

# Country Neighbors gaining in strength

**BY BETTY McSHANE**  
Staff Writer

Residents of Country Neighbors in New Richland didn't make a group resolution to get fit in the new year, but that's exactly what's happening. Thanks to a program implemented at each of its ecumenical facilities, seniors living at Country Neighbors are reaping the benefits of regular exercise. Not only are they getting a good work out, director at the local home, Michelle Parker says the residents are having fun.

"This is a company-wide program we started in January for the overall wellness of our residents," said

Parker. "Country Neighbors Homes decided to go with a strengthening program to help keep the seniors healthier longer, to reduce the chances of their falling and to help them remain independent. Not only is it good for the residents to exercise, it's a social event for them. They're already having a great time with it."

The program, Live 2B Healthy, Inc. promises to "take your body where your mind wants to go." Designed to build strength and overall stamina, the exercises give seniors renewed energy, increase

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**GETTING PUMPED** — Residents of Country Neighbors in New Richland get into the swing of exercising. From left: Roger Tangen, Evie Standke, Mert Arnold, Don Hamilton, Russell Swenson, Palma Richardson, trainers Curt Bergsholm and Jason Tompkins.  
Star Eagle photo by Betty McShane



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mobility, circulation, and improve their cognitive skills. Curt Bergsholm, personal trainer and regional owner of the company, makes the trek from Prior Lake to area Country Neighbors for each class. Assisted by Jason Tompkins, the trainers work directly with the

New Richland residents, guiding them through a series of sometimes, quite entertaining exercises.

"This isn't a job at all," said Bergsholm. "It's fun for them as well as for us. We do a variety of exercises, some with equipment and some without. Exercise is good both physically and mentally for senior citizens, as well as everyone. At the beginning of the program, we test the seniors for cardio-vascular fitness and their strength, then about three months later test them again. We re-test every three months after

that to check their progress. Feedback gives them an opportunity to see their actual progress and their increased balance and stamina. It's good for them to see the benefits of regular exercise and to work out at the level of their own capabilities. It's also a great way for them to live healthier, happier lives. Strength training exercises keep the body guessing; that's when you see results."

The residents are enjoying their time spent inter-acting with their trainers, and are embracing their

"inner Samson" by getting with the program. By the looks of things, no one's going to be kicking sand in their faces anytime soon, regardless of the weather. The one hour exercise sessions are held three times each week, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, 1 p.m. and are open to the public. For more information about the program and Country Neighbors, contact Parker at 507-463-3565, or Bergsholm by email at [cbergsholm@live2bhealthy.com](mailto:cbergsholm@live2bhealthy.com).