



Finding a Nearby Fitness Class Makes all the Difference in Rural Colorado

Louise Iacovetto, 88, of Phippsburg, pop. 204, keeps limber

Louise Iacovetto, 88, was born and raised in the little town of Phippsburg, Colo. (pop. 204), just east of the picturesque and rugged Flat Top mountains. “I’ve been in the same house for 66 years,” she says. “My husband Ray and I ran the post office here in Phippsburg from ‘49 to ‘89. Ray was the postmaster—one of the last postmasters to be presidentially appointed, as they used to do back in those days. It was President Truman who appointed him.”

The Iacovettos used to go to once-a-week luncheons sponsored by the Council on Aging, up the road in Oak Creek. But after her husband passed away in 2006, Iacovetto heard about the classes and workshops offered in Oak Creek by the Northwest Colorado Visiting Nurse Association. She decided to give them a try.

“We don’t have many opportunities to take fitness classes out here, with all the gravel roads and such,” she says. “And then when winter comes, the roads can get pretty dangerous with all the deep snow. So to be able to drive a few miles north to Oak Creek on the highway is a real lifesaver for me.”

Iacovetto takes both of the Aging Well fitness classes offered in Oak Creek each week. One focuses on movement for arthritis, and the other is Tai Chi. Both are led by trained and certified instructors; a \$3 donation is requested for the classes, but due to fixed incomes and other circumstances, not everyone is able to pay. Once the exercise class is completed, Iacovetto enjoys lunch and more opportunities for socializing. Occasionally, someone from the community or a local organization gives a presentation. “Like just last week,” she says, “a fellow from town gave a presentation about the years he spent in Africa working for the Peace Corps.”

Iacovetto appreciates Aging Well. “At 88, I would not be healthy if it weren’t for this program. My fingers normally would hurt because of arthritis, but because of these classes I can keep them limber. I could do the exercises at home by myself, but you know how that goes...It’s much easier to exercise when you’re in a group. It gives you the initiative to get started and keep going. And if I was at home, sitting all day in the

recliner, my back would hurt and pretty soon I wouldn't be breathing well. So to me the Aging Well program is really invaluable and I sure would hate to lose it.”

Prepared by: Robert Crum

Reviewed by: Margaret O. Kirk and Molly Mckaughan

Program Officer: Jane Isaacs Lowe

Program Area: Vulnerable Populations

Grant ID#: 67348, 64602

Project Director: Donna Hackley, MPA (970) 871-7642; dhackley@nwcovna.org
