

**SWELL NEWSLETTER**  
**MARCH 2022** Volume 2, Issue 3



**RUTH BARZ**

Dubuque, IA 52001

Husband, Jon Teaches English at The University of Dubuque. Daughter Emily lives in Omaha, married, and has 1 daughter our first grandchild nine month. Megan lives in St. Louis with her husband. She is in graduate school. Son Zachary is a missionary in Costa Rica. I have been coming to SWELL for 1.5 years. After college I worked in various positions as a social worker. Then went to graduate school and became a school counselor. Married my husband and worked as a school counselor while he went to graduate school. We lived in Bellingham, WA and St. Paul, MN. He became a college professor as we lived in Chicago for 10 years. I stayed home with our 3 children and homeschooled for a few years. In 2003 moved to Dubuque. I worked for 13 years as a preschool aid and subbed in the grade school as a para about 1.5 years. My interest are visiting our children and our granddaughter, playing tennis, visiting with friends, bible study, and leading Mon's in Prayer Group. I like SWELL because it's fun, it keeps me accountable to exercise, love meeting all the amazing people in class and am so inspired by the activeness of all the participants. Gary is a great teacher and inspires us all. I started a masters 2.5 years ago in mental health counseling and will graduate in August 2022. I am in my internship now. When most people my age are planning retirement, I am starting a new career, am really excited about it.



How many SWELL people Ginny? “A record 69.” Friday February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

Meditation Friday is starting to become our biggest day of the week. Must be the new Tai Chi, everyone wants to develop more neurons. All kidding aside, it is great to see so many SWELL people enthusiastic about improving their fitness, wellness, and making new friendships. We are living our moto, “Be Well Be SWELL”.



**RICK THIBADEAU    SUE THIBADEAU**

**Rick and Sue Thibadeau 2275 Trenton Rd. Asbury, IA**

Rick married to Sue, 2 children Daughter Jill and husband Chris, 2 children 10-8, Son Jeff and wife Kaitlin 3 children 4-2 and 6 months. Been coming to SWELL for 2 months. Worked a Flexsteel for 42 years and retired in 2018. My interests are golf, playing cards, walking, and sports. At SWELL I love the stretching exercises.

Sue married to Rick 46 years, children, Jill and Husband Chris, Live in Fayetteville, AR, 2 children ages 10-8 son Jeff and wife Kaitlin, 3 children ages 4-6-6 months Live in Urbandale. Worked at medical Associates 33 years retired 2020. My interests are walking, reading, crocheting and spending time with grandkids is the best!  
At SWELL I like how friendly everyone is.



**JUDY ZAHREN-KULB**

1319 Mt. Pleasant

I was married to my husband Mike for 34 years but very sad to say he passed from covid in October 2020. I have belonged to SWELL for one month. I am still currently working three days a week at Great River Oral Surgery and just celebrated my 36<sup>th</sup> year. I enjoy walking, working out and yoga. Always enjoy meeting family and friend for coffee, wine, cheering on the Iowa Hawkeyes, and Green Bay Packers. I like SWELL because of being able to walk the indoor track before and after class, a great one-hour workout with Gary that does a wonderful job. I have met so many friendly and energetic people and love it.



**ROGENE WRIGHT**

750 Brookview Square

I have 2 adult children and have been coming to SWELL for 3 months. Spent my working career in banking. Retired from American Trust and Savings bank as a mortgage loan officer. I like to travel, do quilting and Jeopardy. I like everything about SWELL, the participants, the instruction, and the facility.

