



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

## Y STORY OF THE MONTH

### **A Life in Motion, A Heart for Others: Carolyn's Story**

As you may now know, the YMCA is more than just a 'gym and swim'—it is a place where people connect, grow, and care for one another. One person that fully embodies that greater mission is one of our most beloved group exercise instructors, Carolyn B. Burnette.

Carolyn was born in Avery County, but raised in Spruce Pine after moving in 1950. She was one of ten siblings, and according to Carolyn they "played everything." She shared that on any given day you'd find them outside playing softball, football, basketball and even climbing trees! Staying active wasn't a hobby to them—it was a way of living. This passion of staying active has carried Carolyn throughout her life, and has shaped the way she lives today.



After graduating from Harris High School in 1956, Carolyn went on to play basketball at Lees-McRee College. As Carolyn attended Lees-McRee, she pursued a career in the medical field, studying to be a medical secretary. While participating in an internship for her program, she reconnected with a high school best friend who soon would become her lifelong best friend.

Carolyn and her husband LC married soon after her graduation, and they began their lives together in Rock Hill, SC. They moved all around South Carolina as Carolyn pursued her career in medical records before ending back up in Spruce Pine, NC, around 1970. She and her husband spent 46 loving years together, raising four children, before his passing in 2006. Even through life's changes and loss, Carolyn never stopped being active, and never lost her heart of service and compassion.

For many years, Carolyn taught exercise classes in the community. Although she is a newer employee to our current Y, she is not new to the Y movement. She was previously a group exercise instructor at the old Pinebridge YMCA.

When the Y began offering some classes at the Healthy Living Center on Upper Street, prior to the opening of the larger facility, Carolyn became a participant. However, she never expected to become an instructor again. When first asked to teach a class, she shared that she had to take time to pray before offering an answer. Lucky for the Y, she agreed.

After many years of teaching, her goal has remained the same: to inspire others to move confidently, and to make sure they know they are cared for. Carolyn loves to see the joy on people's faces as they step out of her class. They feel stronger, happier, and proud of what their bodies can achieve. Now at 87-years-old, she believes staying active isn't just about overall physical health, but about feeling good and staying connected.

The characteristic of caring is what makes the Y such a special place. Through her kindness and dedication, Carolyn perfectly exemplifies the Y's mission. She reminds us all that the Y is so much more than a building—it's a community.

# What's Happening



## Group Swim is Growing!

This month has been an exciting and productive one for the Mitchell aquatics department. We have had many positive developments and continue to experience significant growth across our programs.

One highlight has been the rapid growth of our group swim lessons. On February 19th, we had *more than 20 children* participate in group lessons. It has been incredible to see such strong engagement, and to watch our community continue to grow in the sport of swimming.

We are grateful for the support and enthusiasm that make this growth possible and look forward to building on this momentum in the months ahead.



## Wellness Floor Testimonials

Shout out to our wellness coaches and trainers! Here are just a few examples of the positive feedback we received from last month's orientations and wellness coaching.

*"I have felt comfortable, from the first day when we joined, in the fact that I will work out. What I have found is that I look forward to coming each time. The orientations are so worth taking the time to learn the machines, the weights and proper form."*

Others noted, "Very friendly and welcoming staff," and "Staff is very knowledgeable and friendly with all ages and ability."

One member summed it up best: "My experiences have been off the charts. I'm even doing exercises at home. I hear her (Eve) in my head. She genuinely cares about my (and others) well-being."



## Welcoming TWO New Delay the Disease Instructors

Our Delay the Disease program is more than an exercise class—it's a community of



## After School Staff Shoutout!

After two weeks away due to winter weather, students returned to school—and to After School—with energy and excitement that

strength and support for those living with Parkinson's disease.

We are excited to welcome **Maureen Dorney** and **Whitney Williams** as two new program assistants/instructors. Both Maureen and Whitney bring valuable experience and shared passion to help others in their wellness journeys, and have been amazing additions! We are so grateful to have you both of them.

If you see either of them around the facility, be sure to say hello!

filled the building. The smiles, laughter, and warm hugs shared with staff said it all: this program is more than a place to go after the bell rings. It's a space where kids feel known, supported, and genuinely cared for. The joy of reconnecting with friends and trusted mentors was a powerful reminder of the impact our After School team makes every single day.

We want to give a heartfelt shoutout to the entire Mitchell After School staff for the incredible job they did welcoming students back and creating an environment where every child feels safe, valued, and encouraged. Mitchell County is truly blessed to have such a dedicated and compassionate group of leaders investing in our youth. If you see one of our After School staff members, be sure to give them a big THANK YOU for all they do!



