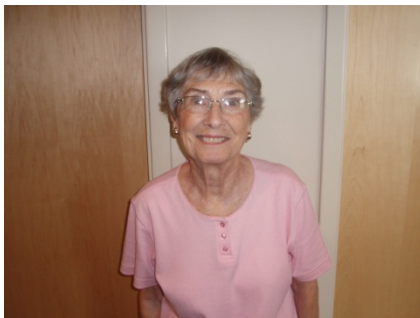


“Get Some Balance in Your Life”: Falls Prevention Awareness

Featuring: Elaine Murphy of Hillsborough, NC

“Get Some Balance in Your Life” is a falls prevention program offered at the Seymour Center in Chapel Hill and the Central Orange Senior Center in Hillsborough. The 12-week program is offered twice a week and each class, taught by a physical therapist or certified personal trainer, has balance exercises, strengthening exercises, and “time on your feet”. Each component of the class challenges an individual’s balance. Our featured profile III is of Elaine Murphy, from Chapel Hill, NC and an A Matter of Balance participant.



Elaine has taken this program twice. After a few serious operations in 2007, her doctor suggested exercising and she choose to start this by taking classes. Her balance has improved within the last few years and had fewer falls. Elaine loved the spirit of the class; she noted that everyone truly wanted to improve their self and everyone was happy to be there. She also was more than delighted with the instructor. Elaine thought being

a part of an enthusiastic, serious class while still having fun was “good socially” as well as physically. Outside of class Elaine has started walking daily every day, especially since driving around limits her ability to a lot of things. She enjoyed being able to move around with people that her so similar to herself. Elaine has a great personality and always had a friendly smile on her face. She left saying “I hope to continue taking similar classes. I talk them up to everyone, it really is a great opportunity.”

Falls prevention is a critical issue considering that falls are the leading national cause of doctor visits, hospital admissions, nursing home admissions and emergency room visits as well as the leading cause of injury deaths among people over the age of 65. North Carolina will recognize this issue during **Falls Prevention Awareness Week from September 19-25, 2010.**

To Prevent Falls:

1. Exercise regularly. Physical activity programs like Tai Chi that increase strength and improve balance are especially good.
2. Ask your doctor or pharmacist to review your medicines to reduce side effects and interactions that could make you dizzy or unsteady.
3. Have your eyes checked at least once a year.
4. Improve the lighting in your home.
5. Reduce the hazards in your home that can lead to falls, such as loose carpets and slippery or uneven floors.

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention]

For more information check out the NC Falls Prevention Coalition website:

<http://www.med.unc.edu/aging/ncfp/welcome.htm>