

SWELL NEWSLETTER
November 2022 Volume 2, Issue 11

Wendy Woodhouse



Hello. I was raised in Dubuque, went to Dubuque public schools, and colleges (University of Dubuque and Loras). I married Tom Woodhouse who was from Dubuque. He died in December 2020. We had two children, Tom, and Emily. Tom lives in a borough of New York City and Emily in North Liberty, IA. I have two grandsons who are 10 and 8. My children and all my siblings are nurses. I broke the mold and was a social worker. I also taught social work classes part-time at Clarke University and psychology at the University of Dubuque. I've been retired about three years.

I ran for about 30 years, but my knees needed a break, a break I now believe will be forever. I enjoy walking, yoga classes, and a weekly activity called "Stillness". Stillness is a group activity and a form of meditation. We sit together, quiet our bodies, and do not speak for 60 minutes. For about 30 years my mother-in-law attended Gary's exercise classes. She died early this year at 98 and was proud of attending the classes. She is a great example of the power of this program. She remained in great physical shape until a few months before her death and attributed this to the exercise classes. I started SWELL in the spring of 2022. I enjoy the friendly, welcoming atmosphere of SWELL. We are here to support and enjoy each other and it is evident we do. I am glad I am a member!

The Amazing Hobby of SWELL Member Lana Santamaria



Lana in her Doctor's Buggy

Gary asked me to write a bit about my hobby, which is carriage driving. I began driving my horse 25 years ago when I bought an antique Doctor's Buggy from a gentleman in Bellevue. I had an older Arab horse who immediately seemed to take to the sport. As I met more people who were driving their horses, I learned about the

beautiful Villa Louis Carriage Classic, a Pleasure Driving Show in Prairie du Chien, WI. I participated in the show in 2000 with Noble and my Doctor's Buggy. This show has many different events: various arena classes and obstacles classes and a cross country. In the arena classes, you are judged on reinsman ship, driving pleasure (how well the horse drives), and how nicely coordinated your "turnout" looks. In obstacle classes, you show your horse's ability to maneuver through complicated courses. In the photo below, Noble and I are on the Cross-Country course, which was our favorite part of the show. In this event, you drive your horse through woods, across fields and alongside buildings, much like a person would have driven when out for a ride 150 years ago. You encounter all kinds of natural and manmade hazards, such as creeks, a cemetery, wooden bridges, clothes hanging on a clothesline, (wooden) bears in the woods, scarecrows, flocks of birds -- they just happen to be dozens of plastic flamingos. What really counts in this event is a brave, confident horse and a driver who can remember the route. Noble was an excellent cross-country horse; you can see in his demeanor that he's ready for any surprise.



Lana at the Carriage Show

As Noble was an older horse, I also had a youngster I was training to drive. When I retired Noble, she became my primary driving horse for the next 15 years. Here is a photo of Tamar, an American Saddlebred mare. As she was a young, strong, and beautiful horse, she needed an equally beautiful carriage. So, I had an Amish man build this "Lady's Phaeton" for me. A Phaeton is a privately owned four-wheel vehicle; this one has a wicker seat and dashboard (which is a word that originated in carriage driving), and that makes it a carriage for a lady. In this photo, we are at a smaller Pleasure Show in Columbus, WI. And I also bought a new, russet, leather harness for Tamra. You can clearly see in this photo and the one below that the horse is tied to the carriage by the harness. The breast collar is attached to a "tug," or strap, that leads back to the front of the carriage: as such, the horse literally pulls, or draws, the carriage from its chest. The wooden shafts are attached to the front axle and as they pass through the side of the driving saddle; they do the job of turning the carriage when the horse's body turns. And lastly, the strap around the horse's rear is called the breeching; it is attached to the shaft and serves as the brake. When the horse stops, the strap that runs from the breeching to the shaft stops the carriage



Tamra and Lana are doing the marathon phase of the Combined Driving Event (CDE)

