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Bella FIT not as easy as it looks

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By [SANDY ILLIAN BOSCH](#)

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Fitness instructor Karen Marzec demonstrates a trick during the BellaFIT Hoop Workout for Beginners at Pleasant Dale Park District. The class targets the midsection, but is a workout for the entire body.

(Jon Langham/for Pioneer Press)

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The BellaFIT Hoop Workout for Beginners, led by Karen Marzec at the Pleasant Dale Park District.

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Fitness instructor Karen Marzec leads a Hoop workout class at Pleasant Dale Park District.

(Jon Langham/for Pioneer Press)

How hard could it be? Five-year-olds do it, and all it takes is a little hip movement to keep the hoop spinning.

Five minutes into the BellaFIT Hoop Workout at Pleasant Dale Park District recreation center, the ladies began to realize they were in for a challenge, and a really good time.

Hooping is all about the core, said Karen Marzec, who offers the class through her company, Bella Fit. But while the ladies in her class are using and strengthening those abdominal muscles, they also are improving their balance, getting an aerobic workout and even getting a bit of a mental vacation.

"After all, if you've got me directing you to hoop while standing on one foot and then push your arms above your head, there's not a lot of room to think about errands and responsibilities," Marzec said.

A fitness instructor for more than 20 years, Marzec is always looking for new ways to help women keep in shape and stay interested in fitness. She's been hooping for about six years and began offering it as a class two years ago. Hooping was recently offered as a class at Pleasant Dale.

After her first hooping experience, Melanie Peterson of Burr Ridge said she'll be back for more.

"It was a challenge," she said, and more work than she expected, but Peterson said she came away feeling good about the way she spent that 45 minutes.

These aren't the hoops from your 6th birthday party. These hoops are heavier, and come in a variety of sizes to give each participant the optimal workout.

Marzec allows students to start out slowly to get the feel of hooping, but then adds tricks to the mix, urging students to use different muscles as they stand on one foot, turn in a circle or move their arms.

Marzec said it's not too late to join the current session. Another session will be offered in the fall, along with Zumba, BellaFIT Rock Bottoms, Ab Attack, BellaFIT Buff Arms and BellaFIT Boot Camp for Women.

There's even a BellaFIT Stroller Workout for moms and tots on the go. Moms will learn to incorporate power walking and toning work into their strolls.

For detail about any BellaFIT or Pleasant Dale Park District class, call (630) 662-6220, or visit pleasantdaleparks.org.

Contact Marzec at Karen@Bella-fit.com or (866) 916-BFIT.