### Thank you, Wendy!

This past week we said goodbye (at least from behind the desk!) to one of our most beloved team members at the A.M.Y. Wellness Foundation YMCA of Mitchell County—**Wendy Christopher**.

Wendy has been a valued part of our Membership Services team since we opened our doors last July. Every Monday through Wednesday morning, she has been the first smiling face our members and guests see—greeting everyone with her signature bubbly spirit, even at 5:00 AM when most of us are still waking up!

Our team and our members absolutely adore Wendy. Her warmth, positivity, and genuine care for everyone who walks through our doors have made a lasting impact on our YMCA

community.

Wendy is retiring to enjoy well-deserved time with her husband, Steve, who recently retired as well. Wendy is also looking forward to participating in morning group exercise classes with her friends right here at the Mitchell County YMCA, so you'll still see her around! She has even promised to jump in and help at the Membership Desk whenever we're in a pinch.

Wendy, thank you for your dedication, your joy, and the light you brought to our mornings. You will be dearly missed at the desk, but we are so grateful you'll remain part of our YMCA family.

## Mark Your Calendars



### Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring Still Accepting Participants!

As you may have seen posted around the facility, our new Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring (BPSM) program has officially launched. Haven't had the opportunity to join yet? GOOD NEWS! We are still accepting new participants.

BPSM is an evidence-based program that features personalized support as you develop the habit of monitoring your blood pressure. Work with trained Healthy Heart Ambassadors for the duration of the 16week program at least twice a month for 10 minutes or less. Learn how to monitor your own blood pressure with proper techniques. Learn how to identify trends and patterns in your blood pressure readings. Learn how lifestyle choices can affect blood pressure and attend Nutrition Education Seminars developed by a Registered Dietitian focusing on heart healthy food habits. This program offers ongoing support as you work to make blood pressure self-

### Pool Closings in March for Sibelco SPLASH Program

This month, we will be hosting the Sibelco SPLASH Program during the weeks of **March 9-March 13** and **March 23-27**.

We look forward to welcoming kindergarten students from across the community to our facility! This program is always a highlight as we introduce young participants to water safety and help them begin developing a lifelong enjoyment of swimming.

To accommodate this important community initiative, both pools will be closed from **8:15 AM-9:40 AM** and **11:45 AM-1:10 PM** during the above mentioned weeks.

For any question, reach out to our Mitchell Aquatics Director, Sam Reiger, below.

[Email Sam](#)

### Ready for our March Wellness Challenge?

#### THE Y INDOOR SPRINT TRI CHALLENGE

Read below on how to participate.

1. Pick a division to compete in as an individual or as a 3 person relay. Options:

#### GOLD RUSH (Pro)

- 500 yd Swim OR 1250m row
- 10 Mile Bike
- 5K Run

#### FOUR-LEAF STRONG (Intermediate)

- 300yd Swim OR 750m row
- 7 Mile Bike
- 2 Mile Run

#### LUCKY START (Beginner)

- 200yd Swim OR 500m row
- 5 Mile Bike
- 1 Mile Run

2. Complete Swim/Row → Bike → Run for your division in one visit individually or a part of a 3 person relay.

3. Report your time to the wellness desk.

You can choose to compete

monitoring a habit.

**This drop-in program is held on Tuesdays from 10:00 AM-11:30 AM in Room 109 and is at no cost to participants.**

For more information, reach out to our Community Health Worker and Healthy Heart Ambassador, Anabel Zayas, below.

[Email Anabel](#)



### **Tuesday BARRE Class Added to March Group Ex Schedule**

In the short month of February, over 400 of you joined us for group exercise classes. So, due to high demand, some of our group exercise classes are growing.

**Starting in March, members and guests will have a second option to attend Barre—Tuesdays at 5:00 PM!**

Barre is a full-body workout that incorporates challenging movements, light weights, and quick transitions. It blends elements of ballet, Pilates, and strength training, often adding cardio intervals to increase intensity. Participants should expect a focus on form while using props like weights, balls, and resistance bands.

Please wear non-slip/grippy socks to class.

*Follow our social media for information on other upcoming classes and cancellations.*



### **Moving for Better Balance Starting March 2!**

**March 2** marks the start of our new Moving For Better Balance program—a 12 week evidence-based, instructor-led group program designed to help improve strength, balance, flexibility and mobility. This is achieved through slow therapeutic movements of Tai Chi, a graceful form of exercise and deep breathing.

**Participants must be:**

- 65 years or older, physically mobile, with impaired stability and/or mobility
- 45 years or older with a chronic condition that may impact stability and or mobility

*This program session filled up so quickly that registration is closed at this time.* However, please contact Jessica Thomas, Healthy Living Director, below to be added to the next class interest list.

