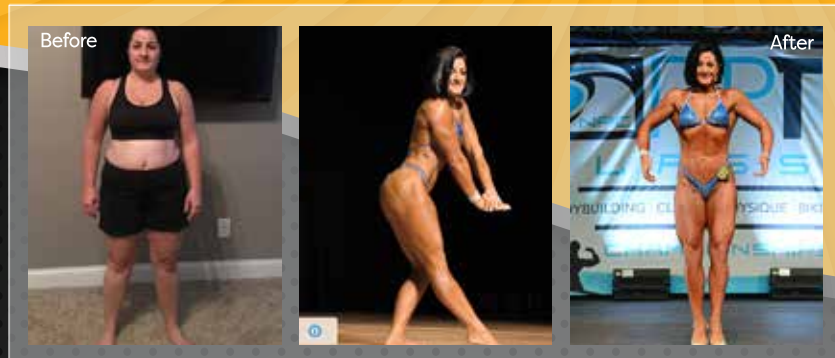


2019

SOUTHERN MUSCLE GUIDE presents

**COURAGE AWARD Finalist**

# CHRISTINE WARE



I have been active all my life. I played soccer and softball growing up. I never had to battle weight until I had my beautiful daughter on July 3, 2007 and nine days later, I almost lost her. She was born with five Congenital Heart Defects and required two open-heart surgeries. I let myself go. Even after she was healthy and back on track, I still made excuses for not eating right or taking 30 minutes out of the day and workout. They were just that...excuses! I actually felt guilty doing something for myself. As a wife and a mother, I would focus on everyone else and put myself on the back burner. I thought this made me a great wife and a great mother. It did not. I became unhappy with myself. I felt undesirable to my husband no matter how many times he told me how beautiful I was. I was not a role model to my daughter on what healthy was.

I remember the moment that everything changed for me. My husband and I were riding our motorcycles and he had taken a picture of me, as he has many times. We stopped for lunch and I asked to see the picture. I remember looking at the picture and breaking down into tears in the middle of the restaurant. I had seen many pictures of myself and knew I had gained weight, but something about this particular picture, I did not recognize this person. A person who cannot stand looking at a picture of themselves is not who I wanted to be. I also realized that I did not have many pictures with my daughter over the years. I was avoiding the camera and it made me extremely sad. I knew my life had to change

and it was up to me to change it. No one was going to do it for me.

**“  
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A few months later, I was in a gym that I had not seen the inside of in 10+ years. It was not easy and there were plenty of days I wanted to quit and thought I was just way too old to get back in shape. I was not 20 anymore, but rather 48 years old when my fitness journey started. However, I never gave up. I started out in a size 14, 174lbs and 5'2". I stayed the course in the gym and with my nutrition and I can proudly say that in October 2018, I competed in my first bodybuilding competition as a figure competitor. Since then, I have competed in four other competitions and even switched to women's physique. This year at 49 years old, I have become Nationally Qualified in Figure and Women's Physique and hope to attend the NPC Teen, Collegiate and Masters National Bodybuilding Championships next year and bring my best package yet.

Never let anyone tell you that you are too old or it is too late to be the best you can be. At 49 years old, I am in the best shape of my life, I feel amazing, and the best part is.....my beautiful daughter is my biggest cheerleader!