This photo was taken at a Combined Driving Event in Fitchburg, WI. Tamra and I are doing the marathon phase of the CDE. For this phase, you must have a navigator along with you. A different type of vehicle is also generally used for this. They are modern, steel, four-wheeled vehicles, and generally they have hydraulic brakes. The marathon has obstacles as well, and this photo was taken as we came out of an obstacle consisting of posts and fences. Other obstacles may be a series of trees that you must drive through in a particular order, or a pond with large barrels that you must navigate, etc. Half-way through the marathon, you must stop for a "vet check." There is always a veterinarian on hand who will check the horse's pulse and respiration, after which you generally sponge the horse with cool water, wait ten minutes before proceeding on the second half of the marathon. Tamra is wet in the photo due to being sponged, not due to an excess of sweating. The first two times that we did a CDE, Tamra won the Best Conditioned Horse award. You will also see that she is wearing boots. Sometimes a portion of the marathon is done on a public road, so rubber boots are commonly used so the horse doesn't slip on the pavement.

Here is another photo of Tamra at the Villa Louis carriage show. You can clearly see that she is trotting. The trot is a lateral gait where one front leg is extended at the same time that the opposite rear leg comes forward. In Pleasure shows, we only use two gaits: the walk, which she is doing above, and the trot.

Many carriage drivers never show; they drive recreationally. For those people who enjoy the excitement and challenge of an organized event, there are two types of driving events: Pleasure Driving Shows and Combined Driving Events. The latter includes a driven dressage routine, an obstacle course, and a marathon. This event was actually the inspiration of the late Prince Phillip, who was an inveterate carriage driver. In all cases,



Lana in a Driving Show and Event
horses to drive. Horses are claustrophobic by nature, and for them to learn to tolerate being tied

we must spend a great deal of time teaching our

into the shafts of a cart or carriage takes time and patience. As you can imagine, carriage driving can be a very exciting hobby; it is also educational. One is always learning something new about the sport and about horses in general. However, for me personally, it is the care and training of the horse that is the most rewarding part of all.

Betty Topping



Hi, everyone!

-I was born in Dayton, Ohio, & grew up there. I am the middle child between my 2 brothers- all of us 18 months apart. My brothers still live in Dayton. -I went to nursing school at a hospital in Dayton - 3 years w/ a one-month break in the summer. My nursing career included Med-Surg, Orthopedics, starting a Hemodialysis Unit (you wouldn't believe how large those machines were then!). I also worked in Additions, managed a Brain Injury Program, Family Medicine in a Dr.'s office. The last years of my career until retirement were as a Case Manager for an insurance company involving Workers Comp. All of my "careers" were so very interesting & I learned so much!! -After retirement, I worked part time in a resale shop for 5 years (I called it my "fun job"). -I have moved a lot, having lived in South Weymouth, MA, New Fairfield, CT, Newburgh, IN (Ohio River!), Lisle, IL, & Naperville,

IL. Each place had its own "flavor", w/ new adjustments, new friends, & new sites.

-I have 2 sons, 2 years apart in age. My older son lives in Florida (I don't want to live there, but I LOVE to visit!). My younger son lives in Asbury. Both have blessed me w/ wonderful wives, & 7 grandchildren (2 Girls & 5 Boys)! AND I was recently blessed w/ my first Great-Grandchild, a boy! -I moved to Dubuque from IL at the end of Feb. & I am very happy here! First of all, I love being close to family again! And I have made wonderful friends! I love the hills & trees here, & just the beauty of the area! (Yes, I'm a nature lover!) I love beauty in any of its presentations! -I also love "making things" - I knit, crochet, make greeting cards, jewelry. I also sang in several church choirs for years. -I joined SWELL (Thanks, Marilyn Gorun for bringing me!) in March of this year. I have to be honest; I don't always jump out of bed to come to exercise (especially if it's raining, dark, cold), but I have yet to regret coming AFTER a session!! I enjoy Tai Chi - wish I had it down-pat, but "progress not perfection"! Same w/1-leg balance!

