

TIELINES

The Newsletter of the Canadian YMCA Alumni



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

May – June 2024

Welcome to the June issue of TieLines. We've made it through the first half of the year and now we're into the lazy days of summer. After the last couple of months, I'm looking forward to a slower pace with more time to get together with friends and family, playing golf and spending time at our lake house enjoying early morning hours quietly paddling in my kayak. These past couple of months have been extremely busy. As my teenage granddaughters get older, they seem to get busier with everyone going in different directions. This year, we had end-of-year dance competitions, softball games, and a high school graduation. On many evenings, there were dance competitions and softball games at the same time! But now that running around has eased, I can enjoy the summer.

In May, YMCA Canada announced some very exciting news. This fall, there will be twelve (12) individuals honoured in Ottawa and inducted into the YMCA Fellowship of Honour. As you will recall this is the highest honour and most valued award in the YMCA in Canada. It recognizes outstanding YMCA volunteers and staff who have given tremendous leadership to the YMCA in Canada. On the list are some of our YMCA Alumni: Marilyn Kapitany, Scott Haldane and myself. We will be joining a group of about 120 individuals who have been recognized previously. Please congratulate Marilyn and Scott for their wonderful leadership contributions over the years. For more information on the Fellowship of Honour, please see below for the full Y Canada announcement to learn about all this year's recipients. Congratulations to all

recipients and, of course, to Marilyn and Scott — so well-deserved.

Late last month, you would have received the sad news from me about the passing of our dear friend, Jackie Jenkins. So many of you responded to that email with your memories of Jackie, and it was lovely to read. I combined all of the responses and have sent them to the family. I hope it will ease their sadness of her passing knowing how much of an impact she made in our lives.

Over the last several months we have transitioned the Membership duties to Mimi Price, co-chair of our Membership Engagement Committee. Mimi will now be the one reminding you if your membership dues are late, so please don't ignore her emails. You can reach Mimi at mimi.price@hotmail.com and she will be pleased to answer any membership questions.

Also, this summer the Executive will be reaching out to each of you as a way to check in with our membership. We've done these check-in calls in the past and they are always a great way to find out what you are up to and gain some feedback on what we can do better. If you get a call or an email from one of the Executive members, know that it is just one of us wanting to say "hi."

Well, that's all for now, enjoy your summer.

Until next time,

Janet Giles
janet.giles@shaw.ca

Quick note from your editor: We will not be producing an August issue of TieLines. Watch for your next edition in October 2024! We will, however, celebrate 4 months of Birthdays in this issue!

Canadian YMCA Alumni News

Celebrating Birthdays!

Happy Birthday to:

May

Martha Lee-Blickstead, Brad Clements, Bill Douglas, Dale Duffy, Sheila Laursen, Don McCreesh, Marty Reynolds, Susan Waterfield.

June

Bill Dobie, Tony Fry, Heather Green, Bill Hallett, Melanie Laflamme, John Lilley, Franz Schmidt, Roger Wilson, YMCA (1844).

July

Rich Bailey, Tom Coon, Ron Coulombe, Keitha Davey, Russ Davey, Sharon Geldart, Steve Heming, Janet Johnson-Dawson, Gordon McKay, Donna Morrison, Peter Noble, Laura Palmer Korn, Mimi Price, Keith Publicover, John Schmitt.

August

Jack Bernhardt, Margaret Flett, Nancy Forrest, Gayle Graham, Gary Gray, Eric Van Meurs.

Welcome, New Members!

A warm welcome to Brian Service, Marty Snelling, Ruth Menegozzo and Ursula Motyka!

About TieLines

TieLines is the newsletter of the Canadian YMCA Alumni published bi-monthly at the end of February, April, June, August, October, and mid-December. Please forward articles for inclusion, any corrections/comments to Diana Deakin-Thomas indicating TieLines in the subject line at dianadeakinthomas@gmail.com. Don't want to receive TieLines anymore? You can unsubscribe by emailing editor.cdnyalumni@gmail.com. To find back issues of TieLines, [click here!](#)

Who are our members?

The Canadian YMCA Alumni is a fellowship of former YMCA or YMCA-YWCA staff, volunteers and/or their partners. We stay connected through TieLines and various ZOOM events. If you know someone who might be interested in joining the Alumni, please share this issue and connect them with Mimi Price, our Membership Chair, at mimi.price@hotmail.com.



YMCA Fellowship of Honour 2024

YMCA Fellowship of Honour Overview

The YMCA Fellowship of Honour is the highest honour and most valued award in the YMCA in Canada. It recognizes the outstanding YMCA volunteers and staff who give tremendous leadership while strengthening and expanding the capacity of the YMCA in Canada. Regardless of age or level within the Association, all YMCA staff and volunteers are eligible. The induction of YMCA leaders takes place every 4 years under the vice-regal patronage of the Governor General of Canada. Two different levels of awards, Companion and Officer, honour people whose accomplishments vary in degree and scope.

Why does the YMCA do this?

This is an opportunity to recognize and pay tribute to the most outstanding contributors to the YMCA in Canada. Honouring exceptional individuals instills a sense of commitment that will grow with each new generation. People are our greatest resource, and the YMCA Fellowship of Honour is a way to celebrate their achievements. Each nomination is judged on its own merits, based on the impact that a nominee has made to the YMCA.

How are People Recognized for their Contributions?

Since 1981, over 100 exceptional and distinguished volunteers and staff have been recognized in one of two categories: A Companion Award recognizes outstanding national and international leadership, and an Officer Award acknowledges local or regional leadership contributions.

