

SWELL NEWSLETTER
April 2023 Volume 3, Issue 4

Save the date Wednesday October 4th, 2023, 4:30pm SWELL picnic!

Mary Shanahan



I have been SWELL member since April of 2022.

I grew up across the river by Kieler, Wisconsin. My parents owned a gas station and so I was pumping gas in cars, checking oil, and washing windshields by the age of 13. Went to grade school in Kieler and went to high school at St. Joseph's Academy and at Wahlert.

I was married to Tom Shanahan for 54 years. Tom died in 2016. We had three of best sons, Dean and his wife Michelle who live in Dubuque have 3 children and 5 grandchildren, Gary and friend Cindy who live in Chandler, AZ and Daniel and his wife Melody who live in Janesville, WI and have 2 children. Love them all!

I worked at Hartig Drug for 37 years. First day on the job I washed off shelves. I did many different jobs including I was a Pharmacy tech. My last day I was doing accounts receivable at Corporate Office.

Since retiring I volunteer at Dubuque Arboretum in the gift shop and volunteer as an usher at University of Dubuque Heritage Center. Love to travel, play cards, knit, and crochet. Also, my sister Eileen and I have walked many miles over the years. We try for a 5K or 10,000 most days. I really look forward to our exercise class. It helps the aches and pains and I get to meet new friends.

Thanks, Gary, for all your hard work at keeping us younger.

Bob Rupp



My name is Bob Rupp. I was invited to try the Swell program by Tom and Micki Parkin. So, I joined the waiting list and was lucky I was only third on the list. So, I joined in the summer of 2022. I'm the youngest of six siblings. I grew up on Wood Street then moved to Chaney Road at the age of 8 years old.

We all went to St. Anthony's grade school then



Wahlert High School. I played a lot of sports growing up but the one I loved the most was wrestling. I think wrestling disciplines you for what's to come in life. After high school I worked a few different jobs but ended up working for Morrison Brothers Company for 42 years. 10 years in Dubuque and 32 years at The Maquoketa Company as the Plant Superintendent also owned by Morrison Brothers Company. I have been retired for a year now and let me tell you "IT'S THE BEST JOB EVER". In 1991 I married Sheila Averkamp. Sheila worked at Crescent Electric in East Dubuque, and she too worked there for 42 years. You don't see that many years of service in one company very often in today's world. We were married for 30 years. Sheila passed away on May 11th, 2021, of Metastatic breast cancer. We had a good life

together. We raised 4 kids, and they all live out of town. Colorado, Michigan, Des Moines, and San Diego. So, I travel quite a bit. We also have been going on a family vacation at Melrose, Minnesota on the lake of Big Birch for over 60+ years. That was something my parents started, and we just kept up the tradition. I would like to thank all

the members of the Swell program because the environment is so POSITIVE! And all of this stems from our fearless leader Gary Wittman. So, thank you Gary for running a great program!

Cindy Widmar



I retired as the business manager of Senior High School last February 2022 and spent the remainder of the year traveling with friends and family... Grand Canyon, Two Rivers Wisconsin, California, and house hopping visiting relatives and friends. I joined SWELL this past October. Perfect timing to start an indoor exercise program. I have to say I enjoy the friendly social part of SWELL as much as the exercise program. It is a nice way to start the day, walking the track and visiting with others.

I have one daughter, Katie who lives in Chicago. We have a non-for-profit Covers of Comfort. Fleece tie blankets for adult cancer patients. It is our way of paying forward the many blessings we received as Katie traveled the cancer journey.

Painting acrylics and watercolors has kept me occupied this winter. I can get lost in a painting for hours. I do enjoy the outdoors. Walks with friends, water walking, kayaking, and

an occasional day trip to explore different destinations fill the warmer seasons. Sitting on my backyard swing and reading a good book is also a favorite past-time.

I recently adopted a dog, Ivy. She is a border collie and Australian shepherd mix, who is sitting by my side as I type. She has brought me her toys and is now tapping me with her paw...it is time to go play.

Jean Schlueter and Hiram Melendez



Married in wedded bliss for 35 years!

