

SWELL NEWSLETTER

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Could SWELL Be a Blue Zone?

A Blue Zone is one of five geographic areas in the world where people live longer than anyone else. Author Dan Buettner is an explorer, National Geographic Fellow, award-winning journalist and producer, and founder of Blue Zones. He's also the New York Times bestselling author of [The Blue Zones](#). He has researched and studying areas of the world where the oldest people live. He circled these areas in blue on a world map while working on this research and named them blue zones.

The five Blue Zones in Buettner's book are: The **island Icaria, Greece**, 2. **Ogliastra, Sardinia, Italy** 3. **Okinawa, Japan** 4. **Nicoya peninsula, Costa Rica** 5. **The Seventh-day Adventists in Loma Linda, California (USA)** Because of the healthy longevity of people in the blue zones people have been copying some of the diets and habits from these zones. In blue zone **Icarian** people developed the Mediterranean diet of olive oil, red wine, and vegetables from their gardens. **Sardinia** has the oldest men in the world that work on farms and drink red wine in moderation. **Okinawans** have the oldest women and eat a soy-based diets while practicing Tai Chi daily. **Nicoyans** eat beans and corn tortillas and stay busy into their senior years doing physical jobs. The **Seventh-day Adventists in Loma Linda, CA** are strong in their religion, eat a strict vegetarian diet, and refrain from alcohol.

One interesting fact that Buettner points out is that genetics only accounts for 20-30% of longevity. So, what you do daily, is the biggest factor in determining a healthy life. So, what is it that you need to do? Based on Buettner's research, eating mostly a plant-based diet with some animal proteins, exercise regularly, drink moderate amounts of alcohol, get enough sleep, and have good spiritual, family, and social networks.

To qualify to be a blue zone these areas have to contain extremely high rates of people who live over 90 and 100. Buettner mentioned that there could be places in the world that are not discovered yet. For instance, 6% of the Dubuque population are above 80 years of age. In SWELL Class 12% of our SWELL folks are above 80, even after our big increase of younger members. Why do we have double the number of seniors over 80? It is because of the things we do in class. We emphasize strength, flexibility, movement meditation/tai chi, aerobic walking, and social connection.

We have seen amazing things that have been happening over the years. This winter Wilma Sanders age 91 slipped on the ice and fell flat on her back, bounced, bruised but didn't break. She returned to SWELL in 2 weeks. Ginny Rauch recently had her yearly physical and found that instead the usual osteoporosis starting in most women over age 35 her doctor was amazed at her abundance bone mass. Ginny is 84 with very strong bones. He asked her what she has been doing, and she said, going to SWELL class. His comment was, "keep going!" These comments are just testimonials not solid research, but I have seen these things happening every day for the over 35 years with this exercise class.

If SWELL was a Blue Zone, what would your day look like? You might get up eat a healthy breakfast, go to SWELL class, and walk and talk with your friends or meet someone new there. Complete all of the exercises offered at class. Modify exercises that are too difficult or cause you joint pain. After class you could spend time with your family, friends or engage in one of your hobbies. On off days, Tuesday, Thursday, and the weekend go for a walk, bike ride or do some other form of aerobic activity. Have a purpose in life, volunteer, or care about and help people in some way. The people in the Blue Zones are spiritual and have some type of prayer in their life. After a busy day you will be tired and should get a good night's sleep. If you are having trouble sleeping, click on this link and use mindfulness meditation to take you into a deep sleep. SWELL offers a number of audio tracks to give you mental energy and help you sleep at night. Also, Bigelow Benefits Sleep Tea with Chamomile & Lavender is an herbal tea that will take you into a natural deep sleep. Drink before bed.



Video link Relaxation the Night Before <https://youtu.be/EFWkcfQXm8w>

So, could SWELL be a blue zone? I think we are heading in that direction. We have double the percentage of 80 and older seniors in comparison to the Dubuque population. Those that see the most benefit come to SWELL all the time. It is a way of life not just a class. Some members have made SWELL a way of life. Jeanne Beeghley, Joan Cadwell, Barb Callahan, Jean Dorweiler, Lynn Hawks, Roger Maiers, Ginny Rauch, Darlean Sabers, Don Sanders, Wilma Sanders, Thelma Schlueter, and Eileen Schueller have made SWELL a way of life for many years. These SWELL members have coming to class for a long time and have kept themselves looking, feeling, and acting young. They are our role models; they are the blue zone members of SWELL. --Gary Wittman