YMCA Fellowship of Honour Advisory Council

The YMCA Fellowship of Honour Advisory Council consists of the following members:

Nik Nanos	Chair
Mary Beck	YMCA BC
Peter Dinsdale	YMCA Canada
Marcel Lauzière	External Director — Ontario
Ray Mantha	YMCA of Northeastern Ontario
Don McCreesh	YMCA of Greater Toronto
Patricia Pelton	YMCA Canada
Franco Savoia	YMCA of Northern Alberta
Laurie Skinner	YMCA of Newfoundland & Labrador

2024 Selection Process

Nominations were due by February 29, 2024. A total of 16 nominations were received — 5 Companions and 11 Officers. The Advisory Council convened on April 1–2 to review all nominations.

Advisory Council Recommendations

Nominations were reviewed by the YMCA Fellowship of Honour Advisory Council based on established criteria and the person's impact on the YMCA in Canada. The selections made by the Advisory Council are being recommended to the National Board for approval. A maximum of 12 people have been selected as recipients in 2024 — 4 Companions and 8 Officers — as follows: (See bios below)

Companion	Nominated by	Staff/Volunteer
Brenda Flaherty	YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford	Volunteer
Scott Haldane	YMCA Canada	Staff
Marilyn Kapitany	YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg	Volunteer
Craig Rowe	YMCA of Newfoundland and Labrador	Volunteer
Officer	Nominated by	Staff/Volunteer
David Beatty	YMCA of Eastern Ontario	Volunteer
Ian Brown	YMCA of Niagara	Volunteer
Dan Bulger	YMCA of Northumberland	Volunteer
Janet Giles	YMCA of Northern Alberta	Staff
John Lindsay Jr.	YMCA of Greater Halifax/Dartmouth	Volunteer
Andrew (Andy) Melton	YMCA of Calgary	Volunteer
Richard St-Yves	YMCA of Quebec	Staff
Robert (Bob) Vokey	YMCA Canada	Staff

COMPANION

Brenda Flaherty — Companion

Brenda Flaherty's impact on the YMCA spans nearly 2 decades, marked by strategic leadership and dedication to community health and well-being. As an exceptional volunteer leader with the YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford, she facilitated organizational change and amalgamation processes, expanding YMCA programs and partnerships. Brenda's vision drove initiatives such as settlement services and donor-funded academic programs, benefiting underserved youth across multiple regions.

Notably, Brenda played a pivotal role in establishing partnerships to enhance community health, leading to the creation of the LiveWell partnership between the YMCA, Hamilton Health Sciences, and McMaster University. This collaboration delivered programs for individuals with chronic diseases, garnering accolades for its innovative approach and positive outcomes.

Her influence extends beyond local initiatives, as she served as Chair of the National Board and as a member of the World Alliance Executive Committee, driving strategic plans for collective impact. Brenda's leadership led to the adoption of a national strategic plan in Canada, and she represents the country at the World YMCA, where she advocates for global unity and youth employment.

As a Fellowship of Honour recipient, Brenda's commitment to the YMCA's mission has been unwavering, leaving a legacy of community service and collaboration at the local, national, and international levels.

Scott Haldane — Companion

Scott Haldane is nominated as a Companion of the Fellowship of Honour for his outstanding leadership and contributions to the YMCA movement in Canada. With a 39-year career, he demonstrated exceptional leadership skills and played pivotal roles at both local and national levels. Starting in 1977, he held various positions within the YMCA, culminating in his role as President and CEO of YMCA Canada.

During his tenure, Scott spearheaded numerous initiatives, including successful capital campaigns, organizational culture changes and strategic planning processes. His commitment to social justice led to his involvement in the National Plan on First Nation Education, aiming to improve educational outcomes for Indigenous students. Additionally, he championed the 4Rs Youth Movement, promoting reconciliation and empowerment among Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth.

After retiring from the YMCA in 2016, Scott continued his impactful work as the President and CEO of the Rideau Hall Foundation. His legacy includes not only tangible achievements like increased access to YMCA programs but also intangible impacts such as fostering diversity and building strong partnerships within the community. Scott's leadership, energy, and dedication have left a lasting imprint on the YMCA movement in Canada.

Marilyn Kapitany – Companion

Marilyn Kapitany has a rich history of volunteerism and leadership within the YMCA movement, both locally and nationally. Since 1999, she has been actively involved, serving on the boards of both the YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg and YMCA Canada, including terms as Board Chair. Her contributions led to significant achievements, such as overseeing facility renovations and strategic planning initiatives. Marilyn's impact extended beyond the boardroom, including roles in community development, such as chairing the Camp Stephens Capital Campaign, where she achieved substantial fundraising goals despite challenges posed by COVID-19.

Marilyn served on the YMCA Canada Board from 2004 to 2014, with a tenure as Board Chair from 2011 to 2013. During her leadership, she spearheaded initiatives such as visiting all the YMCAs in Canada, implementing the Child Protection Policy, revising the YMCA Canada By-Laws, and developing a new strategic plan. On a broader scale, Marilyn's leadership transcended national borders, as evidenced by her service on the World Alliance Executive Committee. Marilyn's professional background as a senior government executive brings valuable skills to her volunteer roles, enhancing her ability to address complex issues and foster collaboration.

Marilyn's appointment as a Companion of the Fellowship of Honour is a testament to her extensive volunteer service, strategic leadership, and international engagement that have made a profound impact within the YMCA movement and beyond, embodying the values of community service and global cooperation.