We met at the University of Iowa in the 70's. Hiram was a strong safety (practiced more than played) for the Iowa Hawkeyes in the 70's, then played Iowa Rugby (a lot) and now competes in the Senior Games throwing the discus. Hiram grew up an "Army brat" and lived many places. Jean grew up in Dubuque, graduated from the University of Iowa with a BSN and started working as a nurse at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics. We moved to Dubuque in the 80's. (Did we mention that Jean attended High School with Gary? The stories she could tell.... JUST KIDDING!) We are now both happily retired and living La Vida Loca here in the Key City.

We appreciate what a healthy, long, life can be (Hiram's father lived to 100 years and 6 months) and that SWELL can help us aspire to 100 years of great living!

Angela Krall



I first heard about SWELL from some SWELL friends and was instantly intrigued. Having retired in 2019 from Alliant Energy after 25 years, I needed some structure to my days and this sounded perfect. When I got the call to join in September 2022, I felt like I'd won the lottery! A program to help me stay active, meet new friends AND get younger by staying fit? Yes, please! It has not disappointed.

I am married to my wonderful husband, Bob and have 2 sons. Both sons are married to delightful women and each have 2 children, a boy and a girl so I am blessed beyond belief. I think grandchildren are the reward for raising kids and I love spending as much time with them as I can. Hiking, biking, walking, and reading are my other favorite activities. Seeing the world from the highest peaks or rolling through the countryside on a bike cannot be beat. Being in nature is a true stress relief for me.

My roots are in Dubuque, born & raised here and then returned to work and raise my family after 12 years in other places. Having lived in Nevada, Northern California and England I love experiencing life in other locations to see the world through others' eyes. SWELL is perfectly balanced with stretching, relaxing and weights but the people really make SWELL special. Seeing both long-time friends and meeting new ones with a chance to connect a couple times a week is great. If I haven't met you yet, I look forward to doing so.

Thanks, Gary, for the positive encouragement and all you do for us each day. You are a true inspiration on how to live a healthy life!

Roger Kurt



I've been a Swell member since last Fall. I am married to another Swell member, Aggie Tauke. Between us we have six kids and six grandkids, and they all reside in Iowa City, Des Moines, Salt Lake City, Walla Walla Washington, Bend Oregon, and Livingston Montana. The grandkids are ages 7, 7, 5 4, 4 and 7 months. So, we have lots of fun places to visit and we're planning our next trips out to Utah, Washington State and Montana in April and May. I retired from the practice of law just this last February 1st after 41 years of practice, so I'm still trying to figure out this retirement gig. I'm keeping busy with a couple of coffee groups, a couple of tennis groups, skiing, hiking, woodworking and (when it gets warmer) kayaking, canoeing, camping, fishing, and gardening. Like some other Swell members, I'm an active member of the Not Yet Dead Softball team which gets together and plays once a week. Also, Aggie and I like to travel, not just to see the kids. Last September we traveled to Portugal for about ten days, and we are planning a trip this coming September to Spain to hike the Camino trail. One fun fact is that I've known our leader, Gary Wittman, since 1976 when I was a Resident Assistant in a residence hall at UNI and Gary was one of the guys living on the floor. His roommate's nickname was Wildman, and they had a piranha named Poncho in a fish tank in their dorm room, that they would feed mice to (as I recall). So, my job was to keep Gary on the straight and narrow when he was a young man, not a small task!! Seriously, Gary was athletic even then. He competed in the decathlon for UNI, which means he was proficient in at least ten track and field events. We like the Swell class not just because it provides a nice balance of weight training and stretching, but because there is a good group of folks we can socialize with as part of it.

Carrie Breitbach



Hello, my name is Carrie Breitbach my husband Jeff and I just celebrated our 40th anniversary with a trip to Ireland/Scotland this past fall with his sister Julie Burgmeier and brother Jim. My husband is a firefighter/paramedic on Dubuque Fire, station 5 on South Grandview. I went to school for Dental Assisting and worked in the field until our first daughter was born and went back when my youngest was 10. A position at Clarke University bookstore came up and I went to work there to help put my kids through college.

