



# ECHOES

GRAND CANYON CHAPTER / ASSOCIATION OF YMCA RETIREES

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## SPECIAL EDITION

### Three Grand Canyon Chapter Members Receive AYR John 17:21 Passion Awards at AYR Reunion 2011, San Diego

#### JOHN 17:21 PASSION AWARDS

A special moment is set aside for recognition of AYR members who are "intrepid and unsung" heroes known for their long and dedicated performance to a particular program or service component in their YMCA careers or for their outstanding and unrecognized efforts carried on in retirement in AYR over the past several years. These individuals are the heroes who changed our lives, stayed the course and never sought or received recognition.

**PEG ANDREWS:** George Williams Award for AYR lifetime achievement and excellence in leadership.

George Williams founded the YMCA in London, England in 1841. The organization is now established in 160 countries around the world.

**STEW BROWN;** Sumner Dudley Award for excellence In demonstrating caring and vision in the discovery and growth in camping and outdoor education. Sumner Dudley's vision changed history by creating the first resident camp and the institution of the system of "leaders" which is represented in every YMCA.

**LEN COVELLO:** James Naismith Award for excellence in health and wellness. James Naismith, as part of a YMCA health program, created what is now a worldwide sports program - basketball.



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# **PEG ANDREWS**

## **AYR GEORGE WILLIAMS AWARD 2011**

For those of us who knew Peg Andrews, it is easy to express why she should be nominated for any kind of award. Many knew Peg throughout her distinguished YMCA career; some of us have only known her in our retired years, but everyone who knew her thinks of one who has a passion for the YMCA, AYR and every aspect of the two.

After an initial career as a dental hygienist, Peg went back to College (Kent State University) to earn her BS in Education and, upon graduating magna cum laude, she began her YMCA career in 1976. She was hired by the Tucson YMCA and was their first female Director. Her success there opened the opportunity to lead the Maui, Hawaii YMCA where she and her husband Andy lived for the next four years. They then moved to Pasadena, CA as the Director of the San Marino/South Pasadena YMCA. After leading a successful Capital Campaign there, she joined Campaign Associates, directing capital campaigns in Victoria, BC, Canada, Waterloo, Iowa, Shawnee, Oklahoma and several other communities.

Peg and Andy ended their full-time YMCA career doing 'Y' volunteer work in Chiang Mai, Thailand before retiring to Sun City West, Arizona.

In her retirement years, Peg is well known for her work in AYR. For years she coordinated the work of ISSC (International Senior Service Corps). She encouraged participants to communicate what they were doing, in whatever country they were located, so that the Chapters could follow their service and be supportive of the international work in which AYR participates. She maintained an excellent working relationship with her international co-workers as well as our AYR members. She was always an active recruiter and sometimes candidates found that they were sold on the idea just by listening to Peg. She laid a strong foundation for the future of this important program of AYR.

Peg was also passionate in support of the EAF program and as chairperson, encouraged her chapter members to always strive for 100% participation.

Finally, Peg was President of the Grand Canyon Chapter of AYR from 2000 – 2005. She had a great core of leaders and high participation of members. Her leadership was exemplary for fun, fellowship and camaraderie. For Chapter members, there were memorable times under Peg's leadership that will last for many years.

It is this outstanding YMCA career and leadership in AYR and ISSC that makes Peg Andrews worthy of receiving the George Williams Award for Life Time Achievement – POSTHUMOUSLY.

We wish to recognize one of our most 'intrepid' but perhaps more so 'unsung' heroes from our YMCA family who excelled in her career and in retirement and has made significant accomplishments in developing, supporting and communicating this passion for others.

In summary "To be one with the Father" – this was the inherent vision of leaders of the YMCA such as George Williams and the inherent vision of Peg Andrews.

We regret with sadness that Peg Andrews passed away on January 27th, 2011.

# **STEW BROWN**

## **AYR SUMNER DUDLEY AWARD 2011**

Stew Brown could have, and actually was nominated for the George Williams Award, not because he attended George Williams College or because he is a past President of AYR, but because he has totally dedicated his life to volunteerism since his retirement from active duty as a YMCA professional in 1994. Thus, recognition for LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT as an AYR and Community volunteer would seem appropriate. However, those who know and love Stew recognize that his sole purpose of being throughout his professional career and after life has been and always will be CAMPING.

Dale Ventres noted that he had first become aware of Stew's energy for volunteerism when he inducted him as President of the Weidensall IARD chapter in 1995. He had just received an award from the Chamber of Commerce in Salida, CO as 'Volunteer of the Year'. This was quickly followed by his Chaffee County award as 'Man of the Year' a year later. And, he continues to volunteer every Monday with the Chamber/Travel Bureau.