Thank you, Gary, for all you do!! And I'm looking forward to meeting all of you I haven't yet met!

Marlene Schollmeyer



My husband and I moved here from Wisconsin shortly after we married in 1979. My husband is General Sales Manager at Morrison Brothers here in Dubuque. I recently retired from Dubuque Community Schools (2020) where I taught General and vocal music in various schools for 41 years. I finished my career at Roosevelt Middle School where I taught General music classes and directed the choirs and the musical theatre production for my last 15 years of service. In retirement, I keep busy by volunteering at the Dubuque Regional Humane Society, Best Friends Animal Sanctuary in Kanab, Utah, Inspiration Stables (Equine Therapy) and playing in the Handbell Choir at my church, Grand View Methodist. For many years I was a volunteer with Sundown Ski Patrol until I had both of my knees replaced. I earned my Master Gardener certification in 2021 and enjoy gardening in our large ornamental gardens. I also am part of the "Green Team" (garden and landscape

volunteers) at Grand View. I substitute teach a few days each month, generally, just for some of my music friends as the need arises. As you might guess, I love animals and our family includes 3 cats- Rosie, Gracie and Ginger. My husband and I enjoy boating, biking, pickle ball, snow shoeing, skiing(husband), great dinners and fine wine with wonderful friends. We also love to travel, especially to Door County, but also anywhere the adventure of life takes us! I am enjoying Swell classes and hope to get into a better habit of attendance as the weather gets colder! Thank you, Gary, for facilitating such a great opportunity or wellness for folks our age!

Gary (Condo - softball slang) Conlon

It has been 72 years! Born the oldest of 9 children. Spent the first 5 years on Loras Blvd and grew up on Summit St. Cathedral was the closet school for us. Every time mom was pregnant, I would hope for a boy. As it turned out the first four children turned into me and 3 sisters. It looked like a lost cause. It ended up 5 boys and 4 girls. Exercise was something interesting to me. I talked my dad into buying weights. It wasn't the greatest set, but I made do. It

would make a lot of sense to have had help from an experienced individual instead of doing every exercise in the



Gary (Condo) Conlon

Where's Waldo? Pick out the other 5 SWELL guys in the photo.

booklet. So, I grew up: Jackson kindergarten on West Locust, Cathedral on Bluff, Wahlert High School, University of Platteville and graduated from Loras College. In high school my dad asked that I take the next oldest brother out running. I left the last stretch a hill back to our home on Summit and left him in the dust. Kevin became pretty good runner at Wahlert! Kevin held the Turkey Trot record for a number of years. Kevin was extremely competitive! While at Loras College I discovered Tang Soo Do, and enrolled. I then forgot about weightlifting for a while and concentrated on karate (hence the high kicks in Swell class). After graduation I worked for my father at Abeln Abstract Co. My dad taught me about eating healthy! Greasy to him was a food group - which I followed for a while. After all, who doesn't like having bacon grease help prepare your eggs for breakfast? It sure tasted good! Same way for popcorn. Hint: don't forget the lard for popcorn - bad, I know - my parent's home smelled like hell! I don't think I was asked to make popcorn again. When I knew, I was going to work for my father when I graduated, I wasn't concerned with higher than a college education. I knew the plan, but apparently, my father didn't! I negotiated with my father and started the next day after graduation at an extremely low rate of pay. After 5 years I decided, I didn't like working for Abeln Abstract Co. So, I started selling real estate in 1977. We had good years and bad years. In Dubuque I sold a home on the west end for \$37,500 with an FHA loan at 17.5% interest. People now are worried around 6%-7%! Well, I'm getting ahead of myself. You have to get through college and pay for it. We had the Iowa Tuition Grant in my day. It's for parents that have had too many children - I qualified my junior year. And you need a job! So, my friend, Daryl Dean Donald David Dorr showed me the