Craig Rowe – Companion

Craig Rowe has been nominated as a Companion of the Fellowship of Honour for his significant contributions and impact on various levels. Craig's involvement with the YMCA began in the 1990s as a member and volunteer, leading to his tenure on the Board of Directors of the YMCA-YWCA of St. John's, where he also served as Chair. During his leadership, he navigated the organization through a CEO transition, capital campaigns, and construction projects. This laid the foundation for the transformation of the YMCA of Newfoundland and Labrador into a province-wide organization with over 200 locations.

On a community level, Craig spearheaded the development of the Ches Penney Family YMCA in St. John's in 2011, which evolved to impact communities across Newfoundland and Labrador. Under his guidance, the YMCA expanded its programs in all areas, demonstrating Craig's exceptional leadership and ability to inspire engagement and support.

At the regional, national and international levels, Craig's influence extended beyond Newfoundland and Labrador. He served as Chair of the National Board, contributing to CEO searches, national conferences and strategic planning. Additionally, Craig was elected to the Executive Committee of the World Alliance of YMCAs, where he played a significant role in initiatives such as the COVID-19 Solidarity Fund and the Canada/Africa Initiative.

Craig's dedication and leadership have had a profound impact of the YMCA at local, provincial, national, and international levels, making him a deserving recipient of the Fellowship of Honour.

OFFICER

David Beatty – Officer

David Beatty, a resident of Brockville, Ontario, has made significant contributions to his community. David, alongside his wife Anne, is actively involved in various philanthropic endeavours. He pursued an education in Economics at the University of Western Ontario and Queen's University. Professionally, David has been a cornerstone at CANARM since 1971, playing a vital role in providing employment to over 2,000 individuals. His commitment to community welfare is evident through the establishment of the Beatty Family Charitable Foundation in 2015.

At the YMCA of Eastern Ontario, David serves as a mentor, steward and ambassador, facilitating various events and initiatives. He has held key positions within the YMCA, including Chair of the Foundation and the YMCA Board of Directors. David's impact extends beyond the YMCA, with involvement in economic development, local governance, healthcare, education and various charitable organizations. His regional and national impact is notable including contributing to the amalgamation of YMCAs in Kingston and Brockville. David's involvement in numerous community projects and organizations underscores his dedication to fostering growth and well-being.

David's lifelong commitment to philanthropy, community service and leadership exemplifies the values upheld by the YMCA and make him a deserving recipient of the Fellowship of Honour.

Ian Brown – Officer

Dr. Ian Brown played a pivotal role in transforming healthcare in the Niagara region over his career. A urologist with Niagara Health, he held several leadership positions including Chief of Urology and later Chief of Surgery. Ian was instrumental in establishing the Prostate Cancer Diagnostic Assessment Program, aimed to expedite patient care. For nearly 2 decades, Ian played a significant role in impacting health care and shaping the community.

Ian's influence extended beyond his medical career, as he was actively engaged in the YMCA since 2003, leading successful fundraising campaigns and serving on the Board of Directors. His efforts contributed to the establishment of community centres and initiatives, fostering connectivity and inclusivity. Despite facing challenges such as operational closures and financial constraints, Ian's leadership and commitment guided the YMCA through difficult times. In addition, Ian contributed to various community initiatives supporting organizations like the Branscombe Family Foundation and the Motorcycle Ride for Dad, raising funds for prostate cancer research.

In retirement since 2023, Ian continues his commitment to learning and community, focusing on renovating a high-efficiency home on Vancouver Island. As a Fellowship of Honour recipient, his multifaceted contributions have left a lasting impact on healthcare, community development and philanthropy.

Dan Bulger — Officer

Dan Bulger's commitment to the YMCA of Northumberland has significantly impacted the organization and the community. Starting as a volunteer at 15, Dan has become one of Canada's longest-serving YMCA volunteers, dedicating over 46 years to the organization. His contributions range from setting up indoor soccer leagues to leading fitness classes in the pool and service on the Board of Directors. Dan has spearheaded successful capital campaigns and made substantial financial contributions. His generosity has funded programs like the YMCA Summer Camp Snack Program and the development of the YMCA Pentel Playground, benefiting hundreds of children and families.

Dan's impact reverberates throughout Northumberland County. He and his Waterpower Fitness Class raise funds annually for the YMCA Strong Communities Campaign. Dan's involvement extends to other organizations including the Northumberland Sunrise Rotary Club, where he served as President, the Cobourg Community Centre, and the development of the Cobourg Sports Hall of Fame. He also served on the Building Committee for the Town of Cobourg's new community centre.

Dan's leadership, fundraising efforts and personal contributions have left an indelible mark on the YMCA of Northumberland and the broader community. His dedication exemplifies the transformative power of service and philanthropy in creating positive change.

Janet Giles — Officer

Janet has made a significant impact in her various roles within the YMCA. Janet served as the Chief Executive Officer of the YMCA of Kingston, leading successful rebuilding efforts that stabilized finances, increased revenue and eliminated debt. Janet held leadership positions at YMCA of Northern Alberta, contributing to significant advancements such as the successful amalgamation with the YMCA of Wood Buffalo in Fort McMurray. Janet played a pivotal role in expanding YMCA operations, overseeing substantial revenue growth and community outreach programs.

Janet's passion for international YMCA partnerships led her to travel extensively and build strong relationships with YMCAs worldwide. Notably, she played a crucial role in establishing a significant partnership with the Bogota, Columbia YMCA, which has become a model for international collaborations. One of Janet's greatest accomplishments, and, personally, most transformative adventures, occurred in 2011, when she and 37 other Edmontonians climbed Mount Kilimanjaro. Through the 16-day climb, they raised more than \$1 million for the Royal Alexandra Hospital Foundation.

