



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Y STORY OF THE MONTH

Spotlight on Ms. Tamara Presnell: A Champion for Students and Community Partnerships

Tamara Presnell began her teaching career in 1998 in Yancey County and has served in a range of roles, from classroom teacher to school principal. For the past three years, she has brought her dedication and leadership to Avery County Schools as principal of Newland Elementary School. A resident of Burnsville, Ms. Presnell recalls memories of attending the YMCA in Haywood County and participating in Girl Scout lock-ins at the Y in Greenwood, South Carolina. These early experiences helped shape her strong belief in the importance of service to others, and meeting the needs of those around her.

As a school leader in a district known for its rich diversity and high number of students with special challenges and needs, Ms. Presnell has witnessed firsthand how YMCA programs directly benefit children and families, services she now sees as essential in



Avery County. One standout program is SPLASH, which teaches water safety and basic swimming techniques to students in kindergarten through second grade. She also highlights the After School program, which provides structured academic time, tutoring, a healthy meal, supervised play, and opportunities to overcome daily challenges—especially those amplified in the wake of Hurricane Helene and ongoing recovery efforts.

Ms. Presnell notes that 80% of students in her school qualify for free or reduced lunch, a statistic that underscores the need for support services including transportation, childcare, academic assistance, adaptive life skills, and consistent access to meals. After School programming helps alleviate chronic attendance issues by providing a safe, supportive space for children while their parents work. “If people could truly see the impact of After School and Summer Camp programs on our families,” Ms. Presnell shared, “they would understand that these hours offer more than just homework help, tutoring, and physical activity—they consistently meet some of our most basic community needs.”

She expressed her gratitude for the partnership between Avery County Schools and the Williams YMCA of Avery County and emphasized the importance of expanding access to every child on the waiting list. “Together,” she said, “we are working to meet the needs of every child in Avery County, and there are so many more who need help.”

At the Y, we’re equally thankful for friends, neighbors, and dedicated partners like Ms. Presnell who serve our community with compassion and commitment. The next time you see her, ask how you can help too!

Upcoming Events



Healthy Kids Day is May 3rd!

**2025 Healthy Kids Day® featured at Family Day at the YMCA
May 3rd, 2025 11:00am - 2:00pm
Blackburn Facility**

We are so excited for Family Day at the YMCA as a part of the Y-USA Healthy Kids Day Initiative to improve the health and well-being of kids and families! Come join us to share in the following safe, fun activities!

- Rolling Skating Rink
- Bounce Houses
- Caliber Martial Arts
- Magician
- Door Prizes
- Food Trucks – What the Cluck Truck, BE Scooped, Lil’T’s Food Truck and Pelicans!

This event is FREE and OPEN TO THE PUBLIC!

We can't wait to see you there!!



The Leonard and Marjorie Williams Memorial Golf Tournament 2025

We are proud to continue growing Leonard and Marjorie Williams' legacy and the impact that they have had and will continue to have on those in our community. While they are no longer with us physically, they will live on through not only our YMCA but the countless other organizations that they have supported to ensure that children and other vulnerable populations are receiving the services they deserve. Our community owes them a great deal of gratitude. The purpose of our golf tournament is not only to honor and remember them, but to continue the Williams' impact by raising funds for scholarships for children and families in need. Thank you to all the sponsors and players that participate in this year's Tournament in Linville on May 5, 2025!



National Senior Health & Fitness Day is May 28th!

National Senior Health and Fitness Day is May 28th from 10:00am-1:00pm in the lobby of the Sloop Medical Office Building! Stop by and check out the community partners attending this annual health and wellness event for older adults. You will learn about local agencies and organizations that help emphasize the importance of regular physical activity and how they are working to improve the health of older adults.

Join us for our first community hike of 2025 on May 21st, to Linville Gorge! Call or email Sheila Bauer for more info.

What's Happening in Avery



Community Health Worker Summit

Anabel Zayas, HOP Program Director and Community Health Worker, and Katie Willett, Association Healthy Living Director, had the opportunity to



Learn to Play Pickleball!

This clinic is for individuals or beginners who want to learn how to play pickleball. In these two hours, you will learn how to play safely, the rules, and basic



Summer Camp Registration!

Summer camp registration opened to the public on April 25th at 9am! Registration links for each grade are posted on our [website on the youth page](#). This summer, camp



No Join Fee in May!

When you walk into the Y, you will find friends, neighbors, and community all congregating in our YMCA lobby. Enjoy a fresh cup of coffee, share a moment and interact with our staff or

attend a Community Health Worker Summit Meeting in New Bern, NC in April, where they both presented their findings and relationships for the three counties our organization serves, Avery, Mitchell, and Yancey Counties, to a group of NC Community Healthy Workers. They presented local findings of outreach and community health from before, during, and after Hurricane Helene, along with plans for long-term recovery. We were grateful to share our experiences and bring attention to the needs and challenges of our community.

terminology that will prepare you to play confidently!

Time: TBD
 Date: May 23rd
 Who: Ages 8 and up
 Location: Blackburn Athletic Facility
 Cost: \$10 members
 \$20 non-members

Email Recreation Director, Nathan for more information.

[Email Nathan](#)

runs from June 9th - August 1st, 7:30am - 5:30pm.

Our Summer Camp program is open to all current K-5th Graders at Avery County Schools at no charge. We are looking forward to a fun-filled summer packed with friends, adventure and learning!

Visit our website for more information or click the link below to Register!

[Register!](#)

other members. The lobby is a great place to make a new friend, connect with old friends or just relax.

During the month of May we are waiving the \$25 join fee for anyone who joins the YMCA for the first time.



Give the Gift of a Brighter Future

Our K-5 After School Program and Summer Camp are safe, fun spaces where kids build life skills, confidence, and friendships.

