Residents bring Granny Basketball to Louisburg

Basketball with no running or jumping. Is that even possible?

It is if you are playing Granny Basketball.

A Granny Basketball team is coming to Miami County and organizers Jean Carder and Becky Berg, Louisburg, are looking for women to join the fun. What exactly is Granny Basketball?

It’s basketball for ladies over 50 years of age who are interested in a little fun and fellowship on the basketball court. The Granny Basketball League started in Iowa in 2005 as a fun, yet competitive, exercise for women over 50 and as an avenue for charitable giving; wholesome, nostalgic and sometimes humorous entertainment, a recognition for mature women and a method of preserving the history of six-on-six basketball, according to league materials.

“It’s just plain fun,” says Carder. She got the idea to start a local granny basketball team after reading a story in the Kansas City Star about a Border Showdown game between teams from Lawrence and Missouri.

Carder, who can be heard on the sidelines of Louisburg High School activities, had been looking for something to get involved in after becoming an empty-nester. Granny basketball seemed to fit the bill so she contacted some “mature” girlfriends to see if anyone wanted to join the fun.

Berg, a cancer survivor, jumped at the chance to add a different type of exercise to her health program and one that also involved some laughs and fellowship. Carder and Berg went to Lawrence to watch the Kansas Grayhawkers and Gray Tornados practice. After one practice, the duo were hooked.

“We had a blast,” Carder said. “I have a slight competitive spirit so it’s fun to get out on the court and have some laughs with the other ladies. But Becky and I don’t think those Lawrence ladies know the correct height for the goals. They seemed awfully tall.”

The rules of the game follow Iowa high school girls rules from the 1920s. The court is divided into three sections and players stay in their designated section. There are 2 guards who are defenders. There are 1 to 2 centers who play in the center third of the court and are the passers. The two forwards are the scorers.

The twist to all this? Uniforms reflect those worn in the ’20s so players were bloomers, long-sleeved shirts and a middy collar with the number on it.

An interest meeting with light practice/shoot-around is planned for 9 to 11 a.m. Saturday at the West Gym in Louisburg. While RSVPs aren’t necessary, Carder said she would love to know how many to expect. She can be reached at 837-5719.

If you can’t attend the meeting but are interested, contact her for more information. Wear your workout clothes, tennis shoes and bring a bottle of water.

“We’d love to have gals from the other communities in the county to come on over and check it out,” Carder said. “It would be great fun if we could get a couple Miami County teams formed.” “We’d like anyone with a passing interest to come out and learn more about granny basketball.”

The season won’t actually kick off until next spring but some summer and fall practices are in the works. More information on Granny Basketball can be found at www.grannybasketball.com or look on Facebook at KansasGBB.