Since retiring, Janet remains active in supporting the YMCA and serves as the President of the Canadian YMCA Alumni. Janet's lifelong commitment to the YMCA and community service has left a lasting and transformative impact which makes her an ideal recipient of the Fellowship of Honour.

John Lindsay Jr. — Officer

John Lindsay Jr. has been nominated for Officer of the YMCA Fellowship of Honour in recognition of his remarkable dedication and service spanning 58 years, with 40 years specifically devoted to the YMCA of Greater Halifax/Dartmouth. Since joining the Board of Directors in 1984, John has demonstrated unwavering commitment to the organization, serving in various leadership roles including Board Chair. John also served as a member of the National Board. His contributions encompass thousands of volunteer hours locally, nationally and internationally, where he has provided guidance, leadership and fundraising support.

John's leadership has been characterized by transformative initiatives such as spearheading a capital campaign for debt relief and acquiring a new home for the Community YMCA. He played a pivotal role in facilitating the merger of the YMCA in Dartmouth with the YMCA in Halifax, as evidenced by his involvement in fostering partnerships, developing innovative programs and advocating for community development and equity.

John's philanthropic endeavours, alongside his partner Anne, have left a lasting impact across various sectors, including education, Indigenous advocacy, cultural preservation and environmental conservation. Their commitment to fostering innovation and entrepreneurship further demonstrates their dedication to building a vibrant and sustainable community. John's nomination reflects his profound impact on the YMCA, embodying the values of service, leadership and philanthropy.

Andrew (Andy) Melton — Officer

Andrew Melton has been an unwavering force behind the YMCA of Calgary's success for over 3 decades, making significant contributions across various fronts. From fundraising to strategic planning, Andy is a deserving recipient of the YMCA Fellowship of Honour. Andy's contributions have been monumental, spanning various roles from volunteer to board member to donor. His impact extends to key initiatives such as capital campaigns and strategic planning, notably aiding in the establishment and expansion of multiple YMCA facilities in Calgary. Andy's expertise in real estate and land development has been particularly instrumental in guiding the organization's growth.

His involvement hasn't been limited to Calgary. Andy's influence has extended to YMCAs in Edmonton and Lethbridge. Additionally, he has played significant roles in other philanthropic endeavours and community organizations, reflecting his commitment to making positive changes beyond the YMCA. Andy is also active in political initiatives and serves on various boards, reflecting his commitment to community service and leadership.

Andy's dedication to family values, community building and philanthropy underscores his leadership ethos. Through his unwavering support and proactive engagement, Andy has left an indelible mark on the YMCA and the broader community. His ongoing involvement in various capacities ensures a continued legacy of service and impact for years to come. Andy's enduring impact on the YMCA of Calgary and the wider community underscores his dedication and visionary leadership.

Richard St-Yves — Officer

Richard St-Yves has been a cornerstone in promoting philanthropy and volunteerism at the YMCA over the past 25 years, particularly in the province of Quebec. Richard spearheaded several initiatives and strategies to anchor the YMCA in his community. He surrounded himself with influential volunteers and fostered their commitment through his legendary listening skills, respectful attitude, positivity and patience.

Richard demonstrated exceptional management skills, overseeing large teams of staff and volunteers while ensuring the Y's values remain front and centre. At the YMCAs of Quebec, he has led numerous initiatives from revitalizing operations to forging partnerships for new centres, always prioritizing the organization's social mission and financial sustainability.

Richard has extended his impact beyond the YMCA, spearheading community engagement programs and partnerships like the hugely successful Alternative Suspension Program that is now being rolled out outside Canada. He has contributed to the YMCA's growth and effectiveness by inspiring generations of staff and volunteers of all ages to get involved, collaborate, dream and strive to do better with and for others.

Richard's dedication is not limited to his professional life. He is actively involved in volunteer activities, demonstrating a commitment to community betterment. His multifaceted contributions have left a lasting mark on the YMCA and the communities it serves and make Richard an ideal recipient of the YMCA Fellowship of Honour.

Robert (Bob) Vokey — Officer

Bob Vokey's journey with the YMCA spans from his teenage years as a volunteer leader in Montreal to his impactful roles on the national and international stage.

Beginning in 1970, Bob demonstrated leadership in youth programs, eventually becoming a youth worker and spearheading innovative initiatives like the Juvenile Diversion Project. Bob's tenure at YMCA Canada's Ottawa office saw him shape national programs and advocacy efforts, particularly in youth empowerment and international partnerships. His contributions expanded the YMCA's global reach, fostering partnerships and programs worldwide. Notably, Bob championed principles of equity and inclusion, expanded YMCA Peace Week in collaboration with the Lead Association and facilitated youth leadership development.

Beyond the YMCA, Bob co-developed the McGill-McConnell Program, a pioneering initiative in voluntary sector education. In retirement, he continues his international development consulting, leaving a lasting impact on communities in Thailand and the Philippines. Bob's legacy embodies the YMCA's mission of fostering global citizenship and community transformation, making him a fitting recipient for the YMCA Fellowship of Honour.

In Case You Missed it!

HISTORY OF THE YMCA

Approximately 100 attended the May 22nd webinar in which Janet Giles presented. Good perspectives, internationally, USA, nationally and locally. In case you missed it, here is the link to the recording. Janet was third on a panel of 4 presenters.

[Click Here to Watch!](#)

Your editor was unable to attend this session live BUT she highly recommends listening to this session. It will be time well spent!

As promised, a brief update from Franco:

We have completed 59 virtual visits with Y volunteer and staff leaders. It has been a privilege for me to be part of these visits and record our personal “Y journeys and reflections” on the changes we experienced over that time. With our thanks to Y Canada, the recordings are on the Y cloud. More visits are scheduled as we keep adding to the long list of Y leaders over the past 70 years.