way of parking cars at Timmerman's Supper Club. No pay with ONLY tips plus a meal towards the end of the shift. I kept that job past graduation from Loras. As I had mentioned, I did not like working at Abeln Abstract Company and decided to move on. I went to work at Dubuque Realty Company and on was on the real estate board for about four years. Then to Galena, Illinois. I married for the first time in 1981 and had three wonderful children. Two daughters Katie and Liz, son Charlie (wife Sonya). Marian Walker, my wife now and future SWELL member, spent part of this past weekend celebrating three birthdays. Arrived back in Dubuque and celebrated two more birthdays (including Swell Group members Aggie Tauke & Roger Kurt). Let's move back to exercise! My wife Marian told me about the Swell Group via John Donovan. After speaking to some of my softball group (Parkin, Willems, Schmidt & Schramm) – who were enthusiastic, I decided to join. It was early in 2022. Gary Wittman, I enjoy your group a great deal! I have a few photographs, one of which is our latest softball group. Six of the softball group are members of the Swell Group. The softball group is: Not Dead Yet – I hope the Yankee organization doesn't mind (check out the photo). Gary Wittman, I like your view of enjoying people in your group, socialization, remembering names. And I would like to commend Jerry Schmidt of our softball group for the same thing! So, I'm a member of two outstanding groups. I hope both groups can keep this up for long time. Lastly, I have an ABSOLUTELY wonderful wife, great kids, daughter-in-law, and sisters and brothers. And two great groups – most of which I'll never remember your names. Even though I can't remember your names, please come to my funeral, and tell my family that he said: Never Give Up.

NOTE: Most of This is True!

REALLY TRUE: my mom was great!

Jim Demmer and Carol Demmer



My SWELL involvement started in March of this year on the advice of friends who had joined. My wife Carol and I joined to get additional exercise time. We have thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to walk, stretch, and meet new people in the class.

Carol and I have been married for 36 years, currently living in Asbury. We love going to Hawkeye football games (although this year is a struggle), traveling, spending time at Lake Delhi, playing golf, and playing better softball (Carol is chief scorer and a member of the Bleacher Babes). I am a 1975 Loras College graduate with teacher certifications in Physical Education, U.S and World History, and English. I taught for 36 years—33 in the Western Dubuque school

district retiring in 2011. At Western Dubuque, I taught mainly Sophomore English Composition and Literature. I also taught 3 years of American Studies- a combination class of U.S History and America Literature/Composition. In addition to teaching, I coached at the Varsity level in Girls' Basketball for 18 years, 13 as the head coach, and I coached in the Girls' track program for 17 years. Again, I really enjoy the camaraderie at SWELL and the opportunity (As Gary says) to get younger. Still waiting for proof of that. Lastly, a couple sidenotes about me: I love puns and playing with words—must be the English vocabulary coming out, and I also am an avid Major League Baseball fan—knowing most player, teams, and good bit of trivia.

Sheila Pillad



I joined SWELL in March 2022 with my sisters Sherri Treanor and Jan Wheeler. I truly enjoy the class workout and social aspect. There were 13 children in my family. We grew up in the Key West area. I have 4 children and 4 grandchildren. My husband passed away 5 years ago. My children live in Olathe, Kansas, Denver CO, Des Moines, Iowa, and Dubuque. Just celebrated my 70th birthday Oct. 5th, same day as our SWELL picnic. This August I celebrated 50 years as a nurse. I had worked at Finley for 45 years mainly in PACU. Last 5 years I work as needed 2 to 4 days a month at Clare house, Mount St. Francis. I enjoy traveling. Recently vacationed in Door County. Travel a lot to see my children. Just with them in Des Moines and heading to Denver in a few weeks. Thanks, Gary, for all you do to keep us healthy.

Lana Santamaria



I'm Lana Santamaria. My husband Enrique and I were college professors and taught at UD for 20+ years. We have two daughters and two grandchildren.