[Email Jessica](#)

anytime from March 1 – March 31. Whether it's your first challenge or your fiftieth, we're lucky to have you in our Y community!



### **Did You Know? Summer Camp is Coming to Mitchell!**

This summer, the A.M.Y. Wellness Foundation YMCA of Mitchell County will be hosting it's very first 6-week summer camp!

Summer Camp is a structured, full-day program designed to provide youth, K-5th grades, with a safe, engaging, and enriching environment while school is out of session. Campers participate in a variety of activities that promote social development, physical activity, creativity, and character building. Typical days may include outdoor games, swimming, arts and crafts, STEM projects, team-building activities, and field trips. Our goal is to create a fun and supportive atmosphere where children can build friendships, try new things, and continue learning throughout the summer months.

**Registration will open on May 1, 2026.** For more information, email our Mitchell Youth Development

[Email Burt](#)

# March Schedules

## March Group Exercise Schedule



### March 2026 Group Exercise and Healthy Living Schedule-Mitchell

Monday	Tuesday		Wednesday	Thursday		Friday	Saturday
	7 Sunrise Yoga Belinda *Room 109						
9 Move & Tone Carolyn **Room 109	9 Refit Morgan *Room 108	9 Water Aerobics *Pool	9 Move & Tone Carolyn *Room 108	9 Refit Morgan *Room 108	9 Water Aerobics *Pool	9 Move & Tone Carolyn *Room 108	9 ReFit Morgan *Room 108
10 Enhance Fitness *Room 108 *Registration closed	10 Groove & Gain Kim * Room 108	10-11:30 Blood Pressure Self- Monitoring *Room 109	10 Enhance Fitness * Room 108 *Registration closed	10 All Levels Yoga Belinda *Room 109	10 Groove & Gain Kim *Room 108	10 Enhance Fitness *Room 108 *Registration closed	
11 Vinyasa Yoga Maria *Room 109	11 Delay the Disease *Room 108 By registration only		11 Chair Yoga Nichole *Room 109	11 Delay the Disease *Room 108 By registration only			
1 Moving For Better Balance *Registration closed	12 Mat Pilates Maureen *Room 109 NO CLASS 3/17 or 3/24		1 Moving For Better Balance *Registration closed	12 PIYO Whitney Room 108		12 Interval Strength Training Joe *Room 109	
	***NEW 5 Barre Dalila *Room 108 *NO Class 3/24		4:30 Yoga Sculpt Maria *Room 108 *SUB on 3/11	4 Barre Dalila *Room 108 *NO Class 3/26			
6 Zumba Sarah *Room 108	6 All Levels Yoga Belinda *Room 109		6 Water Aerobics *Pool	6 Zumba Sarah *Room 108			

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

[Group Exercise Schedule](#)

## March Aquatics Schedule

**POOL HOURS**  
 Monday through Friday - 7:00 AM until 7:00 PM  
 Saturday - 8:00 AM until 3:30 PM

YMCA of Mitchell County



MARCH 2026								
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			
5:00 AM	CLOSED	CLOSED						CLOSED
6:00 AM								
7:00 AM								
8:00 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	
9:00 AM				Water Aerobics		Water Aerobics		
10:00 AM								
11:00 AM								Potential Pool Party
12:00 PM								
1:00 PM								
1:30 PM								
2:00 PM								Potential Pool Party
3:00 PM								
3:30 PM								
3:45 PM								
4:00 PM						Group Swim Lessons Beginner <b>1st and 3rd Thursdays</b> 3:45 - 4:30 Registration Required \$10/month member \$20/month non-member		CLOSED
4:30 PM						Group Swim Lessons Intermediate <b>1st and 3rd Thursdays</b> 4:30 - 5:15 Registration Required \$10/month member \$20/month non- member	Potential Pool Party	
5:00 PM								
5:15 PM								
5:30 PM								
6:00 PM					Water Aerobics Class			
6:30 PM								
7:00 PM								
8:00 PM		CLOSED	Kayak Roll Session - 1st Tuesday only - Free for Members; \$3 for non- members		CLOSED			

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 Y movement 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!

At the A.M.Y. Wellness Foundation YMCA of Mitchell County everyday we see lives changed—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. None of this happens without you.

**If the Y has made a difference in your life, we invite you to give today!**

Your support—big or small—creates opportunities, builds community, and helps every person learn, grow, and thrive.

[DONATE](#)

Looking for other ways to give back to the Y? Give the gift of your time and skills in programs that change the lives of children, teens, adults, families, and seniors.

[VOLUNTEER](#)



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Connect with us on:



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