



Y STORY OF THE MONTH

The year 2019 was coming to an end in my home country of Honduras. One evening, while talking with my wife about how quickly our two children were growing up, we felt a strong desire to continue serving others. For over 20 years, my wife had been working as a preschool teacher, and I had been involved in agriculture, providing food and education for farmers. We entertained the idea of participating in cultural exchange and moving to another country, so we started looking into opportunities in the United States.

The decision was not easy. We had to leave behind many beloved connections and face cultural barriers, language differences, and the challenges that come with starting over in a new place. I remember praying that night and asking the Lord to grant me the opportunity to serve and empower others.

Finally, the day of our journey arrived. We arrived in a small town called Marion,



nestled in the foothills of the Appalachians in North Carolina. From that moment on, I began to feel the love of the mountains and its people, which eased the transition. I started suspecting that good things were yet to come. Both my wife and I found jobs and adjusted to our new way of life.

However, as in every story, tragedy and worry struck overnight with the arrival of Covid-19, a pandemic that brought immense pain to many families, including ours. We lost close relatives and experienced the virus firsthand, having to stop working due to illness.

But a new chapter was about to begin. We refused to be defeated. I immediately joined volunteer brigades on the frontline, delivering educational materials to students' homes, distributing food at dispensaries, and finding solace in taking care of community gardens and growing fresh vegetables. Through these activities, I connected with support organizations for the Latino community and was invited to join Covid-19 response teams. It was then that I found a home, a place that embraced me from day one with guidance and companionship. I affectionately refer to it as the YMCA of the mountains—Avery's YMCA.

In this YMCA, God answered my prayers by providing a platform to fulfill my desire to serve the minority community, which plays a crucial role in the local economy. They are involved in construction, Christmas tree farms, golf courses, gardening, hotels, and more. This is the Latino Community, connected to health, food, transportation, and other resources. We integrate them into existing YMCA programs and connect them with aid organizations.

I conclude this short story with a phrase inscribed on my father's tombstone, which left me with a great legacy: "He who is not born to serve is not fit to live."

- Rosendo Edgardo Lopes Gale, Latino Community Outreach Director



Strengthening Our Community

May is easily one of the busiest times of the year for us. In May we hosted the annual **Marjorie Williams Memorial Golf Tournament**, to raise funds for children and families in need; **Healthy Kids Day** in partnership with the Blue Ridge



Partnership for Children's **BLOCKFest**, where local organizations came together to promote healthy lifestyles for children and their families; and **National Senior Health and Fitness Day**; a day dedicated to promoting the health and wellness of seniors and those aging in place. Across these three events the YMCA and community partners interacted with over 600 individuals.



However, we also hosted the **Mexican Consulate** at the NC Cooperative Extension where more than 550 individuals received assistance with legal documents, Covid-19 and other vaccinations, and learned about other local resources. Staff volunteered and participated in the **Burnsville Fit Families 5K, Run for Holland, ChildFest in Mitchell County**, and so much more! Everyday the YMCA works to support our communities and all of those who live in them. To learn more about the YMCA or how you can get involved visit at www.ymcaavery.com or use the links below to donate and become a volunteer and member.



A special THANK YOU to all of our community partners who participated and sponsored these community events and invited us to participate in your events!

[Volunteer](#)[Donate](#)[Become A Member](#)

UPCOMING AVERY PROGRAMS



Community Connections

The Community Outreach Department has several opportunities for you to get out and meet new people this Summer. Join us for our next Community Hike on June 28th! We will meet in the Hugh Chapman Center Parking lot at 12:30 and drive to the hiking trail. Anyone is welcome to join the group at no cost! To register for the Hike email Sheila Bauer,



THANK YOU!!

The YMCA Recreation Department would like to extend a huge Thank you to all of the Referees, Volunteer Coaches, Spring Soccer Participants and Newland Christian Church for a successful Spring Soccer Season! We couldn't do it without each and everyone of you. We look forward to the fall soccer season!



When Can My Child Use the Wellness Center?

Did you know that your kids can begin their fitness journey in the wellness center at the age of 10 years old? Our Youth Fit program is a one-time session that teaches proper gym use and etiquette. Upon completion of a Youth Fit Session they can participate in non-weight bearing group



What's Your Story?

In June, tell us why you joined. We want to know your story. There's a Y story in us all, tell us yours so we can get to know you better! Stop at the Welcome Desk to grab a piece of paper and pen, and write your story down for us to read and enjoy!

[Share My Story Through](#)

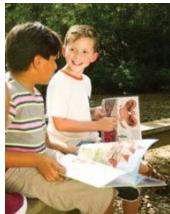
Community Outreach
Director using the
button below.

I want to join
the fun!