I enjoy traveling abroad, riding and driving my horse, shepherding a small flock of Shetland sheep, spinning their wool, and creating knitted items. I also enjoy reading books on world history and novels in Spanish.

One thing I really like about the SWELL program are the Tai Chi exercises, and of course, getting to know the interesting participants.

As I already described my great love for carriage driving in the newsletter, I suppose I won't have to mention anything "funny" about myself.

A SWELL Picnic



Over 100 showed for the SWELL picnic. You are looking at satisfied SWELL picnickers.





The long line and wait were worth it.



Great food and desserts testified by Dawn Andracchios' big smile



Sheila Pillard enjoys the birthday song and a big cake



See Y'all Next Year

Is It True That Some People Heal Faster than Others?

I have always been called a fast healer. This made me wonder if I have some advanced genetics that allows this to happen. Is there some recessive gene in the Wittman family that I was lucky to get like Superman or Wolverine from the Marvel comics? Well maybe I don't heal that fast, but faster than most people. My doctor Dr. Robert Magnus, who replaced my knee and hip couldn't believe how fast I recovered, walking 8 miles one month after surgery. Teaching SWELL 2 weeks after hip replacement. At the one-month appointment Dr. Magnus said that I have no restrictions. Three months later I was shooting down the slopes at Sundown Mountain on my snowboard and four months later snowboarding in the Colorado mountains. There must be some reason or research that can explain this. I started thinking about some of the SWELL members that have been coming to class for a while and how many of them are fast healers. For instance, Wilma Sanders at age 91 slipped on the ice last winter and came down hard on her back, head, and arms. She didn't break any bones and was back in class two weeks later. Other members have complained about various types of pain and asked me what to do. I always suggest keep coming to class, do what you can and modify exercises as needed. Many SWELL members started to heal fast and reduced their pain. The odds of all these SWELL people having a super gene didn't make sense, so the next step was to look for research on the topic. When looking for accurate medical or scientific research, a good place to look is the Mayo Clinic. Mayo is noted as having some of the finest doctors in the US. Some 86 M.D.'s PhD's and Internist practice all areas of medicine and produce some of the latest research on surgery, treatment, and healing at Mayo. In the article "Exercise Helps Ease Arthritis Pain and Stiffness," the Mayo Clinic Staff researched how movement can relieve pain in arthritic patients stating that exercise is crucial.

Exercise increases strength, flexibility, reduces joint pain, and helps combat fatigue. Most people who experience joint pain think that it is best to rest and stay off it, but Mayo doctors say different. You don't need to overdo it; you can use moderate exercise to ease your pain and heal. "When arthritis threatens to immobilize you, keep moving," says Mayo. How does this happen? Exercise can strengthen muscles around joints, maintain bone strength, produce more energy, help you sleep better, control your weight, enhance your quality of life, and improve balance. Most people think that exercise will cause more pain in your arthritic joints, but Mayo says this is not the case. In fact, the lack of exercise can make your joints even more painful and stiff. SWELL class warms-up, strengthens, and stretches every muscle and joint in the body, but make sure you don't overdo it. If you feel make sure you modify and go at your own pace.

What about injuries and healing? When going through the University of Northern Iowa as an undergraduate student in wellness and health we were taught (RICE) rest, ice, compress, elevate to heal injuries. Over the years when



coaching student/athletes we started to use swimming pool training to increase blood circulation to accelerate healing. In the early 1990's we had our athletes simulate running in the pool instead of resting their injuries. We discovered that a stress fractures healed in half the time with movement instead of rest. Many MD's and physical therapists have progressed from RICE to movement. Dr. Jennifer Robinson is a fellowship trained Sports Medicine Physician focused on work with amateur sports teams and is a faculty member of the University of British Columbia's Faculty of Medicine. In the article "Why Movement Is Better for Healing Than Bed Rest", Dr. Robinson gets patients moving post-injury and doing range of motion exercises as soon as possible. She says forget rest: Movement is the way to heal and thrive post-injury and during chronic pain. Dr. Robinson cites research that shows inactivity shuts down the muscle, restricting blood flow to the injured area and lead to tissue atrophy. By contrast, movement improves blood flow, which drives oxygen to heal the injured area and removes metabolic waste, while also stimulating the healing of tissues.