Reference

Ruairi Robertson, PhD (2017, August 2017). Why People in “Blue Zones” Live Longer Than the Rest of the World. Healthline. Retrieved June 6, 2022, from <https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/blue-zones>

A Healthy Diet

It's important to eat a balanced diet especially when you're under stress. A healthy diet includes low-fat protein (meat, fish, beans), complex carbohydrates (vegetables, fruits, whole grains”, and small amounts of fats (olive, safflower, or vegetable oils). Avoid sugar, caffeine, and alcohol, which add to your stress burden. Understand how foods affect your moods, and you'll improve your physical and emotional health. --Ken Evers

Nancy Cooper



I grew up in Central Iowa and went to college at UNI. I taught science for 35 years in the Western Dubuque school district, for the first 12 at Cascade Jr./Sr high and then the rest in Epworth at WDHS. Since retiring I substitute taught until Covid came. I have volunteered at the Mississippi museum and Aquarium, the Arboretum and for the past years as an usher at the Heritage Center here at the U of D.

In my spare time, I like to do word puzzles and any type of crafts especially crochet and sewing. I joined SWELL in late January. I'm very glad I am taking this class. I believe the exercises we do on the yoga mat benefit me the most. The first day I came, a woman 20 years older than me passed me by on the track TWICE. My goal is to someday catch up to her!

Dan Bohle



I joined SWELL in February of 2022– after being invited by Mary Kay and Tim Pancratz. My wife Anne joined shortly thereafter. I was a farm boy from Northeast Iowa and eventually attended the University of Iowa in the 60's and was a proud member of the Hawkeye Marching Band for a couple of years. I stayed on for Medical School and started as an ER physician in the 1970's. A new opportunity brought me to Dubuque, and I helped start the “Blue Light Special” at Finley – the first 24-hour coverage ER in Dubuque. There I met Anne Herbst, a student nurse. She has been my wife for 44+ years. We have 4 children and 9 grandchildren – 3 who are in Dubuque. After deciding on an OB/GYN residency, we moved to West Virginia, home of the WV Mountaineers, for 3 years before coming back to Dubuque in the early 80's to practice. After 3500 babies, I retired from OB and relearned how to sleep on nights and weekends. I then practiced GYN only until I retired in 2018 – the last 7 years were in Southwest Colorado, where we enjoyed the high desert and mountain landscape in all directions! We explored living in Madison for a couple years – sampling mostly good cheese curds throughout the city, before moving back to Dubuque in the Fall of 2020. We are

thrilled to be back and enjoying all Dubuque offers to “older” couples like us, like Swell! Six of our grandchildren are playing baseball or softball this summer, so we are on the road to the ballparks almost daily in Dubuque and to Hinsdale, Illinois. Our travels also frequently take us to Southern California to see our other two little ones. Music is a passion of mine and I enjoy listening to classical and many genres and playing the piano in my “leisure”. COVID found me in the Fall of 2020 – and I was in a fog for a time, got lazy and gained weight. SWELL has helped me regain my goal of exercising for 150+ minutes/week. I have also enjoyed the social aspect – meeting many of my former patients and new friends! What a great opportunity it provides us to feel and stay young!

Where is SWELL class today?

We are determining where SWELL class is being held based on **dew point**. In the morning if you look at the weather and the dew point will be over 55%, the exercise portion of our class will be held inside. This is a safety factor for you. General comfort levels **using dew point** that can be expected during the summer months: less than or equal to 55 is dry and comfortable, between **55% and 65% the air becomes sticky and muggy**, greater **than or equal to 65%** there is lots of moisture in the air becoming dangerous not letting sweat evaporate from your skin to cool you down. This moisture can lead to heat exhaustion or heat stroke. The outdoor track will be open before class but error on the side of caution when going out to walk.

Joann Becker



I joined SWELL this February. My husband is Tom, who is not the physical therapist. We have two children. Our son, Chis, who lives in Minnetonka, MN with his wife, Bridget, and their daughter, Imogen. Our daughter, Anne, lives in Ankeny, with her husband, Keith, and their two sons, Jack and Sawyer.

I was a business teacher at Western Dubuque High School in Epworth for 34 years. I volunteer at the public library prepping newly purchased items for circulation and at Finley Hospital with the SHIP program during open enrollment as a scheduler. I enjoy walking, reading, and visiting our family.

When I started SWELL, I noticed pain from back issues disappear. I think it is due to the variety of exercises that we do. I also enjoy the friendliness of the class members.