Through activities like swimming, sports, and mental health support, we nurture the whole child. Your donation provides meals, support, and joy. Help us give every child the chance to grow and thrive—donate to the Williams YMCA of Avery County today! Use the button below to give the gift of a brighter future today!

Click below to Donate!

[Donate Now](#)



Saving & Change Lives

Now Hiring Lifeguards for the Summer!

Join our Lifeguard Training Course on May 9th & 10th. to start your summer job as a Lifeguard!

You must be 15 years old, be able to work at least two shifts per week, and possess excellent customer service skills. Email [Faith](#) for more info or to register.



Pedaling For Parkinson's™

The Pedaling for Parkinson's program is based on research indicating that exercise on a bicycle can reduce symptoms of Parkinson's. In fact, participants who ride three days a week over eight weeks have shown improvement in their Parkinson's-related symptoms by as much as 35%.

Our program is offered on an indoor stationary spin bike with a trained instructor. This low-impact, introductory spin class is open to Parkinson's patients and their caregivers.

Where: The Spin Room, Williams YMCA Main Facility

When: Wednesdays – 11:15 am-12:00 pm

Who: Anyone diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease and their caregivers

Cost: No cost upon



Personal Training and Wellness Coaching

Interested in personal training? Meet Craig, a passionate, eager, motivated and available personal trainer. Craig is a dedicated father, husband, and war veteran who has been involved in fitness for 10+ years. Inquire at the welcome desk about how to sign up for your free consultation.

[Small Group Personal Training Information](#)

registration

For more information,
contact [Deana Acklin](#),
Program Instructor
or click the link below:

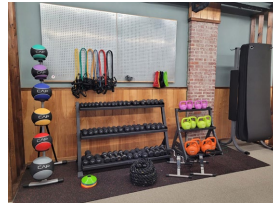
Pedaling for
Parkinson's
Schedule

What's Happening in Mitchell



Learn Nutrition and Food Safety at After School

What an exciting month in After School!! Our Students at Greenlee worked with Sarah Grindstaff from the NC Cooperative Extension service to learn more about nutrition and food safety. Students learned about grains, proteins, dairy, fruits and vegetables, the "My Plate" nutrition model. They also learned how to make the best choices about how to fuel their bodies. We are very excited to have the program begin at Gouge in April. It is always nice to see and hear the students be excited about learning.



Mitchell Group Exercise Opportunities

Looking for a group exercise classes in Mitchell County? We are all eagerly waiting for our facility to open here in Mitchell, but you don't have to wait to get moving. We offer a cardio, strength with mat and weight workout class at 9am on Monday and Wednesday mornings and ReFit, a cardio/dance class at 9am on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. You could work out every morning at 9am Monday through Thursday at the Healthy Living Center! Your 1st class is free and \$5 for each following class. Call or email [Jessica Thomas 828-520-1379](#) for more information!

Email Jessica



EnhanceFitness in Mitchell County

Mitchell County Healthy Living Center kicked off a second round of our very popular program, EnhanceFitness class. We will continue this session through August 2025. If you are interested in the next class starting in the fall, please call or email [Jessica Thomas](#) at the Mitchell County Healthy Living Center 828-520-1379.

Email Jessica

BELONG FROM THE BEGINNING

MITCHELL COUNTY
CHARTER MEMBERSHIPS
NOW AVAILABLE!



BELONG FROM THE BEGINNING

The Williams YMCA of Avery County is excited to announce the official sale of charter memberships for the new Mitchell YMCA, beginning Thursday, May 1st. The new state-of-the-art facility will be located in the former Pinebridge Center in Spruce Pine. Charter memberships will be available for sale at the YMCA of Avery County and at various upcoming community events.

Charter Members will receive exclusive benefits, including:

- Waived joining fee,
- One week of early access to the facility,
- Invitation to an exclusive ribbon cutting event,
- Acknowledgment on lobby signage as a charter member, and
- A Complimentary YMCA swag item and charter member scan tag.

Charter memberships are available for a one-time fee of \$100.

For questions or more information please contact [Trey Oakley](#), CEO at

Mark Your Calendars



May Group Exercise

Have you tried Our Barre Class?

Join Shannon on Mondays at 4:30pm for a unique group fitness class that incorporates movements derived from ballet to promote balance, flexibility and core stability.

[Download Avery Group Exercise Schedule](#)

[Download Mitchell Group Exercise Opportunities](#)



May Athletics

Have you booked your appointment for one of our Golf Simulators in our O'Connell Fieldhouse?? Even when you've got April showers, you can make a reservation Monday - Friday 8am-12pm and 3pm-7pm or on Saturday from 8am-3pm. Visit our website or stop in to reserve your spot today!

[Download Blackburn Athletic Facility Schedule](#)

[Download O'Connell Field House Schedule](#)



May Aquatics

May is Water Safety Month!

From April 1st through May 31st, families who complete the age-appropriate lessons and bring proof to our Aquatics Office will receive discounted lessons! Click the link below to find your lessons!

[Download Aquatics Schedule](#)

[At-Home Water Safety](#)

Giving Back

Do you want to be part of the change and give back to the Avery and Mitchell County Communities? There are a variety of ways you can get involved with the Williams YMCA of Avery County!

[Donate](#)

Reinvest in the community through the programs and services offered by the YMCA, including drowning prevention programs, outreach services addressing social isolation and food insecurity, after-school and summer camp programs that help youth find new and exciting ways to learn and connect with their peers, and Healthy Living programs that help those living with Chronic Diseases manage their symptoms.

[Volunteer](#)

Give the gift of your time and skills in programs that change the lives of children, teens, adults, families, and seniors.

Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities:

- **Outreach**
- **National Senior Health & Fitness Day**
- **Summer Camp**



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](#)