



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

#YCON OF THE MONTH

More Than a Member: Celebrating Tommy Westall

One of the people most certain to brighten your day when you see him at our facility is Tommy Westall—a local legend, a friend to many, and the father of one of our very own. Whether you’ve spotted him exercising on the wellness floor, sharing a laugh over a cup of coffee in the lobby, or watering the flowers in our beautiful downtown, there’s no doubt that our Y family is blessed to know him.

Tommy’s story began on August 27, 1939, “five days before Hitler invaded Poland,” he shared. Born in Bakersville, North Carolina, he has called Spruce Pine home for most of his life. While his roots have always remained local, Tommy is certainly no homebody. He proudly shared that he has visited all 50 states, with 47 of those visits happening before he turned 18. After graduating from Harris High School, he attended Presbyterian College, earning a degree in economics in 1961.



Following graduation, Tommy returned to Spruce Pine for a short time before being drafted into the military. He spent two years serving in Munich, Germany, which he fondly described as “a piece of heaven,” before returning home in 1964 as part of the reserves. Although he married in 1965 and was ready to settle down, he was called back into service a few years later and stationed in Saigon, Vietnam—a place that left a much different impression on him than his first military assignment.

After returning to the United States, Tommy and his first wife welcomed two sons: Dan in 1970 and Bob in 1973. He also established himself in the grocery industry, helping his father operate their family store in Glen Alpine. While he explored a few different career paths over the years, he always found his way back to the grocery business, where he spent the majority of his professional life.

Tommy became a father of three when his daughter, Mollie, was born in 1992. At 53 years old, he admitted she was a surprise, but he affectionately described her as the “light of his life.” Today, Mollie serves as our Association Youth Development Director, leading After School and Summer Camp programs across both Avery and Mitchell counties.

The opening of what Tommy proudly calls our “state-of-the-art facility” has made a tremendous difference not only in the community but also in his own life. Most notably, he has experienced significant improvements in his health following a triple bypass surgery in October 2025. He now spends about an hour each day riding one of our wellness center bikes and credits that consistency with helping him make a remarkable recovery.

At 86 years old, Tommy continues to embody resilience, and a deep appreciation for life’s opportunities. His journey has taken him across the country and around the world, through military service, family life, and a long career, and he remains one of the most humble and

welcoming people you will meet. We are grateful that Tommy has chosen the YMCA as part of his daily routine and proud to celebrate the impact he continues to make by simply just being himself.

A Letter from our Executive Director

As we celebrate our one-year anniversary, I find myself reflecting on an incredible year filled with growth, accomplishments, and relationships.

When we opened our doors, our goal was to create more than a place to exercise. We wanted a YMCA where people felt welcomed, supported, and connected. After one year, I am proud to say that vision has become a reality.

One of the greatest parts of this journey has been watching relationships grow into friendships.

You are not just members — you are part of our YMCA family. Your stories, encouragement, and commitment to wellness inspire us every day.

This milestone would not be possible without our incredible staff. They work hard every day to make our YMCA a place where people feel valued, and they take true pride in ownership — caring about making this YMCA better for everyone.

Year One Highlights:

- Welcomed thousands of members into our YMCA family
- Served local students through our Sibelco SPLASH program, providing water safety and swim experiences
- Completed over 130 volunteer hours through SPLASH
- Averaged hundreds of visits each week
- Expanded wellness programs, group exercise, aquatics, and community partnerships
- Continued growing toward 4,000 members and beyond

As we look ahead, we are excited for the future. We will continue to grow, listen, improve, and provide a place where everyone belongs. Thank you for making our first year unforgettable.

Thank you for believing in our mission. Most importantly, thank you for making the Mitchell YMCA your YMCA. Happy one-year anniversary!

-Bill Hoag, Mitchell Branch Executive Director

What's Happening



Join us for our 1st Anniversary Celebration July 21!

Join us as we celebrate an incredible first year of connection, community, and impact at the A.M.Y. Wellness Foundation YMCA of Mitchell County! This milestone belongs to every member, volunteer, staff member, and community supporter who has helped make this journey so special. Enjoy an evening filled with **games, food trucks, music, s'mores,** and **fellowship** as we celebrate all we've accomplished together. We can't wait to see you there—it wouldn't be the same without you!

When: Tuesday, July 21, 2026

Time: 5:00 p.m.–8:00 p.m.

Where: Mitchell YMCA

Interested in joining our Y? Stop by our Open House before the event from 3:00 p.m.–5:00 p.m. and learn more about becoming part of our Y family!