The YMCAs in Canada are holding their national conference in June in Halifax. In preparation, the Alumni have been asked to be on panel that will provide a retrospective on where the Y has been locally, nationally and internationally. The Alumni and YMCA Canada engaged STIFF, a strategic communication company, to assist in the preparation for the panel.

We are continuing to work on the larger project, for a publication that we can share at the 2026 World Alliance of YMCAs conference that will be hosted in Toronto.

Again our thanks for being part of this project. Please forward me any names of former Y leaders to whom we should reach out.

Franco Savoia
403-671-4298

WORLD YMCA NEWS



Please see the following YMCA communications to help keep you connected to some of our YMCA communities.

Shaping Europe's Tomorrow — [Click Here!](#)

YMCA Europe 2023 Annual Report — [Click Here!](#)

Bridges April 2024 (Newsletter of World Fellowship of YMCA Retirees) — [Click Here!](#)



YMCA ReConnect Stories: Finding Humanity in Homelessness Exhibition

Moncton, NB – May 14th, 2024 – The YMCA of Greater Moncton proudly announces its latest project, "YMCA ReConnect Stories: Finding Humanity in Homelessness." This impactful exhibition, which premiered online on April 18th, is now prominently showcased at both YMCA of Greater Moncton locations – YMCA Vaughan Harvey and YMCA Moncton North.

This project delves into the profound stories often overlooked. Through narratives of loss, courage, community and hope, "Finding Humanity in Homelessness" illuminates the diverse experiences of those navigating homelessness in our community along with staff from the ReConnect program.

Featuring poignant audio interviews and accompanying visual portraits, the exhibition invites viewers to immerse themselves in the lived experiences of program participants and staff. From tales of resilience to moments of vulnerability, each story offers insight into the complexities of homelessness and the pathways toward rebuilding lives.

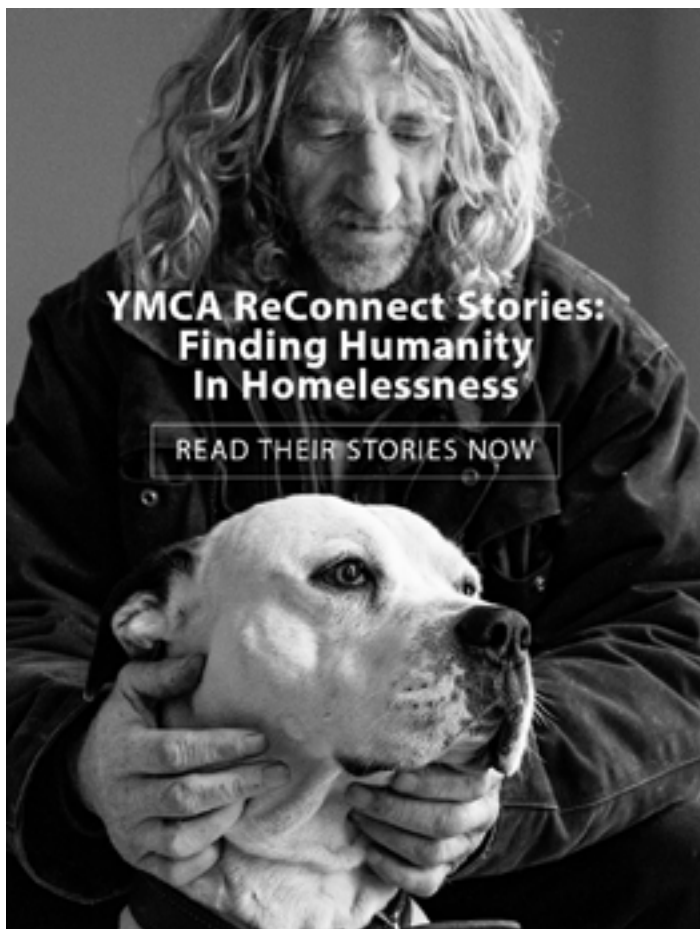
Visitors are encouraged to experience "Finding Humanity in Homelessness" firsthand at either of our YMCA locations, where the exhibition will be on display. For those unable to visit in person, the audio interviews are available for streaming [online](#).

Disclaimer: Mature Content — Please note that the audio interviews featured in this exhibition are intended for mature audiences and may contain explicit language and sensitive discussions related to substance use. Viewer discretion is advised.

Join us in embracing the power of storytelling to spark dialogue, empathy and action. Together, we can cultivate vibrant communities where everyone has the opportunity to shine.

About YMCA ReConnect Street Intervention Program

Established in 2001, the YMCA ReConnect Street Intervention Program has been steadfast in its mission to directly assist individuals facing or at risk of experiencing homelessness. With over two decades of service, the YMCA ReConnect program remains an integral part of the Moncton community. Its program extends critical street intervention and outreach services to youth, adults and seniors who are experiencing homeless or at imminent risk. ReConnect's dedicated and professional staff offer housed-focused services to decrease barriers to obtaining safe and appropriate housing. The program assist with obtaining government-issued identification, damage deposits, eviction prevention, resource navigation and much more.



The YMCA of Medicine Hat Announces Plans to Open Y Treasure Thrift Store

The YMCA of Medicine Hat is pleased to announce it will be extending its impact in the community with the opening of the Y Treasure Thrift Store! Located at 450 3rd Street SE in downtown Medicine Hat, this store will be a social enterprise that supports YMCA youth and employment programs, while also raising funds to reinvest back into the charity. Aligning with the YMCA's mission and strategic plan, Y Treasure Thrift Store will enhance existing YMCA programs while serving the community in new ways.

