

AARP Wisconsin: Peshtigo's plan to offer Cardio Drumming for Exercise wins AARP WI 'Small Dollar, Big Impact' grant

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PESHTIGO, WI – A proposal submitted by the City of Peshtigo Park and Recreation Department to purchase equipment that will enable them to offer a workout called “Cardio Drumming for Exercise” has been selected to receive this month’s AARP Wisconsin “Small Dollar, Big Impact” grant.

AARP Wisconsin is awarding one grant each month throughout 2022 to projects across the state that are designed to improve communities and make them better places for everyone to live, work and play as they age. Judges selected this project for a \$1,000 grant after reviewing dozens of proposals submitted from all over the state.

“These grants are exactly what the name describes – short-term, low-cost solutions that could have remarkable impacts on the shaping of neighborhoods and cities,” said Darrin Wasniewski, Associate State Director of Community Outreach for AARP Wisconsin.

“The judges immediately connected with the simplicity of Peshtigo Park and Recreation’s Cardio Drumming for Exercise application. Simple materials, exercise balls, drumsticks and laundry baskets bring exercise and social connection anywhere in the community. We look forward to hearing more about this project’s big impact on Peshtigo’s citizens,” Wasniewski said.

Cardio Drumming for Exercise provides a fun and healthy form of cardio workout, according to Park and Recreation Director Lori Tonn, who submitted the grant application. She said this exercise can be performed while standing or sitting, enabling participants of all ages to engage in a fun workout.

Each drumming class will be designed to a specific age group using music, rhythm techniques and various levels of drumming. In order to launch the program, the park and recreation department needs several sets of exercise balls, drumsticks and plastic laundry baskets to use as drum bases for up to 20 participants.

The \$1,000 from the grant will enable the department to purchase all the necessary equipment, which Tonn expects will be used several times a week year-round for exercise programming.

“Presently, we have no other exercise equipment for the community to use and this activity/equipment is easy and fun to use for a great workout to music,” said Tonn, who explained that the idea for this project came from members of the community who said they were looking for a type of exercise group that is different, fun and flexible to age and level of participant.

The great thing about this project, Tonn said, is that it’s not only unique, but flexible and fun. “There is no one in the area that uses this type of exercise equipment. Classes can be geared towards 5-year-olds all the way to 95-year-olds. It can be held indoors or outdoors, on the beach or in the park, to any genre of music. A 70-year-old grandparent can do this exercise next to their grandchild if they choose.”

AARP Wisconsin’s launched its “Small Dollar, Big Impact” grant program in 2020 and is now in its third year of helping proposed projects move forward in rural and urban parts of the state.

“This project fits perfectly with the spirit and intent of the Small Dollar, Big Impact grant program,” Wasniewski said. “Our goal is to support communities as they make positive changes that inspire long-term progress on livable issues. This proposal hits that nail right on the head.”

Tonn said the Park and Recreation Department is scheduled to begin offering the classes this June. She was thrilled to learn that the project received the grant.

“We are so excited about this new program and the opportunity that AARP has given us to purchase the equipment needed. It will help us keep participant costs down, and put the fun back in exercising,” she said.

The grant program is open to some nonprofits and government entities. For more information on the program, visit www.aarp.org/WIsdbi