We have 4 children our oldest Ashli and her husband

Nate live in Madison with their 2-year-old daughter Estella. Abby and her husband Mark live in Dubuque with their 3 children Elsie 6, Lena 3, and Evan 8 months. Alyssa and her husband John live in Madison with their 2 children Oliver 4 and Hazel 2. Our youngest Jeffry lives in Dubuque.



I had dinner with a friend Judy Kalb, and she told me about the Swell program and then my sister-in-law Julie also mentioned she was in the program. So, I started to come in July of 2022 and officially joined in August of 2022. My husband and I run a landscaping business when he is not working on the fire department, so 9 months out of the year I don't have much time for hobbies. But there are many things I love to do on my days off. I love to hike, read, cook, bake flower garden work on my family genealogy. I look around at the room of beautiful people and I'm impressed by their loyalty to Swell, and I feel truly blessed to be part of this group. Thank you, Gary, for all that you do to make this program SWELL.

This book written by the Blue Zone author Dan Buettner "The Blue Zones American Kitchen: 100 Recipes to Live to 100", fits in nicely with the article that Gary has written this month.

[The Blue Zones American Kitchen: 100 Recipes to Live to 100](#)

How Close is SWELL to Becoming a Blue Zone?

We have a big challenge ahead of us. The Blue Zones throughout the world are very special places. The criteria to be named to these elite groups is not easy to obtain but we have SWELL members on the way. Dan Buettner author of the Blue Zones, an explorer who has traveled the world in search of the oldest and healthiest people. These people consistently reach age 100. This is the goal that I have for you, to reach the age of 100. I'm not talking about just becoming 100. I'm talking about living a meaningful, happy, and healthy life on your journey to your 100's. We currently have 6 members that are within 7 to 10 years of reaching the Blue Zone, 16 members above 85, 31 above 80, which is 16% of your class. Only 4% of Dubuquer's are over 80. To round out the class, 58 above 75, 119 above 70, 180 above 65, 198 above 60, and 200 above 58.



If we are going to be named the 6th Blue Zone, every single one of you need to dedicate yourself. Based on Dan Buettner's research you need to do all the things we preach at SWELL class and do it every day. Come to class, do everything to the best of your modified ability even if you don't like it. Like my dad would tell us at dinner, "You're going to eat it and you're going to like it." Well, you won't like everything we do, but your mind and body will appreciate it. So, the saying holds true, you are going to do the plank and you're going to like it. You will like it later when your body and mind sore through the 90's to reach 100.

An article published in The Guardian a British daily newspaper, talked about research from the UK on hundreds of seniors in their 80's and 90's. The Guardian pointed out some interesting results.

1. There is a 30% to 80% **reduced** risk of dementia in people who exercise.
 - Keep moving each day and come to SWELL.
2. Throughout the world it is believed hearing impairment accounts for 8% if dementia.
 - Hearing impairments improve with the use of hearing aids.
3. Learning will give you resilience to dementia.
 - Keep on learning, challenge yourself to do unfamiliar and cognitively complex issues.
4. People with gum disease and mouth infections are more likely to develop Alzheimer's.
 - Keep your mouth clean and fresh with good dental hygiene, floss, use mouth rinse, and brush.

So, enjoy the journey as you improve the quality of your life into the 100's. Many of you that come to SWELL regularly feel the results of being younger, this is proof that exercise works. You are more flexible, stronger, balanced, mentally alert, and socially connected. You have felt the results of a quality meaningful life from exercise. You have reversed the aging process and can do more things better than before. There will be ups and downs along the way. These are challenges that you **must** overcome. Believe in yourself and the people around you. The Journey through life can be amazing when you are healthy and feel good because of exercise.

--Gary Wittman

The Guardian (March 11, 2023). (Don't forget to floss: the science behind dementia and four things you should do to prevent it) Ian Sample Science editor. Retrieved March 14, 2023.