This location most recently housed The Post Thrift Store. Operated by the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) for over 44 years, The Post provided supported work opportunities for individuals experiencing mental health issues while generating revenue to fund CMHA's community programs. Although Y Treasure is a new store with a slightly different mandate, the YMCA is grateful for The Post's legacy in Medicine Hat and looks forward to ensuring the location remains a social enterprise in support of a community charity.

"We believe charitable thrift stores play a vital role in our community by providing options for low-cost merchandise, employment and volunteer opportunities, and diverting items from the landfill," says Sharon Hayward, CEO of the YMCA, "the YMCA will honor the legacy of CMHA staff and volunteers as the store evolves to support the programs and services of a different charity."

The YMCA expects to spend approximately 2 months preparing to open the store. Staff recruitment will begin shortly with positions posted at www.medicinehatymca.ca/job-postings. All applicants, including former CMHA employees, are welcome to apply. Volunteer opportunities will be shared once staff positions have been filled. A community donation drive is being planned to support the store opening in late May/early June. More details will be shared with the community once plans are finalized.

About YMCA of Medicine Hat

YMCA of Medicine Hat is a charity dedicated to building healthy communities. For more than 60 years, YMCA of Medicine Hat has been committed to nurturing the potential of children, youth and families, promoting healthy living and fostering belonging and connection within the community. This charitable organization offers programs and services that positively impact the entire community, including health/fitness/aquatics, employment services, child care, day camps and various youth and community programs.

UPDATES FROM ONTARIO

Community members from the Soo came out to show their support to keep YMCA doors open. A community campaign, an anonymous donor and the municipality came together and are working alongside the YMCA to build a future for the YMCA in Sault Ste. Marie.



The YMCA of Southwestern Ontario had a special visitor last month. Prime Minister Trudeau stopped by for a child care announcement hosted at the Stationview YMCA Child Care — an architecturally impressive child care in St. Thomas. The Prime Minister spent time touring the centre and meeting with staff, alongside other important Cabinet Ministers including the Deputy Prime Minister, Chrystia Freeland, Marci Ien — Minister of Women, Gender Equality and Youth and Jenna Sudds, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development. A very exciting day for the SWO team and our entire federation!

YMCAS IN AFRICA:

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES — VIRTUAL GATHERING OF THE WORLD FELLOWSHIP OF RETIREES (WFYR)



If you were unable to join us, here's the link to the May 30th session, [Click Here!](#)

Passcode: **D5dKi@h&**

UPDATE ON THE SAULT STE. MARIE YMCA

Gary Gray



Anonymous buyer steps forward to save the YMCA

Here is an article you will want to read! [Click Here!](#)



Hello, Fellow Alumni Members!



My name is Trudy Brydges and I'm a proud member of the Moncton, NB "Y" Alumni Hub.

My involvement with the YMCA has been life-long. My father was an active member of the Y in Moncton as he was growing up. I grew up hearing about the wonderful experiences he had. When I was finally old enough to join — 8-years-old in those days — I was so excited to join, and I have remained excited to this very day to be a member of the national Y Alumni group. It's been a lifelong association that has given me many firsts and life-changing experiences.

When I think back on my early days, my head and heart immediately go to camp. I'd never been camping before and that began my love for the Y camping programs. Later, during my junior high school years, I was a C.I.T. at the Moncton Y, then a full-fledged counsellor and, finally, during university, the Camp Director. In full disclosure, all of those years were at day camps but just as much fun and meaningful as residence camp. Later, as a staff member of the Fredericton Y, I was lucky enough to be Director of Camp Magaguadavic, a residence camp. As a side note, my 5-month-old daughter was strapped to my back the majority of the day as I went about my daily duties. This marked a first for her as she became a Y member years later and was a camp counsellor at the Fredericton Y. Are you beginning to see a pattern developing here?

As a member of the Leader Corps, the swim team and Hi-Y in Moncton, I experienced so many firsts that it's hard to highlight just a few. Instead, I'll sum up all those years and experiences by saying that during my impressionable and formative years, the foundation of the person I am today was created. The lessons I learned, the adult role models I was exposed to and the incredible experiences I was lucky enough to enjoy cannot be truly measured.

I was fortunate enough to meet and continue to know Bill Gerhardt, General Secretary at the Moncton Y, until his death in 2023 at the age of 91. I thanked Bill regularly for giving me all those firsts, which established my lasting commitment to the spirit of the YMCA. It was during those years that I decided I wanted to work for the Y as career.

My years at the University of New Brunswick (go Bombers!) were a stepping stone to my professional life. Upon graduation with my Phys. Ed. degree safely in my hands, I thanked Dr. John Meagher, Dean of the Phys.Ed. Faculty, for the incredible opportunities I had during my 4 years there, but, it was really the Y that taught me more about actual teaching, team work, goal setting and the joy of working with young people. Much to my surprise, he totally agreed with me. He knew the value of what I had learned as a young person at the Y. Again, I saw this as a first because it made me truly value what I was equipped to do in my future.

My first job right after graduation was at the Fredericton Y under the leadership of Ed Fox, who I had met at Geneva Park during a national Hi-Y conference in 1966. Under his influence and guidance, I continued to learn and grow. Despite having had many volunteer years under my belt, I faced many more firsts that have stayed with me to this day. Learning how to create a departmental budget and work within the limits had to be one of the scariest firsts in my professional life. But, that was countered by all the amazing people I had an opportunity to meet and work with. Those interactions added greatly to my further development as a proud member of an international organization.

