



# Collingwood YMCA

## *connections*



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## Outstanding Spirit

An enormous thank you to all our YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka supporters, donors and volunteers who helped us raise over \$239,000 for last year's 2006 YMCA Spirit of Giving Campaign.

Funds raised through the campaign are directed to our YMCA Spirit of Giving Fund and support individuals who are unable, not unwilling, to pay full-fee for our programs and services.

Last year, through the YMCA Spirit of Giving Fund, our donors supported over 7,000 individuals across our whole Association to participate in and enjoy YMCA programs in Camping; Child Care; Employment and Newcomer Services; Health, Fitness and Recreation; and Leadership Development.

Your support made a difference. Thank you!

## CHAP and the YMCA



Our Collingwood YMCA is proud to have facilitated CHAP (the Cardiovascular Health Awareness Program), a community-based program that brings together local family physicians, pharmacies, public health representatives, volunteers, and community organizations to work as partners to promote and actively participate in the prevention of cardiovascular disease and stroke. Collingwood was one of twenty communities across Ontario that was selected for the study.

The goal of the program was to promote good health and increase awareness about the importance of blood pressure monitoring and control for the prevention of stroke and cardiovascular disease

CHAP ran from September through November and offered opportunities for senior community residents to obtain multiple blood pressure measurements, perform a heart disease and stroke risk factor assessment, and take home health education resources. The initiative was free for all seniors in our community. It offered opportunities for enhanced multiple blood pressure monitoring and health promotion activities around modifiable risk factors for cardiovascular disease and stroke

The study's goal was to reach 30% of the senior community – we did great – 38% in Collingwood - being in the top end of the study!!!! There were over 1800 Risk Profile Assessment Forms completed.

A final meeting of the facilitators will be held in Toronto in February and more information on the study will be available at that time.

**If you are interested in learning more about CHAP and the results of the study, please contact Sue-Ann Keefe at (705) 445 5705 or e-mail [sue-ann\\_keefe@ymca.ca](mailto:sue-ann_keefe@ymca.ca)**

# YMCA Peace Medallion

Every year in November the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka, along with other YMCAs around the world, celebrate YMCA International Peace Week and urge people to make peace their personal cause. Let's believe that we can make this world a better place – a place where each of us can live free from conflict, violence and war, from greed and hunger and from inequality and injustice.

This involves determination, courage, compassion, hope and sometimes forgiveness. Building peace begins with you and me, through changes in our relationships with those around us. Let's begin by using our values to shape how we act every day with our families and in our communities.

At the YMCA, through games and activities during Peace Week, children and youth explore the meaning of inclusion, respect, commitment, responsibility, equality and justice. They are able to translate values into actions by exploring topics such as cooperation, empathy, positive communication, conflict resolution, and parallels between community and global issues.

The highlight of YMCA Peace Week is the awarding of the YMCA Peace Medallion to recognize the best person or group, who through their volunteer efforts, demonstrate and model how each of us can contribute to peace at the Volunteer and Donor recognition event held every year in November at Horseshoe Valley Resort.

## The Collingwood YMCA Peace Medallion went to: LISA FARANO



Lisa Farano is a tour de force of compassion, hard work, and commitment to enhancing the lives of others. She is incredibly active in working both in her own community of Collingwood and helping strangers around the world.

Lisa is a member of the local Rotary International Club. She sits on the Active 2010 committee, a group of active professionals concerned about the health and well being of Canadians.

Lisa is also the President of Elephant Thoughts Global Development Initiatives, a charitable organization which brings education to kids both locally and to remote villages in the third world.

Lisa has devoted her life to empowering people through education, especially those who traditionally are disenfranchised in remote communities in Canada and in developing nations. The act of providing an education world-wide means everybody has an equally valid right to empower themselves and affect change in a just manner. This ends discrimination and injustice and at the same time allows people to find non-violent solutions to change.

Lisa Farano is extremely deserving of recognition for her volunteer contribution, and in all her modesty, seeks none.