Snowbirds Workout



Palm Springs, California called our name this winter! Ken and I were there for six weeks. Sue Jarcow is there with her husband for four months and Ann Ludovissy is there with her husband for eight weeks. (All of us Swell members) We all rented condos at the same complex. We regularly got together to play golf and exercise. Ann and I went to outdoor yoga! I personally have never been to a yoga class but many of the poses we did, we do regularly in Gary's class. The outdoor yoga class was held at Sunnylands Center Gardens each Friday for one hour and had approximately 275 participants. In addition, all three of us and a Canadian friend went to indoor yoga class 1-2 times per week. I was able to attend an outdoor Tai Chi class also at Sunnylands Center Gardens which featured the Yang Style Long form. They were teaching it very similar to Gary. We had one teacher and six assistants. As we went through the lesson, the assistants would mingle the crowd and check our poses and readjust us if needed. We golfed several times per week. Usually, once with ladies, and once



with our husbands. I am a beginner golfer but seemed to improve throughout the time we were there. Ann and I got together several times with our mats and weights and participated in Gary's Swell videos. We did it inside Ann's condo, but we did SWELL poolside one beautiful day! Although we did not do the walking before and after as with Swell class, Ken and I walked each day 3-4 miles. (Ken did not keep up with any of the Swell exercises so please feel free to tease him!) Ann and Sue also

walked with their spouses. We really missed our children and grandchildren and are glad to be back with them. Also, we missed our regular exercises, walking, and most of all OUR SWELL FRIENDS!

--Kendra Kunkel

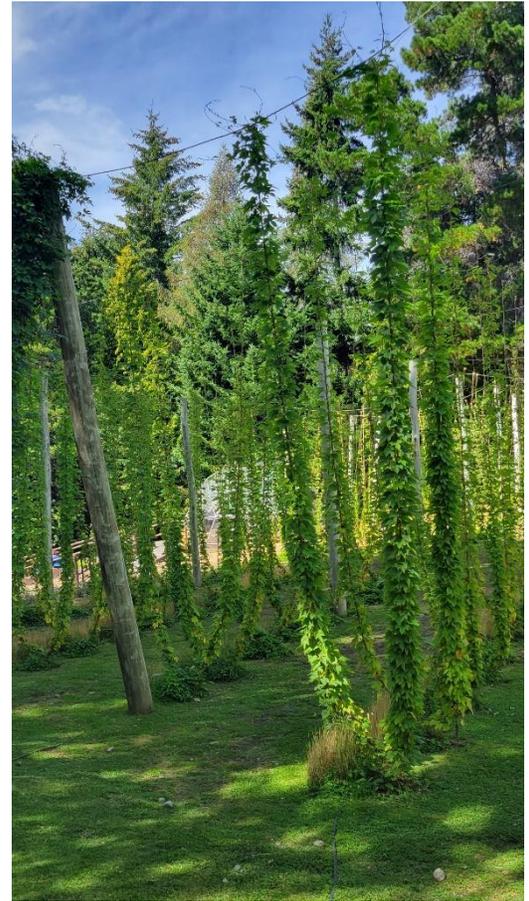
Joyce Johnson Travels to South America

From March 7th through the 16th, I visited my youngest daughter, Kate, in Chile, where she is currently working on a berry farm. She makes marmalade and lots of fruit pies. She'll be moving to a new area soon, where she'll have a new gig. I flew into Santiago, where Kate met me at the airport. We spent the first day in Valparaiso, then Vino del Mar, on the Pacific Coast. Our evening meal was at Don Emilio, where we received complimentary mimosas in celebration of National Women's Day! We enjoyed a gorgeous sunset. We split a four-course meal with wine pairings for each course at Casa Valle Vinamar on our way back to Rancagua, where Kate is currently working.

We took a funicular up Cerro San Cristobol, enjoyed the view of Santiago, then walked down to board an overnight bus to Osorno.