Delay the Disease Celebrating 2nd Completed Session of the Year!



Summer Camp Visits the Asheville Arboretum

In June, our Delay the Disease Parkinson's Program participants completed their second session of the year! We celebrated this milestone with finger foods and a painting activity, recognizing the hard work, dedication, and progress each participant has made. These celebrations are about more than completing a program—they foster connection, build confidence, and remind participants that they are part of a supportive community committed to improving strength, mobility, and quality of life while living with Parkinson's disease.

The 3rd session of Delay the Disease will begin on Tuesday July 7th, meeting every Tuesday and Thursday from 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.. If you, or anyone you know, could benefit from the physical and social support this program offers please contact Jessica Thomas below.

[Email Jessica](#)

Summer Camp officially kicked off in June, and we have hit the ground running! Our staff and campers have enjoyed spending time getting to know one another, building friendships, and trying new activities together. Each day has brought new opportunities for learning, creativity, and fun as we create meaningful summer memories.

On June 25, our campers took a trip to the North Carolina Arboretum in Asheville. During their visit, groups explored the beautiful grounds, walked through the gardens, and discovered the many different types of plant life throughout the arboretum. For some of our students, this was their first time visiting, making it an exciting opportunity to experience a new place right here in our own region.

We are looking forward to continuing a summer full of adventure, growth, and unforgettable moments for our campers!



Diabetes Prevention Already Making a Difference

"June marked the halfway point of our first 16-week session of the Diabetes Prevention Program, and our participants have made incredible progress toward the program's goal of building sustainable healthy habits. Many participants are working toward reaching the recommended 150 minutes of physical activity each week, and their dedication has been inspiring to see. As a lifestyle coach with experience helping individuals develop healthier routines around nutrition and activity, I can confidently say this program stands out because of its focus on connection, accountability, and shared support. The encouragement and solutions participants gain from one another truly make a lasting difference."

-Jessica Thomas, Healthy Living Director



July Wellness Challenge

Ready to test your strength? Join our July Wellness Challenge, where participants will complete one different strength exercise each week and compete for the highest number of clean repetitions. You can attempt each week's challenge as many times as you'd like before the week ends, with your total weekly reps counting toward the leaderboard.

The challenge includes both a **Barbell Division** for experienced lifters and a **Modified Division** for seniors, beginners or anyone who prefers using pin-based equipment. This challenge is accessible for all fitness levels!

Staff will be available to help determine the appropriate weight, demonstrate proper form, and record your official score. Stop by the Wellness Desk to grab your workout sheet, give it your best shot, and see your name climb the leaderboard!



Interested in Wellness Coaching?

Over the past few months, we have seen an increase in wellness floor orientations, youth fitness sessions, and wellness coaching requests, and we are excited to see members taking advantage of these valuable benefits! These services are designed to help you feel comfortable using the wellness equipment, build confidence, and take meaningful steps toward your personal health and wellness goals.

Wellness floor orientations and coaching sessions are typically available Monday-Thursday from 8:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m., but we are happy to work with your schedule when possible. If you haven't scheduled an orientation or wellness coaching session yet, stop by the Wellness Floor Coach's Desk or email them below to get started.

[Email Wellness Staff](#)



Shoutout to Group Exercise Instructor: Belinda Lennon

This month, we'd like to recognize Belinda for the incredible impact she continues to make through our group exercise program. Members consistently share how much they appreciate the variety of class times she offers—from early morning Sunrise Yoga to midday and evening All Levels Yoga—making it easier for everyone to prioritize their health. Beyond her expertise as a Registered Yoga Teacher with 200-hour training through Kripalu and a 500-hour therapeutic yoga certification through Subtle Yoga, members are quick to mention her sweet, kind, and caring spirit. Belinda's passion shines through in every class as she helps participants strengthen their bodies, calm their minds, and improve their overall well-being. As Belinda says, "Whether it is helping the body recover from an injury or a workout, or soothing the mind after a rough day, I love sharing yoga practices that lead to remarkable results." Thank you, Belinda, for living out the YMCA mission of building healthy spirit, mind, and body for all!

We're continuing to grow our Group Exercise program! Keep an eye out for new demo classes this July, and if you're interested in becoming an instructor email Jessica Thomas below.