Not only is Lisa unpaid for her work, but she actually donated a considerable amount of her own resources, despite her own financial needs. In the words of Elephant Thoughts founder Jeremy Rhodes, "We could not imagine another catalyst like Lisa Farano. Her generosity, compassion, dedication, sacrifice, and hard work are an inspiration to us all."

## Congratulations Leslie Whitton

World-class flat-water paddlers (dragon boat style paddling) tend to be short and stocky, equipped with powerful shoulders, arms and upper backs. When you are over six feet tall and slenderly built, qualifying for the 2007 World Championships in Sydney Australia next September might seem to be an impossible dream.

Leslie Whitton made that dream come true, working with personal trainer Scott Andrews at the Collingwood YMCA. Last summer, she qualified at the National Time Trials in Toronto and became part of the women's team at the Club Crew World Championships.

"When I started training with Scott in December 2003, I could barely do two chin-ups," she said. "I owe Scott and the YMCA a great deal for taking me to the next level. His enthusiasm and innovation kept me at my routine and enjoying it. He's the best-kept secret in Collingwood."

Scott Andrews said, "Leslie had to work twice as hard as most Olympic paddlers to qualify because she is tall and thin. She went right to it and I enjoyed training a client who wanted to work hard, eat healthy, and spend time investing in her health."

"I looked forward to seeing Leslie, mainly because when her muscles started to grow, so did her confidence. She would motivate me because I would see such a difference in both her appearance and attitude. I'm so proud of Leslie's accomplishments and I've learned from her how important it is to set goals for yourself in and outside of the gym, and to stick to them if you want to reap the rewards."

Leslie, whose husband and daughter both use the Collingwood YMCA, agrees. "It's a great family place," she said. "But if you have a personal goal, the YMCA is the place to go, because they will be there to help you succeed."

## Answering the Call: Carey Brown

Carey Brown got more than she bargained for when she joined our Collingwood YMCA 18 months ago. Intending only to participate in fitness classes, she soon became an instructor. Then, in another pleasant surprise, she found the Y had become a family affair for the Browns – her two teenage daughters joined and now make the YMCA part of their lives.

"I really enjoyed the aquafit classes," Carey said. "There weren't enough instructors, so they asked our class if anyone was interested in becoming a volunteer instructor. Instructing is really fun. Sometimes it's hard to find the beat to the music in the water but I'm having a good time and the people in class seem to be enjoying themselves."

**"Joining the YMCA has turned into an opportunity for me to try something new and grow with the experience."**

Carey has two teenage daughters and when she joined our YMCA she hoped they would get involved. "They love it here and have created their own network of friends at the Y," she said. "They come and work out almost every night after high-school."

"I see first hand just how much the Y offers for families, and I appreciate the efforts to make it affordable for everyone. I feel very glad to have a YMCA in my community. It has offered me a lot more than I expected when I joined."

Thank you Carey for answering our call for volunteers!

# YMCA Volunteer of the Year Awards

The YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka has over 500 volunteers who help us support the communities we serve and fulfill our Mission. Volunteering is a cornerstone of our YMCA philosophy. Every November we take time to celebrate our volunteers' significant efforts at the YMCA Volunteer Recognition evening held at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

YMCA volunteers, who have a positive effect on the lives of others in our YMCA Association, are recognized as a YMCA Volunteer of the Year.

**Sofie Caap – Supervisor Child, Youth & Aquatics Programs  
Collingwood YMCA nominated:**

## **LAURA WERBITSKY**



Laura has been volunteering for the Collingwood YMCA since the fall of 2005. Her dedication to the Y Values shines through in all her actions. Laura volunteers her time unconditionally at the YMCA Leader program, All Sport program, Bake Sale, Craft Fair, Dances and anything we ask her to help with, she is more than willing. She continually seeks personal development of her own skills to help the young leaders at the YMCA. She is now transferring her land leadership skills to the aquatics department.

She has influenced outside non-members to become members and continue with the YMCA.

Laura is a person who is dedicated and accountable for her actions. She is a role model for the youth she works with; she is always looking for new ways to increase participation in our programs. Her confidence and influencing behavior has her always looking for what's next. When Laura comes to the Y she is able to sign members in, run a child and youth program or help out with a swimming lesson.