## The Triple Stretch

You have heard me talk about the triple stretch. What is it? Well, it is a combination 4 exercises (which doesn't make a whole lot of sense, LOL, except we do these 4 stretches 3 times), the double knee tuck, single leg pull, bend your leg to the side, and hook (bring your leg over your knee and pull). This is one of the exercises that I learned while getting my master's Fitness Specialists degree at the Cooper Institute in Dallas, TX. 350 billion dollars are spent each year on neck and back pain in the USA. The triple is the key to prevent the neck and back pain, along with the other floor exercises. These stretches also help keep you younger. How? By helping you to become more flexible and toned to walk normal into your 90's and hopefully 100's. If you don't believe me, ask Lynn Hawks, Wilma and Don Sanders, Joan Cadwell, or Jeanne Beeghley who have been doing the triple stretch for 3 decades. Our birthday boy Don Sanders one day said that he wasn't sure if he could get back up after going to the matt. I told him to do the best he could, and guess what, Don still goes to the matt. Some of you are not sure if you can get up from the floor at this point of your fitness routine. I encourage you to work on your strength and technique to get up and down off the floor. This should be your goal for future classes. I do encourage that you go at your own pace. If there is something that you can't do at the present time that is ok, but you should always have goals to work hard and improve, and to be able to do all the exercises. I don't just make up exercises for your health. Oh wait, yes, I do. Someone said they have a hip and knee replacement and can't do it. Well, I have good news for you, I have a hip and knee replacement and so do a lot of other SWELL people with replacements who are doing all the stretched. As you get past a year of the replacement and being care with the stretches, you will find you can gradually improve. But I still caution you to go at a slow easy pace until you develop the flexibility and strength to do it. So, the mantra is: "work hard and improve, go at your own pace, and don't give up."

### Very important information about our exercises.

#### 1. Go at your own pace.

- The person next to you might be doing 20 repetitions with curls at 10 lbs.
- This may be too difficult for you, so you do 10 repetitions with 1-5 lbs. that is ok.
- Go at the pace that is right for you, listen to your body, if it is too difficult ease up.

#### 2. We are doing an exercise that have been proven by the Cooper Institutes Masters Fitness Course.

##### Cooper institute is where the top personal trainers go to get certified.

- You might consider doing one of our exercises different from what we are teaching maybe to modify it?
- You need to first discuss the exercise change with Gary.
- If you make changes without discussing it with Gary you may cause an injury.
- We now have 5 SWELL students in their 90's. They have been doing tSWELL exercises for over 30 years, follow their example and be here when you are 90 years young.

--Gary Wittman



The last day of February, 73 SWELL people came to exercise





**CRAIG STOCKEL   ELAINE STOCKEL**

Name: **Elaine Stockel**

Address: 2178 St. Catherine Rd. Bellevue, Ia. 52031

Family/Children/Pets: 3 children: Chad (wife Jennifer) Neil and Lisa (husband Jason)

5 grandchildren: Nathan and Grace Stockel; Athena , Addison, and Calvin Lueken

2 dogs: Luna (wire haired pointing griffon) and Archie (English setter)

How long in SWELL program: 3 months

Previous work experience: Central Hardware. American Trust and Savings Bank. Central Range

Activities: Golf, tennis, snowshoeing, walking, reading, attending grandchildren's activities and spending time with family and friends

One thing you enjoy about SWELL: meeting new people

Other things you want us to know, I am in my happy zone when I am with my children and grandchildren.

Name: **Craig Stockel**

Address: Same as Elaine

Family/Children/Pets: Same as Elaine

How long in SWELL program: 1 month

Previous work experience: Retail Sales (owner/operator of Central Hardware and Central Range)

24 years in the Army Reserve

Activities/Interests: Shooting, hunting, fishing, boating, water skiing and I belong to the Dubuque Shooting Society.

One thing you enjoy about SWELL: people

Other things you want us to know about you: I enjoy a good joke and I like to help friends with projects



**RUTH GRIFFIN**

448 Tamarack Ct

I am married to Larry Griffin. We have six children—Sheila, Steven, Sandy, Bill, Teri, and Sharon. We have fourteen grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

I volunteer at the Discovery Shop.

I enjoy golfing, Square Dancing, doing embroidery work, and jigsaw puzzles.