Dr. Doug Gross, co-author of "[Prevention and Treatment of Low Back Pain](#)," a 2018 study published in *The Lancet*. Also, a professor of rehabilitation medicine and director of the Rehabilitation Research Center at the University of Alberta, says movement is the best thing you can do to heal trauma, "Stay as

active as you can within the limitations of your condition."

For those of us over 45, [Dr. Julia Alleyne](#), a sport and exercise medicine expert with Women's College Hospital in Toronto, recommends enhancing the rehab regime with balancing exercises, which improve coordination and reflexes while decreasing fall risk.

Many of us SWELL members that have been doing the SWELL exercise program religiously for a while, have discovered that we heal quicker. No, we probably don't have the recessive or super gene, we simply keep moving, lifting, stretching, and balancing our way to good physical and mental health. Yes, we heal quicker than other people our age that sit and rest when they feel pain but that is because we move at our own pace and push ourselves to the point of healing not injury. You know how much you can do if you listen to your body. Keep moving SWELL people and modify when needed, but don't sit around waiting to heal. Come to SWELL or do the YouTube videos 3 times a week and walk or do other activities on the off days.

--Gary Wittman

Mayo Clinic MD staff (December 1, 2020). Exercise Helps ease Arthritis Pain and Stiffness The New York Times. Retrieved October 16, 2022.

The University of British Columbia's Faculty of Medicine (October 18, 2017). Why Movement Is Better for Healing Than Bed Rest. Retrieved October 22, 2022

The Apple Doesn't Fall Far from The Tree

I have known the Fairley family for many years. Nancy Fairley one of our amazingly fit SWELL members has a son, Mark. When Mark was in middle school he came and ran at the Senior cross-country camp in the summer



where I first met Mark and his dad, Dr. Richard Fairley an avid biker. He later joined the Senior high school team and became "Elite ALL State Cross Country", placing 6th



at the Iowa Cross Country State Meet Championships. In college Mark was An All-American and national champion in the steeple chase at Central college. Now he is holding the mile world record on the elliptical bike.