Laura makes a difference in the community. The young Leaders really look up to her and her positive way of looking at life and appreciating every step she takes and making sure everyone is part of the community.

**Lisa Stiver – General Manager Collingwood YMCA nominated:**

## **HAROLD ZUKERMAN**



Harold has been a campaign canvasser for at least 10 years. He has made his own financial as well as volunteer program contribution for even longer – for well over 15 years.

His belief in the YMCA is shown in his techniques. His heart is with the YMCA and he convinces others of the importance of a YMCA in our community.

Harold has been a member since the Y first opened its doors in 1985 and it was he who started the then called PRIME TIME classes, realizing that there was a need for a class that catered to those members who were young in spirit, but not so young in body.

You can see his smiling face most of the time standing at the counter greeting the participants with a big friendly hello, knowing everybody's name (that is quite an achievement since there are 78 names on our list).

We all have a great admiration for his knowledge and personality and I know that everyone in his classes feels that it would be hard to find another more deserving.

**Denine Johnson – Supervisor at  
Birchview Dunes Child Care in  
Wasaga Beach nominated:**

## **KIM STUBBS**



Kim has demonstrated a strong commitment to the Mission, Vision and Values of the YMCA through her role as Chair Person of the Parent Advisory Committee at the YMCA Child Care Centre located at Birchview Dunes Elementary School in Wasaga Beach. Most notably Kim was an ambassador educating the parent community of the child care centre and the Wasaga Beach community at large about the philanthropic mission of the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka.

Kim provided leadership and support to the Parent Advisory Committee regarding the quality of child care needs and expectations of parents whose children attended the centre. She attended monthly meetings with enthusiasm and commitment.

As a Spirit of Giving Canvasser, Kim went into our local community sharing testimonials of people whose lives have been positively influenced as a result of participating in the programs and services of the YMCA.

As a result of Kim's leadership and commitment to philanthropy, the Birchview Dunes Child Care Centre exceeded their Campaign Goal and was the first centre to receive a Chair's Round Table donation.

Kim Stubbs is an Ambassador of the YMCA. She is a positive role model who demonstrates the core values of the YMCA to staff, children, families and volunteers. Her positive attitude, enthusiasm and commitment to the YMCA have inspired both staff and families in the centre. In her role as a volunteer of the YMCA, she encourages others to participate in the same capacity.

# Making Friends at the YMCA

- Chris Rutte



Chris isn't really sure why it took him so long to join our YMCA, "It was something I always meant to do, but never got around to" reflected Chris. In September, 2005, Chris joined and he says "it's one of the best things I've ever done."

"Right from the start, I liked the facilities which are always clean and the equipment is in good condition. That's not always been the case at other gyms that I've used. But it doesn't take long when you're a member at the Y to realize it's different to other gyms, because it's more than a gym. At the Y, all the staff are great. They are friendly and welcoming and really make you feel part of the YMCA community right from the start. I can't say enough good things about them. It's not just the staff that generates this great community feeling. The other members are also welcoming and friendly; enjoying being at the Y together. It's a great feeling of camaraderie."

Chris initially joined our YMCA to enjoy basketball, work with weights and improve his overall fitness level. Chris was already in great shape. He was a member of the Canadian Half Pints basketball team that toured schools throughout North America using basketball to share the important 'don't tease' message.

Chris is pleased with the results of his weight training program at our YMCA. He has started to see improvements with his overall strength and he's proud of his accomplishments. "I can lift a lot more than I used to, and it's satisfying to see the improvements I've made," says Chris.

**"What took me by surprise at the YMCA is how it has positively affected the rest of my life. I came to improve my health but I didn't expect to improve my social life as well. I've made some great new friends here and we often hook up at the Y and then afterwards go out and do something together."**

Chris is thinking about what he'd like to do in the future too. "One of the things I enjoy at the Y is [the presence of] all the kids. I think because I stand out from everyone else they will often come and chat with me. They have so much energy and enthusiasm - it's great. I would love to work with kids in some way, perhaps here at my Y too," shares Chris. "I wish I had belonged to a place like the YMCA when I was a kid," says Chris, "I can't believe it has taken me so long to join and find this great community that I can be part of."