I did leave temporarily for a few years to teach Phys. Ed. at the junior high level. During that time I coached several teams. I didn't enjoy that part of my job very much because of the times I had to post the list of who made the final cut. My Y background came through every time. That is, at the Y everyone gets to participate, to play on a team, to improve, to contribute, to become a leader, to enjoy and not be excluded. Let's say my teams didn't have the best winning records but they learned how to be gracious "non-winners" and how to enjoy a team experience!

I returned to the Fredericton Y again years later to job share a position with a fellow U.N.B. P.E. graduate. Here's where another first comes into play. Who ever heard of 2 professionals sharing 1 position, 1 salary, 1 office, etc. and eventually creating 2 full-time jobs? Well, that was me and my buddy.

Nevertheless, it was because of the work ethic I had learned over the years at the Y that it was just now a part of me. I saw what needed to be done to maintain the quality of Y programs expected by the community.

Now, let's jump ahead many years when I became involved with the national Y Alumni. I was honoured when Franco Savoia asked me to represent, on the executive, the informal Hub we had

formed at the Moncton Y of former staff members and volunteers. This group came about as a result of Bill Gerhardt's belief in staying connected to our Y friends. Franco has given me another opportunity to experience more firsts. The chance to work with more wonderful Y retirees has expanded my knowledge about associations across Canada that I would never have had. This has been valuable because it has reinforced my joy of being part of an incredible worldwide organization that strives to make the lives of its members better and purposeful. I've had the chance to re-connect with former colleagues and friends which has enriched my retirement years. That is something not all retirees are lucky enough to enjoy. Thank you, Franco, for this unexpected gift.

I wish I was a wordsmith like Hal Studholme, who we unfortunately lost recently, so I could have experienced all my feelings as well as he did in his poem, *Why The Y*, where he talks about the 3 things that touch our hearts as Y staff members. They are PEOPLE, SERVICE and COMRADESHIP.

Well, folks, you have officially been "Trudy-ed" meaning you have learned I talk too much and write too much. I have so much to say about how important the Y has been in my life. I never miss a chance to tell others about my pride and gratitude for being part of such a wonderful world wide association. I have used that phrase many times in my article for a reason because it has made me a better person, citizen and friend, I hope.

P.S. Oh, by the way, I met my future first and only husband, Bill, at the Moncton Y as he was a very active volunteer as well. We were married 40 years. There are several other couples in our Hub who grew up together at the Y on Highfield St. in Moncton.

P.P.S. Those who know me probably aren't surprised by my P.S. /P.P.S. notes even in an article for TieLines.

Trudy Brydges



© Scott Haldane

PEANUT

Written by our well-remembered friend, Hal Studholme

(Submitted to your editor the week before his passing)

No, not the nut that I gave up long ago when I nearly choked on one. Not the name I called my two-year-old daughter until she decided it wasn't really a compliment. No, this little tale is about a six-foot by ten-foot rock outcropping just off the shores of the main island of Camp Stephens.

We've always felt pride for the five islands that comprise Stephens.... Copeland, after the Y Secretary who lead the way to the YMCA becoming a coast-to-coast enterprise, Sir George, of course, Fleming, after a long-forgotten Y board member, Patton, after a much honoured General Secretary of the Winnipeg Y in the 1890s and early 1900s, and tiny Ball after the General Secretary of the Brandon Y in the same era. But perhaps, for its own unique uses and history, an equally-renowned island, "Peanut" must be included in this special ensemble.

Imagine this, you have just settled yourself for a good sleep when a brilliant light invades your closed eyelids and a loud voice from a bullhorn nearly causes deafness: "what in the hell do you two think you're doing out here?" My partner and I, he on the top bunk, me on the bottom, of a badly rusted steel frame double bunk had been warned that we might get a late night visit from a "friendly" Mountie or OPP Cruiser. And I suppose to a new officer of the law, it might appear strange to be confronted by one of the infamous pranks of the nearby YMCA camp.

I attempted an explanation. But, watching his eyes glaze over, I could tell he thought he was witnessing a bit of insanity inflicting two young men who were old enough to know better than to do such idiotic things. Sane people do not put a double bunk on a small rock, which was barely a few metres from the main boating channel and intend to sleep for the night. I tried to expand on my explanation by saying that this was a rite of passage for staff new to the camp (I was just entering my first season as Waterfront Director). As they say, "it cut no ice."

Peanut was also well known in some circles of older teens from the local city of Kenora. It was not unusual that, when the water levels were promising, some of the more prankster-oriented youth would make the seven mile run to camp, and, circling past Peanut, would make a swooping high speed turn and cast the wash from the boat to soak the bunk inhabitants. These "visits," however, did nothing to deter camp staff from a night under the stars on Peanut. And any who have been caught up in the legend and lure of a night out on the island will say to detractors, "don't condemn it until you've tried it." I waited until I was Camp Program Director and only then on the top bunk on a warm summer's night, basking in awe of the Milky Way, the gentle lapping of waves and the call of a loon. That tiny, wave-washed rock, Peanut, was Camp, too, and probably still is.

REMEMBERING OUR ALUMNI



Jacqueline Jenkins May 26, 2024

It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of Jacqueline "Jackie" Jenkins on Sunday, May 26th. She was the loving wife of Leon for 52 years. She was the most amazing mom to Jeramie and his wife Lorelei and "Nanny" to her much-loved grandchildren, Matisse (Mason), Jyllian, Jebediah, and Eliza Jane.

She will be missed by her sister, Marcelle Shayda, and husband, Mike. Jackie is predeceased by her father, Joe Leclerc, and mother, Adelaide Leclerc, who wait to greet her with all the love she deserves.

