

Y STORY OF THE MONTH

Sharon Pendley's Journey at the Y

Meet Sharon Pendley, a dedicated member of the A.M.Y. Wellness Foundation YMCA of Mitchell County. Maybe you've seen her around! Sharon is a Yancey County native, raised in Green Mountain, North Carolina. She learned the importance of hard work and resilience from an early age—describing her childhood as very difficult. Sharon shared that she would walk 2.5 miles to *and* from O.C. Whitson's store just to ride the school bus. As a teenager, she attended Cane River High School for two years before marrying her now husband of 56 years, Gerald Pendley.

Sharon and Gerald have 2 daughters, 3 grandsons, and 4 great-grandsons. Her life has been one filled with love and service, not only in her home but also in her professional career. Sharon worked for 20 years at Glen Raven Mills in Burnsville, NC, and then an additional 25 years for the Blue Ridge Area Foundation where she cared for mentally-disabled clients. Her last 8 years of work were spent as a personal caregiver.



Pictured from left to right: Sharon Pendley, Shannon Robertson

Now in retirement, Sharon eagerly joined the Y upon its opening as a place to work on her health and fitness and to go with her family. She is often accompanied by her daughter, Shannon. They have remained consistent, committed to coming at least 3 days a week together. Their favorite thing to do is swim laps in our aquatics area. Sharon shared that she has lost 13 pounds in only 5 weeks, alongside a drop in cholesterol and blood pressure. Additionally, the Y has helped her and her daughter emotionally, giving them a sense of community while combatting feelings of depression. "Life has been so stressful. The YMCA has been the best thing that has ever happened to us," said Sharon.

We are so glad to have them at the A.M.Y. Wellness Foundation YMCA of Mitchell County. If you see her or her daughter around, be sure to say hello!

A Letter From our Executive Director

The Mitchell YMCA continues to thrive as a cornerstone of Mitchell County, fostering health, connection, and community spirit. Our membership is steadily growing, reflecting the trust and enthusiasm of our residents. With an expanding array of exercise offerings, including the ever-popular water aerobics classes, we're providing more ways than ever for members to stay active and engaged.

More than just a fitness center, the Mitchell YMCA has become a vibrant meeting place where neighbors connect, friendships form, and community bonds strengthen. It's a stable,

welcoming hub where people of all ages come together to pursue wellness and build a stronger Mitchell County.

Join us at the Mitchell YMCA, where we're growing, moving, and connecting—together.

-Bill Hoag, Branch Executive Director

What's Happening



Enhancing Social Connection with Healthy Living Program Participants!

Last month, we were able to take our social connections outside of the Y! Thanks to the Social Connectedness Grant from YMCA of the USA, about 18 people from our Healthy Living programs were able to deepen their relationships with others in the programs. They know the Y is a great place to combat chronic disease symptoms through physical activity, but they also now know the importance of socially connecting for improved health!

Interested in one of our Healthy Living programs?

Delay the Disease for Parkinson's continues to be open and free to anyone with Parkinson's Disease.

Enhanced Fitness registration is now closed until Jan 2026 but you can be added to the interest list for the next session by contacting Healthy Living Director, Jessica Thomas, below.

[Email Jessica](#)



New Students Warming up to After School

After School programming is up and running, with 5 sites now participating.

According to Mitchell Youth Development Director, Burt Blankenship, one of their best moments so far comes from a student that is new to the program. The first day he seemed a little unsure, but participated. On his second day he came in announcing that he LOVED After School.

Specifically, getting his homework done, spending more time with his friends—oh yes, and he likes the snacks! He went on to say that After School was his favorite part of the day.

Interested in working with After School?

Email Burt below for more information.

[Email Burt](#)



Looking to Give?

Through our Year-Round Annual Giving Campaign, staff and volunteers work to ensure no one is turned away due to inability to pay. This support helps us provide life-changing programs and services right here in our community.

Our Association Membership Director, Jessica Hurlbert, says it best:

"Yes, we provide a gym and a swim, but we are so much more than that. For some, it's a lifeline of social interaction. For others, it's where families grow healthier together. I've seen how the Y changes lives, and I'm blessed to play even a small part of that."

If you'd like to join Jessica in supporting the Annual Giving Campaign, stop by the membership desk to connect with her — she'd love to share more about how you can get involved in making this kind of impact possible.



24-Hour Access is HERE

We are excited to finally announce that 24-hour access officially began on Sept. 29, 2025. Now you will be able to access our wellness floor around the clock from the door in our upper parking lot. *NOTE: This is only for members 18 and older.*

Wanting to add this to your membership? Stop by our membership desk to do the following:

1. Activate 24-hour capabilities on your access tab
2. Sign the 24-hour waiver
3. Authorize payment for the \$5/person monthly fee

For more information, click below to read FAQs.

[24-Hour Access FAQ](#)



Worried About Membership Costs? Talk to our Staff

Please don't let cost be an obstacle to membership at the YMCA. The YMCA offers a program called "Y-Access" which provides membership at a cost based on your income.

Our Membership Services team (Wendy, Sam, Nora, Robert and Teresa) has spent the last couple of months training to best support you, and we are quickly becoming experienced employees.