Tom Parkin



Hello Gary: great job leading the huge swell class, member since Feb 2022, here is my info grew up on west 5th street, went to nativity school, then to Wahlert and finally Loras college graduating in 77. married Micki Lammer in 1979, we have 4 children, 2 boys 2 girls, and our grandkids number 5, and one more on the way xmas day.

enjoy the swell call very much, gets me off my couch, and away from my YouTube like watching that channel. amongst watching the Cubs, Bears, and Iowa Hawkeyes. I play on a over 60 league softball team and meets on Tuesday nights, still play racquetball in the cool weather months, and dabble in a little golf from time to time.

have my own meat brokerage company, semi-retired now, I mostly sell truckloads of frozen pork, 42k, anything from the snout to the tail.

Swell has been good for me; we have a great friendly group of people attending, looking forward to getting to know more of you all have a great summer, thank you.

Mary Kay and Tim Pancratz



Gary, we love your class, keep up the good work.

Info for Tim and Mary Kay (Sigwarth) Pancratz

We joined around the end of January and received parking passes 99 and 100. Mary Kay is still working, but has Fridays off, and comes if we are in town, and sometimes can come on Wednesdays for part of the class.

We have three kids: Danny & wife, Kate in Atlanta, Elizabeth in Milwaukee, and Molly & hubby, Tim in Denver. We are blessed with two Grandbabies, both girls, Emma is one years old and Mae is 8 months. We have been traveling a lot this past year enjoying these girls. Tim retired 1 1/2 years ago from 47 years in construction as a carpenter/contractor. Tim owned his own business for around 20 years

and the remaining years he was running projects for other companies. I retired from Russell Construction. Mary Kay works part time as the Church Administrator for Westminster Presbyterian Church. She loves working with the Congregation. Tim enjoys anything outside from Gardening to hiking. Mary Kay loves Tennis and bike riding, plus socializing. We have become beer lovers, as we continue to perfect our taste for craft beers. We love to visit new breweries and meeting people with the same interest.



Best part of Swell is how good we feel after working out. It has really increased our flexibility, balance and motion. We have been married 41 years this August. We both considered religious life before we married.

Mary Jo Danner



Hello! My name is Mary Jo Danner. I joined SWELL a few months ago and am completely in love with this program.

A little bit about myself: I am a retired UnityPoint Finley PACU nurse of 38 years and am enjoying being with my grandkids, traveling, volunteering and pretty much living my best life. My husband Tom is also retired from teaching and coaching at Western Dubuque Highschool. We have 3 children and 4 grandchildren which will soon change as we welcome two newbies into the group. Both babies are due the week of Christmas! What are the chances?!

As I mentioned earlier SWELL is a wonderful program. I love that it encompasses physical, mental and social as well as spiritual health. I've made new friends and have longtime friends that I see more regularly now. It's a win win!!

Vacations/ Destinations



Michelle Leland

This is a photo from left to right, husband John, me, my sister Charmaine, and husband William.

We are in the Galena Territories in front of the water fall at the lake there. We rented a two-bedroom home for 3 days and hiked the trails and enjoyed the peaceful setting at the rental. You don't have to go far to have an enjoyable vacation. Galena is a great option.

Gary and Family



My mom bought me a view master projector when I was in 4th grade. It had all of the attractions of Disney Land. She said, “You can enjoy Disney Land by projecting the attractions on the wall. We couldn’t afford to travel to Anaheim, CA, but I would look at the pictures on the wall and dream of going there someday. Well 55 years later my son Ted arranged the trip to Disney and fulfilled a childhood dream. It is really nice when your kids take you to Disneyland LOL.



Left to right (My wife Lisa, Tim’s girlfriend Audrey, Son Tim, Son Ted, Daughter in Law Allie, and me.



Micki Parkin



Tom and I joined about 6 months ago we have 4 Children, Family of 5 in Milwaukee, Family of 4 in North Liberty, Family of 2 with one on the way for Christmas in Bettendorf, and almost family of 2 in Elmhurst, IL

Retired from Crescent Electric after 47 years

I like to go on the road a lot visiting our kids.

I like any beach and picnics and going to movies on rainy days and love all four seasons and enjoy what each has to offer.

I enjoy my seeing my longtime friends and spending time with them.

SWELL has been swell, it keeps me on my toes and feeling like I am making an effort as we age In the mystery of life. And it is a mystery isn’t it. I love meeting old and making new friends in the process.

Thank you, Gary, for you time and effort.