Jackie was an avid ball player from a young age in Oshawa, and later in the Orillia area, leading hundreds of games as a competitive pitcher. Jackie took up curling in Beaverton where she met and made lifelong friendships. She took up golf and began some of her favourite traditions: golf tournaments with the ladies up north, and golf trips with the Beaverton crew to the sunny south. Friends and laughter followed wherever she went.

She began her career in 1977 at YMCA Geneva Park on the eastern shore of Lake Couchiching. Starting as an Administrative Assistant, she eventually worked her way to become the General Manager of Geneva Park, until her retirement after 35 years. Her passion for the Park and its employees was always evident in the way she treated staff and guests with respect and compassion. She spoke so highly of her colleagues, many of whom became her closest friends.

Jackie took great joy in her grandchildren. "Nanny" was instrumental in helping to raise them as she always wanted them for sleepovers so she could spoil them silly. Even as her health waned in the last few months, her spirits rose when the grandkids were near.

Cremation has taken place. A private service for family will be held.

As an expression of sympathy, memorial donations may be made to the [Orillia Soldiers Memorial Hospital Foundation](#) or the [Sharing Place](#) through the Simcoe Funeral Home, 38 James Street E. Orillia. Messages of condolence are welcomed at www.simcoefuneralhome.ca



HAROLD (HAL) STUDHOLME

Nov. 15, 1938 – March 31, 2024

Hal died on Easter Sunday, March 31, 2024. Hal was born on November 15, 1938, and was 85 years old. Anyone who knows him will appreciate that he has left his own parting thoughts and words.

"This isn't done too often, but it's my farewell shot, so bear with me. In fact, I have rewritten it several times. All in all, I've had a pretty good run at life. There are not any guarantees on tenure. Yet, I've been blessed in so many ways. My parents, Norman and Pearl, and big brother, Bill, gave me a good start in life, most importantly signing me up at age eight at the YMCA. As a member for over 70 years and professional staff for 28 in the Winnipeg Association, the Y has always been a major part of my life, especially Camp Stephens and, before that, Camp Norval and the old Toronto West End YMCA. Other career stops included The University of Manitoba Recreation Studies program, the Society for Manitobans with Disabilities and Age and Opportunity. They were equally rewarding. Helping small social agencies in my brief consulting career was a gratifying way to close things out. Retirement brought years of enjoyment in Square and Round dancing and many hours serving at St. Alphonsus Church, and stabs at painting, furniture crafting, cartooning (apologies to those who were the brunt of my so-called whit) and writing. I also returned to the Y as a part-time desk clerk and loved being back in the old Downtown Y, seeing some of my old friends and making new ones. The young staff were very kind and listened to my stories of the good old days with patience and generosity. The two years I spent there were a grand experience. I must have done something right in those Y years as they awarded me with the treasured Fellowship of Honor in recognition of my work and service.

For 31 years, I shared the wonderful love, support and friendship with my first wife Josie who died in 1996 of Cancer. I later married Marilyn who was my partner and friend who passed in 2022 of Dementia. I thank God for every wonderful moment I shared with these two amazing women. They were truly a blessing.

A final goodbye and thank you to my beloved daughters, Lesley and husband Vic, Donna, Nancy and husband Gary, Terri and husband Bruce; and much cherished grandchildren, Jennifer, Allison, Michael, Sara, Hilary, Wyatt, Dylan and Shaye and great-grandchildren, Caitlyn, Emily, Amy, Jacob and Ozzy.

To Marilyn's family, son Mike and his daughter Athena, daughter Maureen and her children, Shalin, Alisha and Arya, thank you for accepting me into your lives. And a special note to Lori and her son, Stewart, Sandeep and the Nidderly families.

A final goodbye to my Y and Camp gang for their treasured friendship. To family, friends, and colleagues who made my life meaningful and rewarding, my thanks to you as well. You know who you are.

ADIEU

So, it has come to this, at last.
The journey I take on my own,
To light and a new life;
I hold that firm belief.
So, I leave you these ancient words,
The watchwords of my quest:
This is what God asks of you:
To love tenderly, To act justly
And to walk humble with your God" (Michah 6:8)

Wednesday, May 22, 2024, a gathering at the St. Alphonsus Church Hall, 241 Munroe Ave. at 12:00 noon welcomes friends of Hal to come and share stories, pictures and memories. Please feel free to share by leaving a picture, note or card about your memories or stories about Hal that will be put together in a book for the family. Those wishing to share memories with those attending will be given the opportunity to speak. The hall is best accessed off Donald Avenue from the church parking lot.

For those who would like to attend Mass, it will take place Wednesday, May 22, 2024, at 11:00 a.m., St Alphonsus Church, 315 Munroe Ave. Winnipeg.

No flowers please. For those who wish, donations can be made to YMCA/YWCA Camp Stephens in the Campership fund, so children can experience the life-changing joy of camp. Or, donations can be made to the Stepping Stone Project.

As published in Winnipeg Free Press on May 11, 2024,

A little extra gem to listen to:

Hal's Video. [Click here!](#)

Rick Paluk accompanied Hal with the music. The video was made at the end of June, 2022.



I want to hear from you! Comments please!

Each month, your editor and team works to pull together interesting stories and provide articles that you might enjoy reading. I am so very thankful to those who provide such thoughtful content for me to insert and share. I would be delighted to receive and share your thoughts on articles you read in our TieLines.

Please send along to me at dianadeakinthomas@gmail.com.

Thank You!

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Canadian YMCA Alumni
TieLines • Summer 2024

Photo credit: Diana Deakin-Thomas