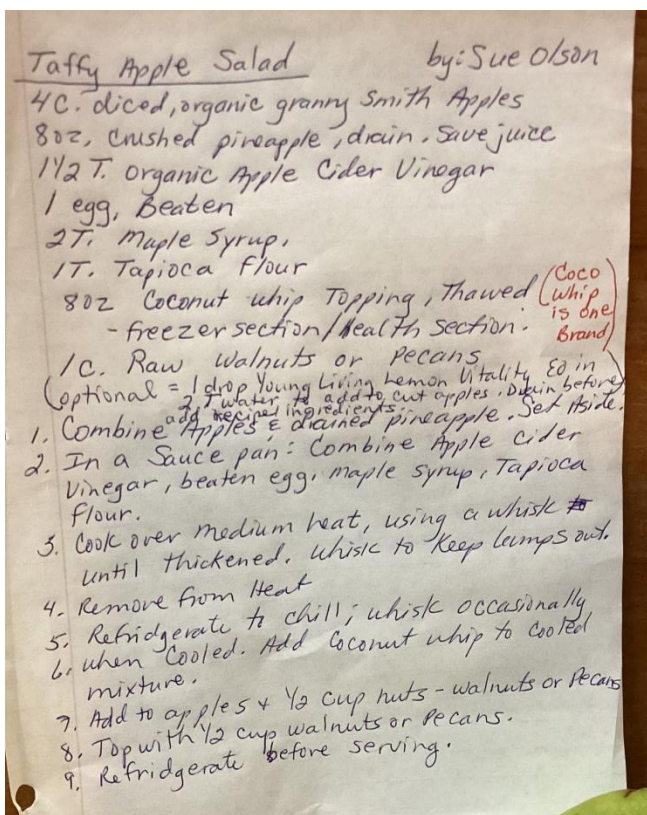
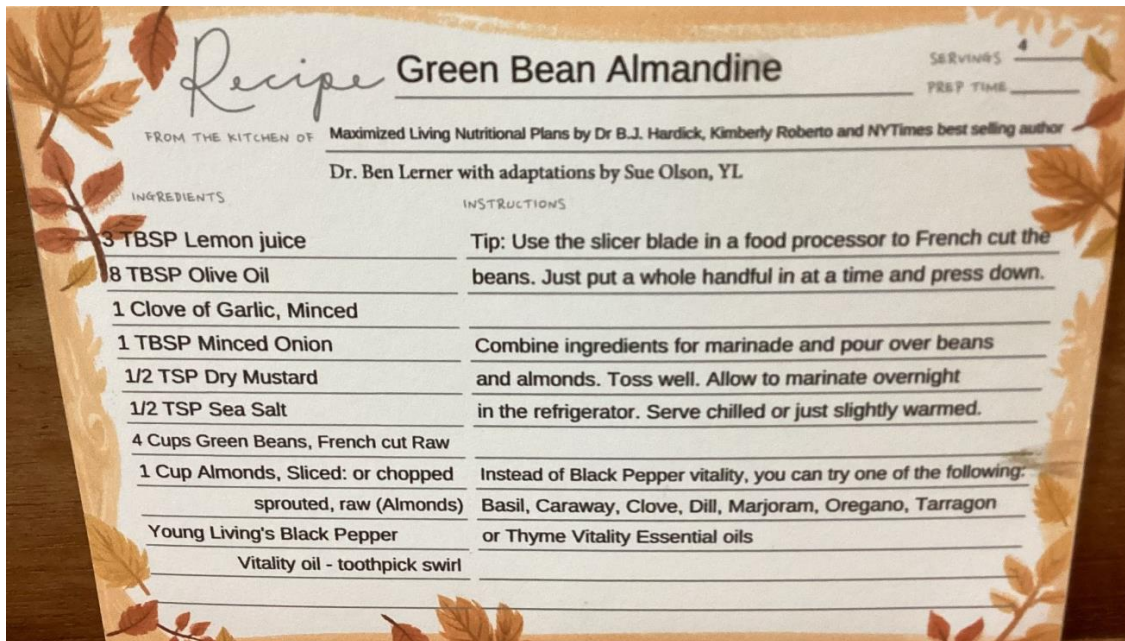
Press release

This afternoon at Canyon Crest Academy in San Diego, Mark Fairley set a new ElliptiGO mile World Record at 2:33.94. Mark is the Meet Director and Volunteer Assistant Track and Field/XC coach at Liberty university in Lynchburg, Virginia. Previously the record was held by Paul Thomas at 2:37.25. Congratulations Mark! What a great way to kick off ElliptiGO world Champs and Rally Weekend.



You have got to try Sue Olson's healthy pumpkin cookies. They were soft, fluffy, and tasted great. The bakers left to right granddaughter Emma 1.5 years, daughter Tonya, granddaughter Mary 3.5 years and Gary.





Next Article coming in the December newsletter. “The Importance of our Monday Dynamics”

Dynamic movement improves our footwork, body control, body awareness and balance while also developing agility and endurance. Dynamic movement is a 3-dimensional movement pattern that your body was designed to experience on a daily basis: involving a combination of moving forward and backward, side to side and rotational. Training dynamic movement is crucial for optimal joint and health and longevity.

THE STAFF

- Editor..... Gary Wittman
- Healthy RecipesSue Olson
- Feature Writer.....Lana Santamaria
- Feature Writer.....Gary Wittman

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