Please stop by the Membership Desk at any time to chat or ask questions about our Y-Access program. We're here for you!



We Have MERCH for Purchase!

We are excited to announce that we now have YMCA gear available for purchase. This includes includes t-shirts of various styles, pullovers, ball caps, lanyards and more!

We also have a small supply of our "Climb to Remember 9/11" t-shirts still available for purchase.

We have ordered our Fall gear, and we expect to have it in time for cooler weather.

Stop by the membership desk to support the A.M.Y. Wellness Foundation YMCA of Mitchell County by purchasing gear and wearing it proudly.

Mark Your Calendars



Hugh Chapman Early Learning Center Opening

In-person registration is now open for the **Hugh**



Group Fitness Class Additions

We are excited to have started 3 new group exercise classes in the last



Early Closures in October

On Saturday, **October 25** at **2:00 PM**, we will be closing in support of the

Chapman Early Learning Center at the Williams YMCA of Avery County! The Hugh Chapman Early Learning Center will be serving up to 45 children ages 2-5 in a full-day program. We will operate Monday-Friday from 7:00 AM-5:30 PM. Please contact Jessica Sullins by phone at [828-737-5500](tel:828-737-5500) ext. 341, or by email below, to learn more.

[Email Jessica](#)

month.

Vinyasa Yoga on Mondays at 11:00 AM, Yoga Sculpt on Wednesdays at 4:30 PM, and Water Aerobics on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9:00 AM.

All group exercise classes are free to members, however, capacity is limited so classes are first-come, first-serve.

We are working to add more group exercise options as we get instructors. If you have experience, or would like more information on becoming a group exercise instructor, please reach out to the Healthy Living Director, Jessica Thomas, below.

[Email Jessica](#)

Halloween 2025 Benefit Concert. The Wellness Floor will still be available to those with 24-hour access.

The Y will reopen for it's regular schedule on Monday, October 27.

Thank you in advance for your understanding and cooperation with these early closures.

October Schedules

October Group Exercise Schedule



October Group Exercise and Healthy Living Schedule-Mitchell

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday		
7:00		Sunrise Yoga Belinda *Room 109					
9:00	Move & Tone Carolyn **Room 109	Refit Morgan *Room 108	Water Aerobics *Pool	Move & Tone Carolyn *Room 108	Refit Morgan *Room 108	Water Aerobics *Pool	Move & Tone Carolyn *Room 108
10:00	Enhance Fitness *Room 108 <i>*Registration closed</i>		Enhance Fitness * Room 108 <i>*Registration closed</i>	All Levels Yoga Belinda *Room 109	Enhance Fitness *Room 108 <i>*Registration closed</i>		
11:00	Vinyasa Yoga Maria *Room 109	Delay the Disease *Room 108 <i>By registration only</i>	Chair Yoga Nichole *Room 109	Delay the Disease *Room 108 <i>By registration only</i>			
12:00		Mat Pilates Maureen *Room 109		PIYO Whitney *Room 108	Interval Strength Training Joe *Room 109		
4:30			Yoga Sculpt Maria Room 108				
6:00	Zumba Sarah *Room 108	All Levels Yoga Belinda *Room 109		Zumba Sarah *Room 108			

Healthy Living Programs: We offer the **EnhanceFitness** and **Delay the Disease** with advanced registration. Contact Healthy Living Director, jessicat@ymcaavery.org.

To find an up-close view of the calendar, and for descriptions of each class, click below.

[Group Exercise Schedule](#)

October Aquatics Schedule

OCTOBER AQUATICS CLASS OFFERINGS AND PROGRAM DETAILS								
	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
			Private Swim Lessons - Registration Required - 30 minutes throughout the day - Cost and Scheduling Online		Private Swim Lessons - Registration Required - 30 minutes throughout the day - Cost and Scheduling Online			
7:00 AM	CLOSED							
8:00 AM								
9:00 AM		Adult Swim Group - Registration Required - \$10/month member \$20/month non-member			Adult Swim Group - Registration Required - \$10/month member \$20/month non-member		Adult Swim Group - Registration Required - \$10/month member \$20/month non-member	
10:00 AM			Water Aerobics - 20 person cap		Water Aerobics - 20 person cap			
11:00 AM								
12:00 PM								
1:00 PM								
2:00 PM								
3:00 PM							Group Swim Lessons - Beginner - 1st & 3rd Fridays - 3:45 - 4:30 - Registration Required - \$10/month member \$20/month non-member	
4:00 PM							Group Swim Lessons - Intermediate - 1st & 3rd Fridays - 4:30 - 5:15 - Registration Required - \$10/month member \$20/month non-member	
5:00 PM								
6:00 PM								
7:00 PM								

To find an up-close view of the calendar, and for descriptions of each class, click below.

[Aquatics Schedule](#)

Giving Back

Do you want to be part of the change and give back to the Mitchell County community? There are a variety of ways you can get involved with the A.M.Y. Wellness Foundation YMCA of Mitchell 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, afterschool 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.



For more information on what's happening at the Williams YMCA of Avery County, click [HERE](#).

Connect with us on:



A.M.Y. Wellness Foundation YMCA of Mitchell County | 97 Pinebridge Ave, Spruce Pine, NC 28777

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