



New England Scene

Newsletter of the New England YMCA Alumni Chapter of AYR

Spring 2010

From the Green Mountain State:

Yup, it 3 years ago when we became official residents of Vermont, however we have owned our home here since 1981. We are true flatlanders and while we've been here for 29 years to the Vermonter a flatlander is someone who reminds them of how little they know and man are they thankful for flatlanders. We took on the editorship from Ellen and Greg Fairbend and let us say that their work was really great and a very tough act to follow. They have been most gracious in showing us the ropes and providing all the necessary resources so basically it will be hard to mess this up if you all will provide us with your stories and reports.

We have a good friend at Oronoque Village, Stratford, CT where we keep a condo, who is a true born and bred Vermonter. He has written a book titled "Please Listen While I Think...I'm a Vermonter." We will be using some of these stories as part of our writing so that you can benefit from the Vermont wit.

"The family tree plays a big role with Vermonters. They feel if you look hard enough you'll always find some sap in it."

Skip retired in 2004 after 42 years of serving YMCA's on the East Coast. Last October he started back to work as the Interim Executive of the Keene Family YMCA, a 1 hour commute. His agreement was to work 10 days a month and as you can all understand a YMCA cannot be managed in 10 days a month. The agreement was also to last 3-6 months; however this has been extended probably thru this year. Natalie is keeping the home fires burning and enjoying life up here in the mountains.

"A Vermonter values your opinion as long as you don't volunteer it."

This is your newsletter so your help is needed by submitting your stories, reports or happenings that can be shared with your colleagues. Help us make this a fun and interesting piece that we all look forward to reading. We look forward to seeing many of you at Purity Springs in May.

Natalie and Skip Raymond

Happenings:

- Lou and Mary Faulk are keeping us well informed about what is going on at the Dominican YMCA and how they are helping their friends in Haiti.
- Good news from Andy and Barbara Anderson. Barbara has pretty much put her heart problems behind her and Andy has had successful surgery and is back in the pool and cross country skiing.
- Len and Ann Cuneo have spent some time in Florida, not much warmer than it is up North.
- Jane Kirk retired as Selectman in Nelson, NH and donated the proceeds from her farewell party to Haitian relief. She is now undergoing treatment for sciatica. We wish her pain free soon.
- Congratulations to Ellen and Greg Fairbend on their 53 years of marriage.
- For those of you that remember Carol and Doug McCleod, (Southington & New Haven YMCA's) they celebrated 53 years of marital bliss.

THOUGHTS FROM THE IMMEDIATE PAST CO-PRESIDENTS

Ann and Len Cuneo

We became your Co-Presidents on September 15, 2007. We had been on the Executive Committee for four years and members for three additional years. We believe that the Chapter continues to grow and strengthen and we are among the finest in the country. Our term was completed on September 23, 2009. The Nominating Committee was unable to recruit our replacements. Our Executive Committee is currently operating and managing the Chapter. We continue on the Executive Committee as immediate past Presidents.

During the past two years, our Chapter held seven member meetings, events and activities as follows: Mystic Seaport (34); Springfield College (23); Berkshires (43); Providence Zoo and Planetarium (18); Tennis Hall of Fame (20); New Bedford Whaling Museum (16) and Plymouth Plantation (22). (The bracketed numbers are people in attendance.)

The most important event sponsored by the Chapter, under the able leadership of Nancy and Chuck Goding, was the Harbor to Harbor National Reunion Cruise 2008 from Boston to Montreal. This successful event had 225 members in attendance, including 26 from the New England Chapter.

Thanks to Allen Beavers for keeping track of the income and expenses of the Chapter. Once again, we are in an excellent financial position with cash at \$1485. and a \$10,000 CD for a total of \$11,485.

We are proud that during 2008, our Chapter contributed \$4,000 to YMCA causes. They included International Senior Service Corp, Secours Specieux, Emergency Assistance Fund, World Service, Sioux Indians, and North Carolina Armed Services YMCA. This money was raised by member contributions, profit from the Silent Auction and a small amount of income remaining from our Chapter events.