It will be interesting to compare my submission to Tom’s wondering how many matches we will have kind of like the newlywed game.

Hiram Melendez



Sports News

The Iowa Senior Games were held 11 June 2022: Track and Field competition was held at West Des Moines Valley High School on a beautiful summer day in Iowa.

Hiram Melendez competed in the 65-69 Men's Discus: 18 were registered & 9 participated from 3 states (Iowa, Nebraska, and Illinois).

Hiram finished 3rd of 9 and accomplished his goal of utilizing he full spin to throw beyond next year's national minimum qualifying standard of 114 feet 7 inches: He qualified for the nationals with a mark of 119’ 5 “.

Next up Hiram will compete in the 2023 Iowa Senior Games next June and National Senior Games in Pittsburgh, PA.: 7-18 July 2023. If he can find competition nearby Hiram may do one more competition this summer.

Jean Delaney



I joined the Swell program early in 2022, after being invited by a friend, Nancy Nebel. I enjoy our classes and the continued road to wellness we are on. Getting to know other people is great. Remembering names is a great challenge. My husband joined the class this spring, and I love having him by my side.

I was born in Dubuque, the second of seven children and lived here all my life except for 3 years in Iowa City, while my husband attended college. I worked for the Dubuque Community Schools in Food Service for 30 years, retiring in 2018. We raised 4 boys. They all live in Iowa. We have 3 grandchildren.

My favorite activities are (flower) gardening, reading, biking, and playing cards and games. I am very involved with my church, and very devoted to my faith.

Wheeler, Jan



I joined SWELL in April of 2022. My sisters, Sherri Treanor and Sheila Pillard introduced me to the SWELL program. It is an ideal program for me consisting of weights, Tai Chi, and floor exercises. I have 12 siblings and many wonderful nieces and nephews. My career was in Information Technology which began at John Deere Dubuque Works, transferring to Deere & Company in Moline, Illinois, and retiring after 32 years of service. I still love learning about technology. My journey in life has included great experiences with unexpected detours along the way making me a much better person. I have had opportunities to travel both for work as well as personal pleasure in Europe, Canada, and the United States. I have had some major health issues – cancer 3 times and loss of hearing in my left ear. If I do not respond when you talk to me, just tape me on the shoulder. I have found life's challenges has made me a much stronger person in

continuing to march forward enjoying my life and remaining positive. For hobbies, I enjoy jewelry making, quilting (just started), reading, watching National Geography and History programs. I love being with family and friends.

Healthy Recipes by Sue Olson



Summer always brings memories of outdoor gatherings and good food!!

A picnic is never complete without potato salad. Next time make this recipe to “lighten” your salad AND best of all have great flavor!!

DANA'S UNPOTATO SALAD as adapted by Sue Olson

Makes 10, 3/4 cup servings

Cauliflower - medium fresh head

Celery - 1 cup, chopped

Red onion- 1 cup, chopped

Vegan mayo - 1 cup, like Follow Your Heart Avocado oil Vegennaise

Can add more if needed.

Organic Apple Cider Vinegar - 2 Tbsp

Hard boiled eggs - 4, cooled and peeled, more if desire to use on top for garnish

Optional = 1/2 tsp to 1 tsp sea salt

1/4 tsp black pepper

1/2 - 1 small packet stevia (I leave this out)

1 drop Young Living Dill Vitality Essential Oil (or less)

Fresh parsley for garnish

Paprika for garnish on top

DIRECTIONS:

Cut cauliflower into bite size pieces.

Steam until begins to tender. The Cauliflower **MUST** keep its form.

DO NOT OVER COOK! The moisture in cauliflower will have it get too mushy if steam too long.

Transfer cauliflower to bowl and refrigerate until lukewarm or colder.

Stir in the celery and onions.

In a small bowl mix mayo, seasonings, vinegar, and Young Living Vitality dill essential oil if using.

Pour over cauliflower mixture and gently mix well.

Cut eggs into large pieces and add to cauliflower, gently stirring so eggs stay together.

Chill before serving. Garnish with additional sliced hard-boiled eggs and/or paprika and fresh parsley sprigs. Intended to eat fresh, DO NOT FREEZE.

Can make the day before. When I have served this no one missed the potatoes

**I love to use Young Living Vitality Essential Oils to flavor burst foods and drinks as these are labeled for consumption.

They are super concentrated and 1 drop will bring a great flavor burst to this salad!

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We are looking for feature writers each month, try your hand at it.
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