I have been with the SWELL group for six years. One of the things I like about the SWELL program is I get to meet new people. And it motivates me to get up in the morning!

## Saturday Night Mania

I'm sure that more than a few of you older citizens can recall small-town Midwest America, more specifically rural Iowa in the 1920's, 30's, 40's. For seven days a week these sleepy little towns turned from tranquil commerce activity into a carnival-like atmosphere come Saturday night...particularly in the summertime.

Farmers, clad in freshly laundered bib overalls piled their families into the old Chevy and headed for an evening on "main street." Cream cans and egg cases filled the car trunk...produce to soon be turned into cash and credit at the cream station and the grocery stores. Funds to be exchanged for merchandise before returning home. Country folk joined with town dwellers in sort of a weekly reunion...a few hours of togetherness with friends and relatives after a week of more or less isolation.

I remember my uncle Ed driving his old Essex to Main Street in late afternoon in order to claim a choice parking spot on the main drag where later my mother and two of my aunts would have ringside seats to later watch the natives mill around and around the business district.

Small fry's, with dimes clinked in little hands, rushed off to the Crystal Theater to watch a western feature starring Tom Mix or Hoot Gibson, followed by a two-reel comedy of the Keystone cops or Laurel and Hardy. The womenfolk did the shopping, chatting with friends and neighbors and browsing through patterns in the dry goods department. Post-puberty adolescents roamed around the town square, boys and girls in separate groups, always conscious of the others presence but never quite getting together.

Menfolk stood in small clusters along the curb discussing the weather, farm prices, and local politics. Many filled the taverns where week-old thirsts were quenched with "Near Beer" (these were prohibition days). However, a handy bottle of "White Mule", the real thing, was under the bar to spike the drinks of all who asked for it. Ceiling fans were inadequate to clear the heavy smoke from the room, or to cool the heated atmosphere of the summer night. I can still almost hear the heavy thump of the brawny, weather-beaten fist as it hit the surface of the card table with the winning trick at "Pitch" (high, low, Jack and the game). Shiny copper cuspidors were stationed at points of attack to meet the challenges of tobacco-chewing card players.

Down the street the barber shop chairs were filled to capacity and waiting customers lined the seats along the walls, waiting for a turn with the tonsorial artists. Some of the dressier town "dudes" climbed aboard the shoeshine stand for a boot polish...more opportunity for small talk with the "well-versed" (?) barbers.

Occasionally some of the more thirsty souls would linger at the rail a bit too long, bending the elbow with friends and engrossed in conversation, failing to realize their capacity for "the grape." In such situations Mama had to gather the kids and "the old man" and the groceries and drive home over dusty, unsurfaced country roads to darkened farmsteads a few miles distant and reorganize for the new week.

I can remember, vividly, walking home late at night with my parents and sister, along heavy-shaded, Maple-lined streets, to our home at the edge of town. Before retiring, my father and I would usually enjoy a snack of cheese and crackers or a can of sardines. While partaking of this late night "special" we would often turn the dials of the old Atwater-Kent radio to a super station in Cincinnati and listen to the harmony of the Mills Brothers. Things just didn't get much better than this!

How things have changed. These small towns for the most part, are now bedroom communities for the nearby larger county seat cities. Merchants and shopkeepers close early on Saturday afternoons with the exception of a few taverns, the corner drug store, and the gas station.

I'm sure afraid the small-town mid-America will never be quite the same as it was in the hey-days of the first part of this century.

Perhaps it's just as well!

--Clarence Porter

**Remember we do not have SWELL class when  
Dubuque Community Schools cancels classes because of weather**

## THE STAFF

Editor..... Gary Wittman  
Reporter..... Doris Ries  
Ghost Writers..... Clarence Porter (The Heavenly Age of 96)  
Feature Writer..... Gary Wittman

**We are looking for feature writers each month, try your hand at it.  
Email articles to [garydonaldwittman@gmail.com](mailto:garydonaldwittman@gmail.com)**