"You know, the Y builds a stronger community for everyone. It's a wonderful community place," states Chris.

**Chris Rutte is a member of our Collingwood YMCA.**

## Did You Know?

One hundred and eleven years ago, William G. Morgan, who was an employee of the YMCA Chapter in Holyoke, Massachusetts, developed the first game of Volleyball. Morgan called the game "Mintonette" (from Badminton) and created it for businessmen as a game that afforded less physical contact between players than Basketball which he knew from YMCA colleague, James Naismith. Morgan borrowed aspects from several games in creating volleyball: tennis (the net, though it was 6 foot 6 inches high, so it was just over the heads of average men), a German game called Faust ball, basketball, baseball, and handball. It was during one of the demonstration games of the sport that volleyball got its name when one of the spectators commented the game was more about volleying.

One hundred years ago, the first official game of volleyball was played at the YMCA's Springfield College and became a pet sport at a variety of different colleges. By 1900, volleyball was popular enough to have its own ball. Amazingly, volleyball became an international sport in its early days and to this day remains popular.



## General Manager Message



Whoever said that change is the only constant in life was right on! This year has brought many changes to my own life and to the YMCA of Collingwood. My first child, Noah, was

born on June 4 and has brought new joy to my life. Professionally, I have recently taken on the role as General Manager of the Collingwood YMCA. I consider it a great privilege to serve the Association in this new role and give leadership to a strong staff team. I look forward to having my son join me in this fantastic YMCA family.

And what a summer and fall we have had! Our YMCA summer camps, child and youth programs were all well-attended, and I thank all the staff and volunteers for giving our children and families such wonderful care and attention. We are always hearing comments about the quality of our counselors, volunteers and staff who give children and their families such a rich experience.

Our YMCA Spirit of Giving Campaign went over the top of our target of \$45,000, demonstrating once again, the generosity and commitment of our community and the hard work of YMCA staff and volunteers. Our new campaign will be starting soon, so watch for information. Our Open House was a great success and many new members have been joining the YMCA.

Yes, there's more change on the horizon! As we experience a growth in membership heading into the winter session, we are adding more fitness classes, new child and youth programs and we will be offering youth dances. I want to offer a sincere thanks to all the members and staff of the YMCA of Collingwood for welcoming me back, and I look forward to serving the YMCA along with all of you this year.

Nilusha Premasinghe  
General Manager  
Collingwood YMCA

## Open House Huge Success

On Saturday, September 8th our Collingwood YMCA held a fall open house. YMCA members, volunteers, and staff all made our community visitors feel welcome. The open house was a huge success. Roughly 100 people dropped by and learned what our YMCA offers their Collingwood community.

A big thank you to members, volunteers and staff for making our guests feel so welcome.

## Collingwood Dragon Boat Festival

Collingwood YMCAs "Y Guys" team photo at this year's Collingwood Dragon Boat Festival held on 2nd Sept. The team was made up of members, staff and Robert Reid, Board Chair, YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka



PHOTO: Courtesy of MasterPix, Collingwood

**health**   
**star**  
*Strengthening  
through active  
recreation*

Children and youth in our communities. Children involved in recreation programs build self-esteem, become healthier and are more productive. The purpose of our new Health Star program is to help families who are unable to enroll their children in recreational activities due to limited financial resources. With Health Star, children can be fully or partially funded to participate in programs such as minor hockey, skating, soccer, and swimming, etc. Health Star is part of our healthy living strategy and is funded through the National Child Benefit Program. Health Star is also endorsed by the Child, Youth and Family Coalition of Simcoe County.

For more information about the YMCA Health Star programs please contact Cathy Mills, [cathy\\_mills@ymca.ca](mailto:cathy_mills@ymca.ca), (705)792-7822 ext. 229; or visit [www.ymcaofsimcoemuskoka.ca](http://www.ymcaofsimcoemuskoka.ca)



PHOTO: Lisa & Ben at the Wasaga Beach YMCA Grand Opening

## Congratulations Lisa Stiver

Former Collingwood YMCA General Manager, Lisa Stiver, and her husband Ron, are the proud parents of Benjamin Robert Miller Stiver, born September 14th, 2006.