A major Chapter priority has been the development of a plan to increase Chapter Membership. Sy Symonds and Ellie Murphy planned and conducted a data gathering session at Springfield College in September, 2009. Participants included non-member retirees and employees soon to retire. The session was facilitated by Harry Rock of Springfield College. This session was very successful and the positive feedback has resulted in the desire to hold more sessions in the future. The data gathered will be used by the Chapter to recruit members and to plan meetings and events which will attract these groups. The hope is that this program will serve as a pilot program for all chapters in the future.

Thank you for allowing us to serve for the past two years.

News from EAF from Dale Ventres

You probably feel sad about our EAF support in 2009 in that we only gave \$57,903 compared with \$80,356 in 2008. This means we lost 271 gifts, totaling \$28,241 from our all time high. That could assist many, many YMCA Actives and Retirees. We simply have to do better in 2010. I am well aware of tight finances but still insist it our own Y family we are supporting in their troublesome time of need, and we must dig deeper as it could be any of us at any time.

WHATEVER YOU can do to help promote EAF - 2010 is the year to do it.

PLEASE DO YOUR PART.

Many thanks, and also remember our close partner YMCA World Service. We both need your support.

News from the Transition Team

Ellie Murphy, Sy Symonds

Our Chapter's Membership Development effort was having difficulty attracting new members, especially recent retirees. It became obvious that we needed a new and different approach such as asking new "retirees" what kind of an organization would be attractive to them.

This led to our convening a very successful and informative meeting at Springfield College in early September of 2009 of a dozen people within a 5 year span of retirement. Facilitated by Harry Rock, this meeting produced not only programmatic ideas but also a strong sense of concern as well as enthusiasm.

With this encouragement, the following steps have been taken in a process of revitalizing our N. E. Chapter:

1. A "Transition Team" was formed to guide and manage this process in a timely and systematic fashion. It consists of Mary and Lou Falk, Fran & Matt Johnson, Ellie Murphy, Sy Symonds, Nancy Kruger and Steve Clay who represents the Springfield College September meeting.

2. We changed our name informally to N. E. YMCA Alumni a Chapter of AYR.

3. A meeting was held January 14th, 2010 in Providence, R. I. of the Chapter Executive Committee, the Transition Team and several members at large to address the question "Who/what are we know?" The Transition Team will organize the results of that meeting for presentation to the Executive Committee as a prelude to their answering the major question: "What Do We Want To Become?"

"Final recommendations will come before the Annual Meeting in September.

Stay tuned!!!!

Notes from National President Julius Jones

This will introduce you to something new and important to you. It's called the Association of YMCA Retirees, or AYR. This new AYR will appeal to those of you just joining the ranks and those who have been retired from the YMCA for any number of years. You will receive each issue of *AYReports*, filling you in on news from chapters around the country, progress on national board initiatives, inspiration, news from today's YMCA world and much more. You will see a renewed focus on chapter events designed for fun, fellowship and education.

I am your new president and am joined by an executive board ready and anxious to take AYR in new and exciting directions: Bea Halk, VP/West; Bill Cameron, VP/East; Betsy Jacobs, VP/membership; Jane Kirk, Secretary; Rich Hill, Treasurer; Dottie Eley, Assistant Treasurer; Bob Rule, Past President; Donna French Dunn, Neil Nicoll, John Preis, consultants.

A new strategic plan for the organization is in the works so that AYR is relevant and important to retirees of all ages.

If you are already a member of AYR, thanks for renewing. If you haven't yet joined, we hope you will do so right now. It is no longer "business as usual."



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Don't Forget

New England Chapter AYP program..May 18-20 ' 2010 at Purity Spring in Madison, New Hampshire. Our Board of Directors will meet beginning at 1:00 PM on Tuesday with the general program for all members beginning at 1:00 PM on Wednesday and conclude late afternoon on Thursday. We need everyone to bring a gift for the annual auction to be held on Wednesday evening. For room reservations contact Purity Spring at 603-373-3754 before April 18, 2010. When you call be sure to tell them if you are handicapped and need a 1st or 2nd floor room and ramps to get to it. Purity Springs has a heated indoor swimming pool and by may will have their boats and canoes available for use on their lake. There are many hiking trails, tennis and golf are available.

Contact Allen Bevers at 14 Rumford Street, West Hartford, CT 06107 to register for the program.