

Ramp up your Happiness Factor

Jim Miller has some tried and true advice for aging adults. He suggests, "Upon arising from bed each morning, clap your hands and say, 'It's going to be a great day!'" A long time resident of Tuxedo, Miller believes that beginning each day by expressing such optimism is an important key to happiness.

At age 74, Miller should know a great deal about coaching others into a more optimistic existence. For more than 38 years he has espoused many lessons regarding the subject to the more than 1,500 young girls who spend each summer at Greystone, his family's summer camp.

After years of talking about happiness and the balanced life, Miller has chronicled his thoughts, life experiences and inspiration on the subject in a book, *Have a Great Day Today and Every Day of Your Life*. Miller draws inspiration from William Danforth's, four fold way in his work, *I Dare You*. Favorite stories and quotes from key motivationalists along with scripture are shared. Combined with personal experiences and lessons learned from campers, Miller offers his guide book to a happier life.

Many of the young girls who attended Miller's inspirational breakfast club sessions over the years during summer camp now have families of their own and highly successful jobs. These days while awaiting the return of summer campers, Miller spends much of his time traveling across the country as a motivational speaker sharing his theories on leading a happier life with people of all ages.

He will offer his insights about finding happiness through living a balanced life at a Great Life Series workshop, "Ramp Up Your Happiness Factor" on Tuesday, March 27. The morning program is sponsored by Pardee Hospital and Western Carolina University. Open to individuals of all ages, the program will be held at the Pardee Health Education Center at the Blue Ridge Mall.

Miller says, "The challenge with aging is that we are living longer and often do not have a plan for life. We see the glass half empty rather than half full." He suggests that by viewing the later years as a time of opportunity, fear can become faith, part of our spiritual life that is a crucial keystone of a happy life.

"By balancing the physical, emotional, social and spiritual spheres of our lives, we create a plan that leads to happiness,



Jim Miller is shown above with campers at Greystone Camp.

says Miller. The plan, however, must be intentional, as it takes 29 to 35 days to practice a positive response and engrain it in the subconscious. Miller will assist participants in developing goals and objectives that insure balance in the four important elements of life.

He says, "It is important to have little disciplines, practices that are part of our everyday routine." He feels that it is the accumulation of little things that determine quality of life. In addition to Miller's presentation, Marcia Caserio, WCU's Regional director of education

outreach will share the latest research on happiness and its benefits on health, aging and longevity.

WCU and Pardee were recognized in 2004 for their collaborative programming on healthy aging. The Great Life Series and WCU's graduate level gerontology certificate program were designated as "Geriatric Best Practices" by the Sage Institute's Duke Endowment funded research in the southeast.

In addition to Pardee and WCU, the Great Life Series is sponsored by First Citizen's

Bank, the Spring Arbors of Hendersonville and Home Helpers.

Registration is available at the Pardee Health Education Center at the Blue Ridge Mall or by mail to WCU Carolina Partnership for Aging and Education. The cost is \$22 per person, and checks should be made to Western Carolina University. For further information or to register by phone, contact 693-8375 or e-mail mcaserio@wcu.edu.