



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Y STORY OF THE MONTH

As the holiday season approaches, we pause to count our blessings and consider all the ways that our lives are enriched by our families, friends and communities, through which we find love, support, motivation, encouragement, a listening ear and generous spirit. Three mornings a week, the Stretch, Tone & Balance class begins at the Blackburn Facility, and along with a bit of pulling or pushing from Sheila, the day becomes breakfast with friends, a hike in the woods, a service project for a less-fortunate community member, or a bit of company on a rainy day.

For many participants of the class, Sheila's friendship, creative exercise class, prayers and encouragement are what motivates them to get up and out of the house to get to class by 8:30.

Judy, would describe the Y, and the community she has found here, to be life-saving, as she moves through her 96th year. She is at the Y five days a week and contributes as she can volunteering with our Outreach programs.

Jeanette appreciates getting together with friends old and new (as she brought a friend to class today), volunteering for the Reindeer Run coming up soon, and helping to meet the needs of those in our community, beyond the obvious health benefits of coming to class regularly.

Sherry and Webb came to class initially after a knee replacement, but now looks forward to seeing Sheila and being challenged in a variety of ways, which makes the time go by quickly as well as each class special in its way.

Eileen moved to the area four years ago, and faces daily challenges that often bring her to class stressed and anxious. She shared that when she leaves after just an hour, she is more free, relaxed, and her overall mental health has improved dramatically. She has been working on improving her balance, and has achieved more stable movement overall. She always feels better when she leaves, and emphasized that this is the best medicine!

Connie, a part-time resident, is a retired Marine, and knowledgeable about how to achieve mental and physical fitness. She really appreciates Sheila's approach to the maintenance of the body, the stretching and



balance work, that are less fun for some of us. Sheila uses a variety of activities that make the more routine parts of fitness fun and challenging.

Karen (K-Ron) has been coming to class for 11 years, and describes it as the best class at the Y, crediting this time spent for improvement in her general fitness and balance. She also volunteers where she can.

Jan is a fixture in the class, as well as other classes, and always looking out for ways to improve the world, and others, around her, through service or contribution to a service project.

Becky and Phyllis nurture those around them with encouraging words, sweet treats, and contributions to outreach and volunteer opportunities when Sheila presents them. You can also find them moving and shaking in Active class and solving the troubles of the world as they walk and talk.

Kathy loves the Stretch, Tone, and Balance Class! She attended the class before her back surgery and according to her doctors she is recovering faster than expected and it could be due to the strength that was built before her surgery. Because of the connections Kathy made in the class, she felt supported and cared for post surgery. She appreciates Sheila's enthusiasm and how she lifts you up throughout the class.

The Stretch, Tone and Balance class is a living, breathing example of family, friendship and community, with its own heartbeat, daily reminding and encouraging us to improve our own lives even as we lift up those of our neighbors. The class is filled with many other friends and neighbors, sharing their mornings, challenges, encouragement, volunteer hours, delicious treats, gifts and talents with those around them.

Get fit, do good. We'll see you in class!

YMCA Holiday Hours of Operation

To give our YMCA Staff a chance to celebrate and rest with their families and loved ones the Williams YMCA of Avery County will be closed or operate on adjusted hours the following days.



Christmas Eve: December 24th - Closed

Christmas Day: December 25th - Closed

New Year's Eve: December 31st - Closed

New Year's Day: January 1st - Delayed opening to 8 am

Any Williams YMCA of Avery County Member with 24/7 Access will still be able to access the Wellness Center even when the YMCA is closed for the Holidays. As we enter into winter months, facility closures due to inclement weather become more likely. At your own risk, you can still use the facility if you have 24/7 Access.

To sign up or to find out more information about 24/7 Access, please stop by the welcome desk today!

[Tell Me More about 24/7 Access](#)

UPCOMING AVERY PROGRAMS



Thank You!

Thank you to everyone who has donated socks, sweatshirts, and blankets for our Seniors and those who are socially isolated! The Community Outreach Office is overflowing with donations and the Community Outreach Team is overjoyed at being able to deliver these cold weather items to those at greatest need in our community.

Thank you for helping us bring warmth to so many individuals this winter season!



Calling All Volunteers

All departments at our YMCA rely on volunteers for our programs to run smoothly. Please fill out this form if you are interested in volunteering at our YMCA. Volunteers are needed in all departments, including

- Youth Development,
- Aquatics,
- Athletics, and
- Administration

This survey should not take more than a few minutes of your time. Surveys can be submitted anonymously.