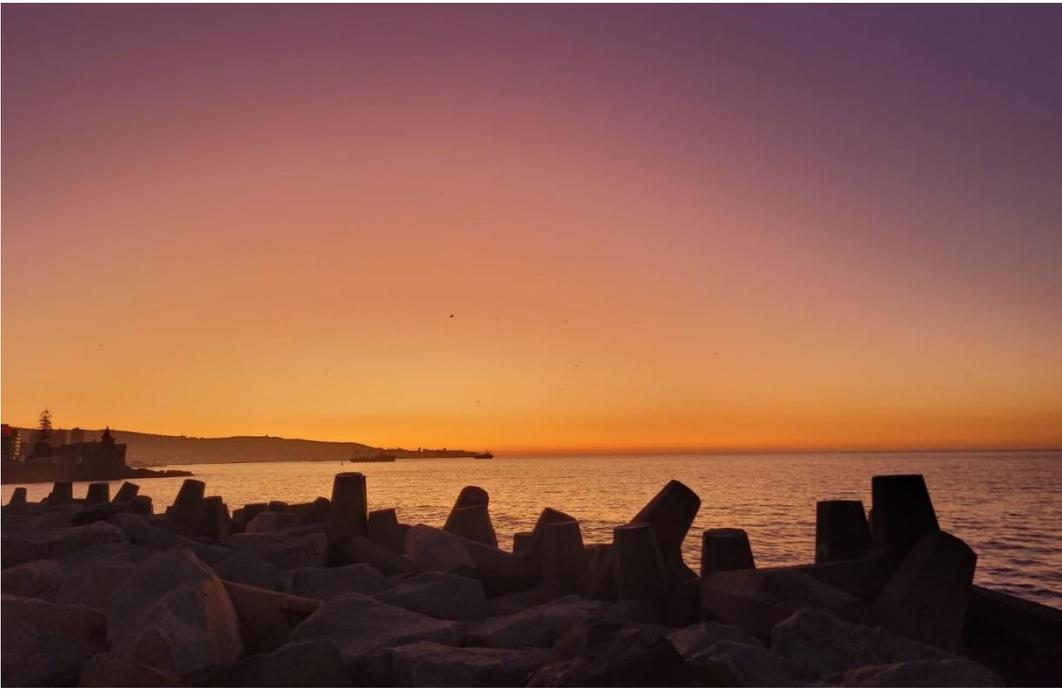
We then spent a few days in Pucon. We enjoyed a hike to Salto Claro, which is an amazing waterfall. We also hiked up San Sebastian Sendero. It was an 8-to-10-mile hike. Kate was patient with my pace...I used my deep breathing (SWELL skills) for oxygen as our altitude changed, and for relaxation when we were scrabbling over enormous rocks with strong winds attempting to push us off the mountain! The balance and stretching training made a great difference, and I'm so grateful that we were able to finish the hike. We only saw one person older than I on this adventure, and he passed us on the way back down (these adventures keep me humble!) Reaching the summit was heavenly. We could see 7 volcanos, 3 lakes, snow patches, and millions of trees. (Monkey trees are now my favorite trees!)



The next morning, we did a few short hikes to smaller waterfalls, and enjoyed large glasses of Jugo (fresh mango juice). Then we crossed the border [Side note: in Argentina, they didn't stamp our passports, even though Kate tried to persuade them to do so. I have no idea why they wouldn't!] and arrived in San Marten Argentina. We walked around town a bit and enjoyed breakfast (media luna: a croissant with ham and cheese) on a bench at the beach. We



We then headed for Bariloche. We drove along the Highway of Seven Lakes, and we stopped at every "Mirador" sign. It was fabulous. Enormous lakes, volcanos, trees, mountains, fresh air! I loved it! At one point, we saw 25 or 30 cars pulled over, so we pulled over. Someone told us there was a waterfall about a mile away. So, we walked to the waterfall, crossing a stream by balancing on a log (thank you, SWELL). The



waterfall was gorgeous, and there were many people in swimsuits diving into the lake at the base of the waterfall. The meal we had upon arriving in Bariloche was lamb, pickled zucchini, parmesan potato sticks and a delightful basket of bread. We had our leftovers for breakfast. The next day we drove around the lake. We stopped many times to wander and explore. We met an artist who did these awesome detailed ink drawings. We stopped at a brewery for Patagonia beer, and enjoyed it outside on lawn chairs, soaking up the view. We made some friends, both

engineers who grew up in Argentina. They were really interesting; they told us about the bad inflation there, how Argentina workers trade their pesos on the streets for US Dollars (called black dollars). They live a life where they bike, bus, or walk to get around. They both spoke fairly good English. Kate is fluent in Spanish, but I'm certainly not! Our last night we stayed in Villa la Angostura, so that we could cross the border at a different point. Our car was searched, which Kate was expecting. We drove back to Osorno, where we got on a plane back to Santiago. From there, I flew overnight to Dallas, then to Chicago. It was one of my favorite trips ever. I truly enjoyed my 28-year-old daughter, the beauty surrounding us, the friendly people, the delicious food, and that great tired feeling I get after exercising outdoors! 88,000 steps for the week!