Email

exercise classes with
direct parental
supervision. 14+ can
use the wellness center
and participate in group
exercise classes without
parental supervision.

Tell Me More!



What Are You Doing This Summer?

What are your plans for the Summer? It's not too late to add joining the YMCA Summer Camp to your list of exciting Summer plans! We currently have open space for Summer Camp in our 4th and 5th grade groups. Not in that grade; no worries! We have waitlists for Kindergarten through 3rd grade. When a spot opens up we will give you a call!

4th Grade
Registration



Summer Schedule Updates

For the months of June and July the Aquatics Department will **NOT** be offering Group Swim Lessons, Swim Club or Junior Swim Club. Parent and Me Lessons along with Private Swim Lessons will continue to be offered on their normal days and times. At this time we anticipate bringing our Group Swim Lessons and Swim Club options back in August.

5th Grade
Registration

Email Us Your
Questions



Building Strength. Supporting Survivors.

LIVESTRONG at the Y begins June 5th. This program is free for any Cancer Survivor, past or present. Contact Chris Kennedy at ChrisK@ymcaavery.org today to register!

What is
LIVESTRONG
at the Y?



Congratulations Graduates!

Congratulations to all of the YMCA Staff and Interns graduating this year! We know you all have worked hard to get to this point and will go on to change the world. Join us in celebrating the 2023 Graduates by watching their video using the link below and giving them a shoutout on social media.

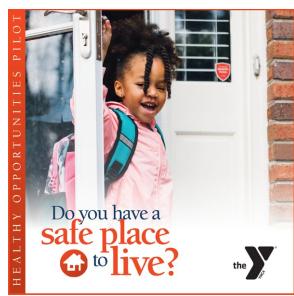
Avery County
Graduates

Mitchell
County
Graduates

UPCOMING MITCHELL PROGRAMS



THANK YOU!



How Can We Help?



Delay the Disease
is Growing!



YMCA Trivia

On June 6th the YMCA will celebrate Founder's

As we wrap up our first year offering After-School in Mitchell County we wanted to thank everyone who has helped us along the way! We are grateful for our community partners Penland School of Craft and 4H Mitchell County Extension who lead fun educational activities through the year. We are also very grateful to Mitchell County Schools and Tri County Christian Private School for providing a safe place and assisting with transporting students to the program!

Our final family engagement event was "Fitness is Fun" where all partners came together to support the health and wellness of students and their families. We are looking forward to more After-School fun next school year!

If you have Medicaid Managed Care, you may qualify for **free** housing services like move-in support, home safety modifications, and utility setup fees through the Healthy Opportunities Pilot. Call 828-278-9900 or visit impacthealth.org/home to learn more! Or email Sheila Bauer, Rosendo Gale, or Stephen Bomar to learn how the YMCA can help you!

Email Sheila for Services Offered in Avery County

Email Rosendo for Services offered in Spanish

Email Stephen for Services Offered in Mitchell & Yancey County

The YMCA is more than a gym and swim; we are a place where individuals of all walks of life come together to improve the health and wellness of our community! The Delay the Disease for Parkinson's Patients program is a prime example. This group has grown from 6-7 individuals to 12-15 coming together to improve their strength, balance, cardiovascular health and support each other through living with Parkinson's Disease.

How Can I Join?

Day! In 1844, George Williams and 11 other young men held a meeting in London that would lead to the founding of the YMCA. For 179 years, the Y has worked to strengthen communities – creating the first group swim classes, spearheading the first English as a Second Language (ESL) class and addressing chronic disease through programs like the Y's Diabetes Prevention Program. We are one of the oldest nonprofits in the United States and rely on members and donors to continue our work. Thank you for your continued support!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS



[June Group Exercise](#)

Have you tried Boot Camp on Saturday mornings? Offered each year from May-August
Boot Camp is the perfect interval training class with tire flips, running/walking, weight, battle ropes and more! Join us at 8:30 am in the O'Connell Fieldhouse this Saturday to experience the fun for yourself!

[Download Group Exercise Schedule](#)



[June Athletics](#)

Summer Camp is back! Please refer to the June Schedule for all programming and class locations as GYM A will be closed to the public beginning June 5th during Summer Camp and Basketball Camp.

[Download Blackburn Athletic Schedule](#)



[June Aquatics](#)

Download the June Aquatics Schedule to see when lessons, aquatics classes, Summer Camp Swimming and so much more are happening in the pool!

[Download Aquatics Schedule](#)

[Download Fieldhouse](#)

Schedule

Connect with us on:



Williams YMCA of Avery County | 436 Hospital Drive, PO Box 707 Linville, NC 28646

You received this because you are subscribed to emails from the Williams YMCA of Avery County.

[Manage Email Preferences](#)