Wellness Center Updates

Have you checked out the new cardio equipment in the wellness center? New pieces to the center are our seated ellipticals and arm ergometer! Work with a wellness coach to learn how to use them today! Also new on the tvs is ESPN+ and Discovery+ so you can watch a variety of channels and live sports!



Last Day to Register

Don't forget to register for the Reindeer Run! You can **register on site** December 2nd up until 8:45am before the race starts! Adult Registration (12+) is \$25, ages 6-11 is \$15 and ages 5 and under are free. Wear your best Christmas and festive attire and we will see you there!

I'm Ready To Volunteer!



Winter Youth Program Updates

This winter season the YMCA **will not** be offering Snow or Holiday Camp options during the Avery County School break or on days when school is canceled due to inclement weather.



Have You Got What It Takes?

Are you ready to make a difference in our community? Join our YMCA Lifeguard Team and learn how to protect our members and guest in the pool while encouraging the next generation of swimmers to tackle the Swim Test. For more information please contact Aquatics Director, Faith Boyette.

Submit Your Resume Now!



New Year New Resolutions

Register now for our next Weight Loss Program beginning January 9th. The class will be held on Tuesday afternoons from 5:30-6:30pm. If you register during the month of December you only pay \$40. The rate increases to \$60 in January! Don't hesitate, plan to lose weight today!

Save My Spot!



YMCA Youth Development Feedback

We need your help! In order to continue enhancing and improving our programs and services we need your feedback. Each month we will include a survey for a specific department or program at the YMCA. This month our focus is on Youth Development. If you would like to provide feedback about

any of our youth development programs please complete the short survey using the button below.

Youth Development Feedback

UPCOMING MITCHELL PROGRAMS



Spreading Holiday Cheer!

Through out the year you may have seen updates for the new Healthy Opportunity Pilot Program through NC Medicaid that the YMCA is participating in. This program ensures that those who need help with food access, transportation, or housing needs receive them. For the Holiday Season the YMCA Mitchell After School Group handmade cards to accompany the food boxes being delivered this week. Thank you to all of our After School students for the holiday cards!

[Learn More About The Healthy Opportunity Pilot Program](#)

[Learn More About Mitchell County After School](#)



National Recognition

The Riverside Story Trail recently received national recognition by the Association of Bookmobile and Outreach Services (ABOS) on Facebook! During StoryWalk® Week the ABOS posted that they were thankful for the stories and pictures of communities engaging with the stories that have been featured on the story trail. The Riverside Story Trail is a collaborative effort with the AMY Regional Library, Blue Ridge Partnership for Children, PENLAND School of Craft, the Town of Spruce Pine, and the Williams YMCA of Avery County.

[Here is the Facebook Post From ABOS](#)



Join Us For Mitchell EnhanceFitness

Your wait is nearly over! EnhanceFitness will return to Mitchell County on January 8th, 2024! The program will be lead by Jessica Thomas and held on Monday, Wednesday, and Fridays from 10:00 am-11:00 am. The registration fee for this 16-week program will be \$60. There is a class limit of 20 spots for this winter session.

If you have additional questions please contact [Mitchell County Healthy Living Director, Jessica Thomas](#).

[What is EnhanceFitness?](#)



Moving Forward

On November 3rd, 2023, Mayland Community College and the Williams YMCA of Avery County hosted a groundbreaking at the construction site of the shared Pine Bridge Building. This space will house the new Mitchell County YMCA along with Mayland Community College classrooms and a shared event space. We want to thank everyone who came out to celebrate the groundbreaking with us!

Since the ground breaking construction crews have been hard at work in the space and we can't wait to show you the progress of the project over the next year!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS



December Group Exercise

Have you tried our Saturday Zumba Class yet? Dance your way to fun through the Holiday season with this high energy class!

[Download Group Exercise Schedule](#)

December Athletics

Thank you for all of your support and engagement in 2023! Click this link to get a preview of our 2024 Youth Athletic Program lineup! <https://bit.ly/3GcxXrJ>

[Download Blackburn Athletic Schedule](#)

[Download Fieldhouse Schedule](#)

December Aquatics

NEW CLASS TIME!

We have added an afternoon Water Fit Class. Join Lucy from 2-3 pm in the pool! Be sure to download the aquatics schedule below for all of our other December aquatics program offerings!

[Download Aquatics Schedule](#)

Connect with us on:



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