While president of the Weidensall Chapter for four years, he instituted a unique 'voting plan' to give chapter members the opportunity to vote on Y related charitable imperatives. As a result, giving doubled as did the interest in many of the programs receiving grants from the chapter.

Not only has Stew provided hours of volunteerism to his local chapter over the years, but has also taken on numerous national commitments and assignments that have changed our organization and improved our communications, membership development and outreach programs in terms of service and support.

Whether his involvement is assisting with the national gathering of Camp Directors in Colorado last year, formulating a new communication process, chairing our national gathering in Minneapolis a few years back, lending a hand planning committee of the latest Reunion, assisting in international development for retirees around the world, or supporting the EAF campaign you will always find Stew willing and able to give his time, talent and support to worthy YMCA and community projects. In between times of travel and discovery, Stew also produces the Weidensall newsletter and keeps everyone informed in the Grand Canyon Chapter of events and needs.

These myriad of AYR tasks that Stew has taken on behind the scenes reflects the very best in the likeness of our YMCA founder George Williams as Stew has dedicated himself as a retired Y director to the improvement of others and demonstrates 'SERVICE ABOVE SELF' in every way. But, it has been Stew's unlimited amount of 'inspiration' to others via his camping life for so many years that even more so possess the qualities of leadership, vision and ingenuity like that of Sumner Dudley according to Pres Johnson.

Recounting the lyrics of our Praise Song 'I REFUSE' - TO SIT AROUND AND WAIT FOR SOMEONE ELSE TO DO WHAT GOD HAS CALLED ME TO DO MYSELF, OH, I COULD CHOOSE NOT TO MOVE BUT - I REFUSE!!

Stew Brown has always REFUSED not to move and TO FOLLOW THROUGH AND DO WHAT STEW WAS MADE TO DO!

# **LEN COVELLO**

## **AYR JAMES NAISMITH AWARD 2011**

This Naismith Award recognizes an individual who served the majority of his active and post YMCA career in the areas of health, wellness and sports development via the designing and management of program concepts and creative vision in the implementation of community wellness.

Walter Price, in the Ellenwood AYR Chapter's nomination said it this way: " Len Covello is our nominee! My relationship to Len is that he was my first boss at the YM-YWCA in Newark, New Jersey. Len was at that time the coordinator of the Physical Education Department, which included women – a very rare aspect of program development in those days. Len was an excellent leader, teacher and mentor to me in my role as an Assistant Physical Director and certainly reinforced my decision to make the "Y" a lifelong career. Len was then and still is today a man of supreme integrity and one who expected nothing less than your best efforts in each aspect of responsibility. At this same time I must also give credit to Len's greatest asset – his wife Audrey who was very helpful to my young wife as part of the 'Y Wives' organization."

Len Covello graduated from Springfield College in 1941 where he was active on the gymnastic team and competed in track and field as well – thus his interest in and devotion to developing programs around these interests , applying his education and sharing his support in training and mentoring over the years as a Physical Director or as a Mid-America Field Staff team member, Len has influenced Y professionals, volunteers and Y members too numerous to count.

One "Y" Director noted that when Len was working in the Mid-America Field as the Health/Wellness Specialist, he always took the time to meet one-on-one with young Physical Directors, encouraging them to seek additional education. He would then follow up with his support to accomplish these goals via training seminars, college classes and/or special study assignments. Len was always interested in assisting young Y directors to position themselves for career advancement opportunities and offered support and mentoring along the way. Len was not just another 'National' staff person fulfilling his duties and passing through, but took a personal interest in each and every one of his "children" as they grew in their wellness throughout his career and into retirement. By YMCA careers.

Len never rested for a moment after his retirement. He was a contributor to the 'Old Guard News' for many years providing Health and Wellness updates benefiting our retired family with hints relating to nutrition, medical suggestions, daily activity programs, spiritual wellness and staying active through volunteer activities. Len provided similar information for his local Grand Canyon Chapter 'Echoes' newsletter as well. And, he always provides a short, but most interesting presentation at Chapter meetings – even at the age of 90 +! What a great example to follow.

Although we could go on and on regarding Len and his enormous contributions to health and wellness as a professional for over 40 years and in retirement for well over 20 years – the picture presented here is very indicative of the man. He is a leader, mentor, family member and wonderful friend. But at the same time, we would be irresponsible to not recognize Len's guiding spirit over the years – his wife Audrey. How else can we say this other than "LEN AND AUDREY – WE LOVE YOU!"