

Evergreen: Yoga on the Boardwalk

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What better way to get out in nature than enjoying Yoga on the Boardwalk? Especially when you can share it with a flock of American White Pelicans. FWNC&R Staff Photo.

Several months ago, Naturalist Assistant Avery Pesek rolled out an innovative new program at the Nature Center, Evergreen, designed specifically to reach adults 55 years of age and older to increase time outdoors and improve mobility through a variety of activities. While the Nature Center offers a multitude of programs for all ages, Avery felt the need to focus on this niche of folks and offer them activities at a reasonable price. She did her research, visited some senior living centers, and in the fall, began Evergreen.

Earlier in December, I decided to check out the program since I was off Tuesday and was excited that the week featured Yoga on the Boardwalk. The topics vary weekly: Art in the Park, Yoga on the Boardwalk, Guided Hike, and Green Living. Unfortunately, the weather was predicted to be 44 degrees that Tuesday morning at 9 a.m., the starting time of yoga.

There were four participants, including the instructor. The weather was calm and sunny, and the Boardwalk was the perfect place to relax, stretch, and focus on one's inner being. Five minutes into the class, we were on our backs, eyes closed, and doing our best

to breathe in eight, breathe out four, when suddenly, we heard sounds that could not be drowned out, no matter how hard we tried. We looked at each other, then at the marsh behind us, and to our delight, witnessed approximately 100 to 150 American White Pelicans doing what pelicans do—helping to feed each other! They were in a big circle, taking turns dipping their bills into the water and then raising them up to flush out the fish. We watched in awe as 20 to 30 more pelicans joined the group. They were oblivious to our presence as they continued this choreographed dance for their breakfast. Five minutes later, after the excitement died down, they moved upstream, and we continued our yoga—breathe in eight, breathe out four. It was the highlight of our day and one that will be burned into my memory for years to come. Nature is like that.

If you are 55 years or older and enjoy nature, consider signing up for an Evergreen program. This is a great opportunity to meet others, experience the outdoors, and have fun while learning something new. These activities meet weekly on Tuesdays from 9 to 11 a.m., with a different activity each week. For more information or to register, [click here](#) and enter Evergreen in the search bar.