The Collingwood YMCA Staff and Members would like to congratulate Lisa as she starts her new role as General Manager of the Barrie YMCA.

## Community Spirit

Thank you Creemore Springs and Royal Bank of Canada for supporting your community and making generous donations to our YMCA Spirit of Giving fund. Your support makes a difference.

## Increasing access to recreational activities for children and youth

The YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka has created a new service to increase access to quality recreational programming for

# Supporting Communities, Shaping Their Future

*YMCA Child Care; Conference Services; Day and Residential Camps;  
Employment and Community Services;  
Health, Fitness and Recreation, International and Philanthropy.*



What a great year it was at our YMCA.

It was wonderful to see our Health, Fitness and Recreation (HFR) Centres filled with community members cooling down from the summer's extreme heat - our swimming pools were especially popular. Now, with winter upon us they are still popular.

Under the care and guidance of our camp counsellors we watched children in our Summer Day Camp programs enjoying their programs and learning through camp activities and games.

Our resident camp YMCA Camp Kitchikewana had another great summer with more children and youth attending this year over previous years, and we had a full summer of families enjoying the wonders of YMCA Geneva Park on Lake Couchiching. I am glad to report that as severe storms blew through our communities our Kitchi campers and Geneva Park cottagers remained safe.

Our Employment Resource Centres were busy this summer too. Our staff provided resources and programs that helped students find summer jobs and aided our communities' unemployed youth and adults to return to the workforce. This fall we relocated our Midland Employment Resource Centre to be more accessible and serve more people.

This summer was also exciting for us at the YMCA as we moved forward with our 2012 Strategic Plan. In the fall, our YMCA opened the new Wasaga Beach facility and construction is proceeding on the new Innisfil YMCA, which will open in late fall of 2007.

The Child and Family Development Department has undergone significant growth this fall opening 9 new locations across Simcoe and Muskoka allowing to serve hundreds more children. Thanks to the generous support of the municipal and provincial governments.

Last year's 2006 YMCA Spirit of Giving Campaign raised over \$238,000 to support our YMCA financial assistance program which helped over 7,000

children, youth, and adults participate in YMCA programs they otherwise wouldn't be able to afford. This year's success is due to you – our donors, funders and volunteers – and I am sincerely grateful for your tremendous support. Thank you.

Our YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka has over 700 volunteers, and in November we celebrated and recognized their efforts at our annual Volunteer Recognition Event at the Annual General Meeting. In November, we also recognized the tremendous efforts of our communities' peacemakers as our YMCA celebrated YMCA World Peace Week at events held across the communities we serve.

Our YMCA is blessed by the support and involvement of the individuals and communities that our Association serves. It is a privilege for me to give staff leadership to your YMCA and work in partnership with our many outstanding volunteer leaders as we build strong kids, strong families and strong communities.

Tom Coon  
Chief Executive Officer  
YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka

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**mission:** The YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka is a charity that excels at strengthening our communities by providing opportunities for all to grow in spirit, mind and body.

**vision:** The YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka will be the recognized leader in lifelong health and personal growth.

**values:** Caring, Honesty, Inclusiveness, Respect, Responsibility.

## Comments & Contributions

Please contact Lynda Inglis, Editor, YMCA Connections Newsletter regarding the articles and information provided in this issue of YMCA Connections at (705) 726 9622 ext. 245.

We build strong kids,  
strong families,  
strong communities.



Plus de vie à la vie  
des jeunes, des familles  
et de la communauté.

YMCA

**PRIVACY STATEMENT:** The YMCA strives to ensure that volunteers and staff conduct their relationships with each other, participants and all other Association contacts with integrity, good judgment and fairness. The YMCA respects the right of individuals to the protection of their personal information. The YMCA is committed to maintaining the confidentiality, privacy and accuracy of personal information it collects, uses and discloses about its participants, members, donors, parents/guardians, staff and volunteers.

Collingwood YMCA

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