--Joyce Johnson

Tom and Ellen Hunt



Hello to everyone. Tom and I, Ellen have belonged to SWELL for almost a year now. We like seeing friends, the camaraderie that Gary brings to the class, and of course the workout. For Ellen it is the Tai Chi, as I have had both my

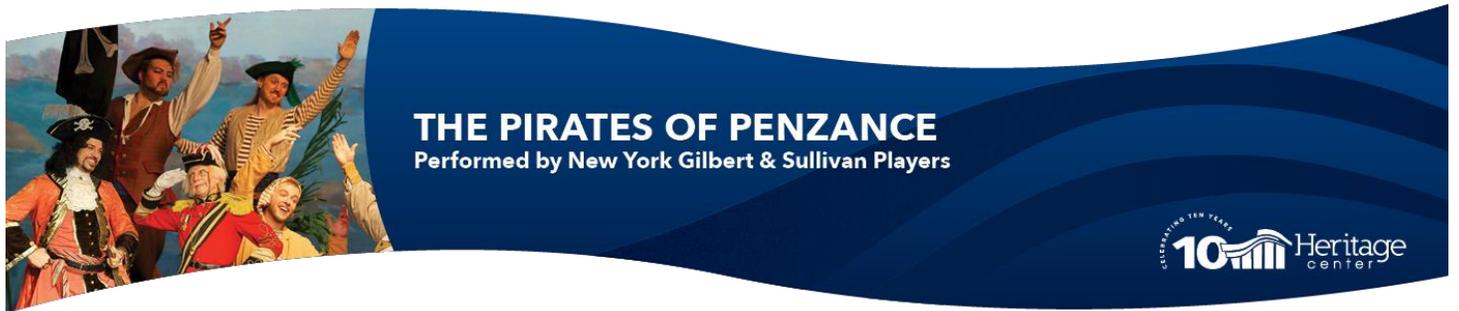
shoulders replaced after a career lifting patients. Helps much for preventing pain! For Tom, his favorite part of SWELL is when it is over for the day, and we are rolling up the mat. :).

We are both born and raised in Dubuque. Tom was a close neighbor of Gary's growing up on West Locust St. Chatting with him brings up many old memories. We are both retired, Tom as an HVAC technician at Geisler's, and Ellen spent her entire career at Finley as a bedside nurse, then a nurse educator. We have three adult daughters, all living in different states. Ellen's mom is 99 years young, and we both have many siblings nearby, which is a blessing. We





like to travel, as we've experienced most of the USA, and a several other countries. But our favorite vacation destination now is southern California, where our three grandkids live! Tom enjoys bass fishing and considers the Mississippi backwaters his "playground". He says he might take up golf when he gets older. Ellen likes genealogy, gardening and being retired! Thanks Gary!



2:00pm SWELL had cookies and coffee.

2:30pm Bisignano Art Gallery featured Leonardo da Vinci's "The Last Supper."

3:00pm **The Pirates of Penzance**





A good time was had by SWELL, as we were cultured with the “Pirates Of Penzance”, an Opera which was a first for many of us. Once we figured out what was going on and the Key Stone Cops showed up the second half, the story line came into view, and we became cultured. This tale features a band of tenderhearted pirates celebrating the coming of age of Frederic, who was mistakenly apprenticed to the pirates until his 21st birthday. A ludicrous leap year snag threatens to keep him apprenticed to the pirates for life! The price was right, the company was outstanding and at the age of...well let’s just say. a younger versions of ourselves, we learned something new. We learned that Opera can be interesting and entertaining with a twist of fun and laughs. Thanks to all who suggested to me to line up this play. Our social connection brings us closer and closer to becoming the SWELL family that has been my dream and the dream of Professor Jim Romagna.