[Email Jessica](#)

July Schedules

July Group Exercise Schedule

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



GROUP EXERCISE CLASS OFFERINGS AND PROGRAM DETAILS										
Time	Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday	Saturday
↓										
7:00 AM			Sunrise Yoga (Belinda) - Room 109							
7:30 AM										
8:00 AM										
8:45 AM	Move & Tone (Carolyn) - Room 109 *NEW TIME				Move & Tone (Carolyn) - Room 109 *NEW TIME				Move & Tone (Carolyn) - Room 109 *NEW TIME	
9:00 AM			Refit (Morgan) - Room 108				Refit (Morgan) - Room 108 class 7/16 NO			Refit (Morgan) - Room 108 class 7/18 NO
9:45 AM										
10:00 AM	Enhance Fitness Room 108 *Registration Closed				Enhance Fitness - Room 108 *Registration Closed				Enhance Fitness Room 108 *Registration Closed	
10:30 AM		Aqua Arthritis - Pool *Registration Closed				Aqua Arthritis - Pool *Registration Closed	All Levels Yoga (Belinda) - Room 109			
11:00 AM	Vinyasa Yoga (Maria) - Room 109 No class or Sub 7/13, 7/20		Delay the Disease - Room 108 *By Registration Only		Chair Yoga (Nichole) Room 109		Delay the Disease - Room 108 *By Registration Only			
11:30 AM			Mat Pilates (Maureen) - Room 109				PIYO (Whitney) - Room 108 Class or Sub 7/16 No			
12:00 PM										
12:30 PM										
1:00 PM										
1:30 PM										
2:00 PM										
2:30 PM					Prevent T2/DPP - Room 108 *Registration Closed					
3:00 PM										
3:30 PM										
4:00 PM			Barre (Dallia) - Room 108				Barre (Dallia) - Room 108			
4:30 PM					Yoga Sculpt (Maria) - Room 108 No class or Sub 7/22					
5:00 PM										
5:30 PM										
6:00 PM	Zumba (Sarah) - Room 108 Class 7/13 No		All Levels Yoga (Belinda) - Room 109				Zumba (Sarah) - Room 108 class 7/16 No			
6:30 PM										

****8:45 NEW Time for Move and Tone to extend class to 1 hour. Check for possible sub for Vinyasa on 7/13, 7/20 and Yoga Sculpt 7/22**

Group Exercise Schedule

July Aquatics Schedule



SEE SCHEDULE CHANGES/POOL IMPACTS AT BOTTOM

JULY 2026 AQUATICS CLASS OFFERINGS AND PROGRAM DETAILS

Time	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
↓			Private Swim Lessons Registration Required 30 minute classes throughout the day		Private Swim Lessons Registration Required 30 minute classes throughout the day		
5:00 AM	CLOSED	CLOSED					CLOSED
5:30 AM							
6:00 AM							
6:30 AM							
7:00 AM							
7:30 AM							
8:00 AM							
8:30 AM		Adult Swim Group Registration Required		Adult Swim Group Registration Required		Adult Swim Group Registration Required	
9:00 AM			Water Aerobics		Water Aerobics		
9:30 AM							
10:00 AM							
10:30 AM							
11:00 AM		Aqua Arthritis - Class Full		Aqua Arthritis - Class Full			
11:30 AM							
12:00 PM							Potential Pool Party
12:30 PM							
1:00 PM							
1:30 PM							
2:00 PM							
2:30 PM							Potential Pool Party
3:00 PM							
3:30 PM							
3:45 PM							
4:00 PM					Group Swim Lessons Beginner 1st and 3rd Thursdays 3:45 - 4:30 Registration Required		
4:30 PM					Group Swim Lessons Intermediate 1st and 3rd Thursdays 4:30 - 5:15 Registration Required		
5:00 PM							
5:15 PM							
5:30 PM							
6:00 PM					Group Swim Lessons for participants in the Summer Camp Program 2nd & 4th Thursdays 5:30 - 6:30 Registration Required	Potential Pool Party	
6:30 PM				Water Aerobics Class			
7:00 PM							
8:00 PM							
	CLOSED	Kayak Roll Session - 1st Tuesday only		CLOSED			

We will be hosting youth group swim lessons on Thursdays. You may want to schedule your use of the pools to avoid the hours between 3:45PM & 6:30PM on Thursdays ONLY.

Monday evening Water Aerobics classes have been cancelled. The Wednesday evening class will still occur.

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



Connect with us on:



A.M.Y. Wellness Foundation YMCA of Mitchell County | [97 Pinebridge Ave, Spruce Pine, NC 28777](#)

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