



**SENIOR POWER** — Raymond Connett shows the exercises he will help teach other senior citizens. (C-J Photo by Hank Reichard)

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# Piketon's 'prize' pushes senior fitness

By RAY HUGHEY  
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Raymond Connett took a couple of days off from pushing pianos around to help show senior citizens how to keep fit.

He's no physical fitness buff — no time for it, he says — but he is senior. He'll be 89 April 20.

Connett, of Piketon, came to Columbus Tuesday and Wednesday for the Feeling Fit physical training program for the Aged and Corporation for Appalachian Development in the Rhodes Center at the Ohio Expositions Center.

About 250 people took part in the program designed to train people how to lead physical fitness programs for Ohio senior citizens. Connett and other COAD members demonstrated exercises — such as sitting leg lifts, elbow and arm circles, head turns, and walking in place — to

participants, then showed them how to do them in smaller groups.

Connett's spryness is helped by his teaching music and leading marching bands for more than half a century. He said he founded Ohio University's band in 1923.

He retired in 1970 after 14 years as a high school music supervisor in Pike County. He still leads the Adelphi Community Band.

Since his retirement he keeps busy tuning and rebuilding pianos.

"I have to help load and unload them, and move them around in my shop," he said.

How does someone his age manage to help move pianos?

"You get used to it," he said.

Continued on Page 3, Col. 1

### ● From Page One

He said a carpenter he occasionally hires keeps telling him, "Your're a better man than I am."

"And he's 20 years younger," Connett said.

Connett plays the violin and has played trumpet in a circus band. He also plays saxophone for dance bands and fiddles for square dancing.

He dances himself, and goes roller skating and ice skating. He admits to

being "a considerably good figure skater."

Connett works with a COAD program providing hot lunches for senior citizens. They do exercises before lunch, he said.

Many are greatly surprised at how good they feel after exercising, he said.

"It makes blood go to the brain. It carries oxygen. They are more alert, active," he said.