Grazie --Gary Wittman

Relationship between Strength, Power, and Balance Performance in Seniors

The article “Relationship between Strength, Power, and Balance Performance in Seniors” explores the importance and potential benefits that strength and balance has on decreasing the risk of falls in seniors and successfully performing other activities of daily living (ADLs). More specifically, this article discusses a study that was conducted that focuses on the relationship between balance and strength in the lower extremities while performing various tasks. Twenty-four healthy seniors participated in the study, 13 females and 11 males, all between ages 65 and 75. Participants had to be a minimum age of 65, inexperienced with strength, balance, and power training, and could not have any musculoskeletal, neurological and/or orthopedic disorders or terminal illnesses that would affect the ability to participate. Before beginning testing, all participants underwent a standardized 5-minute warm-up that consisted of bipedal (two-leg standing) and monopedal (one-leg standing) balance exercises to get a baseline. After collecting that information, a series of tests were conducted. Participants

began with an isometric exercise doing the leg press as fast and as forcefully as possible. Participants then began a countermovement jump (CMJ) on a three-dimensional force platform jumping up vertically as high as they possibly could. The participants performed three CMJs each with a resting period of 1 minute between each jump. A 10-meter walk, a Timed Up & Go test, Functional Reach test, and both unperturbed and perturbed balance standing tests were also conducted and performed by participants.



Based on the results of the study, the steady-state and proactive and reactive balance are independent of each other in healthy and physically active older adults. It was found that increases in isometric lower extremity muscle strength can be transferred to improved jump performance. Overall, the findings were nonsignificant regarding the associations between strength, balance, and power in healthy seniors and may have to be trained complimentarily for preventing falls. This study in particular only tested and accounted for overall healthy and physically active seniors. We would gather more conclusive data from a study that either tested participants ability to do ADLs before and after performing strength, balance, and power exercises over a period of time or a study that tested participants ability to do ADLs who were not as healthy and physically active before and after performing strength, balance, and power exercises over a period of time.

--SWELL Intern Jasani Williams

Besemer, C., Gollhofer, A., Granacher, U., Muehlbauer, T., & Wehrle, A. (2012). Relationship between Strength, Power and Balance Performance in Seniors. *Gerontology*, 58(6), 504-512. <https://doi.org/10.1159/000341614>

Healthy Recipes By Sue Olson



Balance all the sweets and chocolates we enjoy when celebrating Easter with this tangy dessert served with fresh fruit or thawed frozen fruit

SPRING LEMON BROWNIES

INGREDIENTS:

- 1/4 cup organic unsalted butter, softened
- 1/4 cup organic coconut oil
- 1/2 cup Young Living Einkorn flour
- 2 large eggs
- 2 Tbsp organic lemon zest
- 2 Tbsp organic lemon juice, with or without pulp
- 1/4 cup organic coconut sugar
- 1/4 cup organic cane sugar
- 1/4 tsp sea salt
- Fresh berries or thawed berries Optional: coconut whipped topping

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 350 F.
2. Grease 8X8 baking dish with organic butter. Set aside.
3. Zest and juice 1 organic lemon. Set aside. If extra zest place in freezer for future use. If extra juice place in tall glass water and quench your thirst.
4. Place flour, sugar, salt in a bowl and Use an electric mixer with the paddle attachment to blend. Add butter and beat until combined.
5. In a separate bowl beat eggs, lemon juice and zest to combine.



6. Put egg mixture into the flour mixture. Beat on medium speed until creamy and smooth.
7. Pour into prepared baking dish. Bake 23-25 minutes, will turn golden around the edges.
8. Cool. Cut into 16-20 pieces.
9. Serve with fresh berries: cut strawberries, blueberries, raspberries, etc. I enjoy more berries than brownie!! Or use frozen berries that are thawed, include the liquid from unthawing.
10. For extra fancy, serve with dollop of coconut whipped topping on top of berries. Enjoy!



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| Feature Writer..... | Gary Wittman |
| Feature Writer..... | Intern Jasani Williams |
| Healthy Recipes | Sue Olson |

 **We are looking for feature writers each month, try your hand at it. Suggestions (Vacation or travels, sports, important milestones like anniversaries, and hobbies). Email articles to: garydonaldwittman@gmail.com**