

YMCA is a snap shot of our community

“YMCA – To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirits, mind and body for all.”

YMCA Mission Statement

Few organizations impact our Phoenixville community more than the YMCA. With its five branches (Upper Perkiomen; Pottstown; Audubon; Spring Valley; Phoenixville), our “Y” has 45,000 members, 2000 employees, 900 volunteers at 65 program sites and is the third (3rd) largest (of 79) in Pennsylvania.

With a humble beginning in England in 1844 and in the United States in Boston in 1851, the YMCA has grown into our country’s largest social service organization. The USA goal is to have 25 million members by 2012. Overseas, the YMCA can be found today in more than 135 countries.

Here are some rarely known facts about this amazing organization. Did you know that the YMCA invented basketball, volleyball and racquetball? It introduced day camping and started public libraries, night schools, English as a second language, the first indoor swimming pool and



THINK ABOUT IT

BY DR. DON MEYER VFCC

after school child-care. All is built on the core values of caring, honesty, respect, responsibility.

The Phoenixville YMCA was founded in 1952 and was first located on Bridge Street, then Main Street and in the late 1960s moved to its current site on Pothouse Road. Today over 1000 programs are offered each week.

Many people I know have made the YMCA a part of their daily regimen. Whether they start their day before sunrise or end their day into the evening, our Y contributes to their well-being and they often reference its value. Many of our

VFCC students find there a wonderful place of employment in close proximity to our campus. Often I see them getting in their cars as I walk to my office and when I ask them where they are going so many say “the Y because that is where I work.”

And now the YMCA is expanding again. According to Richard A. Kunsch, Sr., Honorary Chair, “We have embarked on a \$12 million capital campaign to address the re-birth of the Phoenixville branch, the expansion of the Spring Valley Branch, and the creation of a third full-service facility in the Audubon area. This will allow the YMCA to meet the increasing needs of our members and continue to strengthen the level of quality programs and services we have provided.”

Some months ago Jay Schaeffer, Executive Director, and some of his leadership team shared a session with the Phoenixville Regional Chamber of Commerce titled the “State of the YMCA.” Their passion for the mission of the YMCA and commitment to its fulfillment were inspiring to all of us.

In addition to much of the above information they also asked this trivia question regarding the Phoenixville YMCA, “Can you name an original program offered at the downtown Phoenixville site that we are unable to offer today?” The answer: woodworking.

When I think of our “Y,” I think of Helen Keller’s words, “I long to accomplish a great and noble task, but it is my chief duty to accomplish humble tasks as though they were great and noble. The world is moved along, not only by the mighty shoves of its heroes, but also by the aggregate of the tiny pushes of each honest worker.”

Just recently the realtors across the USA chose the top 100 cities to which they would recommend any one to relocate. The only one on that list from Pennsylvania was Phoenixville. Without a doubt, if the reasons for that choice were itemized, the Phoenixville YMCA would have to be on that list.



Our entire neighborhood has many reasons to be proud and grateful for the YMCA and the vital role it plays in making this a better place to live. We congratulate all who are a part of that wonderful organization.

What a great picture of our community.

Think about it.

Dr. Don Meyer is President of Valley Forge Christian College, Phoenixville, PA. Responses can be emailed to president@vfcc.edu.

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