

STAUNTON-AUGUSTA FAMILY YMCA NEWSLETTER

MAY 2024



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May is Older Americans Month. Read more about staying active as you age inside!



UPDATE ON OUR NEW HOPE ROAD BRANCH



The pavilion is equipped with multiple restrooms, a cooling room, water fountains and extra hand washing stations. It's a great space for many occasions.

The property at 575 New Hope Road will serve as headquarters for Summer Camp programming beginning summer 2024.



You can help us succeed by getting involved!

WE NEED VOLUNTEERS TO ASSIST WITH OUR CAPITAL CAMPAIGN!

Email Executive Director Josh Cole at josh@saymca.org or Associate Executive Director Candace Martin at candacemartin@saymca.org to find out how you can help.

THANK YOU TO THE INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS THAT HAVE HELPED US GET THIS FAR!

Moffett Paving & Excavating, Nielsen Builders, Inc., Lineage Architects, P.C., Balzer & Associates, Inc., SAYMCA Board Members, SAYMCA Trustees and staff.

YMCA TASK FORCE: Alison Denbigh, Jason Lackey, Julian Moffett, Maggie Ragon, Paul Vames, John Keene.

EARLY DONORS: The Houff Family Foundation, David Didawick & Family, Paul Vames, Billy Sowers, Julian Moffett & Family and several anonymous donors.



IMAGINE YOURSELF HERE!

What does the development of this property mean to our members?

- Outdoor ADA-accessible walking trail
- Classrooms for youth development initiatives
- Multipurpose indoor recreation building
- Pickleball courts
- 2 Multipurpose athletic fields

The goal of this project is to develop a green space playground for children and adults to discover the wonders of nature, connect with the outdoors, foster a love for sports and teamwork and learn to take care of our community.





the

YMCA

YOU'RE INVITED TO OUR ANNUAL GIVING CAMPAIGN KICKOFF EVENT!

Thursday June 6

5:00 - 8:00 PM

Gypsy Hill Park Bandstand

BRING THE WHOLE FAMILY FOR AN
EVENING OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
AND ENTERTAINMENT



the



MAY
6 - 9

NO JOINING FEE

HAVE YOU HEARD THE NEWS?

As reported recently in local media, the Waynesboro YMCA and the STAUNTON-AUGUSTA FAMILY YMCA, under the guidance of the YMCA of the USA, have entered into a formal management agreement. Working under this agreement, the YMCAs will maintain their autonomy while Josh Cole serves as the CEO of both independent YMCAs. The arrangement affords the leadership of the organizations the opportunity to explore the many and varied service, operational and collaborative options available to them going forward.

"I am confident that we can help each other better serve the people who live, learn, work and do business in Waynesboro, Staunton and throughout Augusta County," said Waynesboro YMCA Board Chair Dave Mirra.

In the months ahead, the volunteer and staff leadership of the two YMCAs will work cooperatively to evaluate operations and continue to explore collaborative programs, service and staffing options.

"The Staunton-Augusta YMCA Board and I are excited to be working with the Waynesboro team," said James Hall, Chief Volunteer Officer of the SAYMCA. "We believe that our Ys can be catalysts for positive change, broad collaboration and transformational impact across Augusta County."



In this photo, published in The Staunton News-Leader in September 1973, three students play in the Community Childcare Center garden.

CCC Provides Affordable Child Care for More Than 50 Years by Heather Cole

In January 1971, a survey by Mary Baldwin College discovered that there were nearly 700 preschool-aged children in Staunton in need of childcare. Demographic and cultural changes had contributed to this need: more women were working outside the home; more children were being raised in single-parent households; and fewer families had the support of extended family living nearby who could help care for children who were not yet old enough for formal schooling. There were three childcare centers in town, as well as several family- and church-based programs, but they were not able to provide space for all the children in need of care.

The dearth of childcare options was already on the radar of city officials and service organizations in town. In May 1969, the Staunton City Council set up an independent nonprofit organization to coordinate the work of social service organizations across the city. In addition to providing direct services in the form of job training, counseling, housing support and legal aid, the Community Coordinating Council appointed a Task Force to find a way to create new community-based childcare centers across town.

THE TASK AT HAND

Four local women - Elsie Chittum, Ruth Sproul, Loretta Clemmer and Jane Shields - were appointed

to the Task Force and set about establishing a childcare center that would provide what they described as "a well-balanced program of food, rest, companionship, play with other children and interesting and stimulating experiences under the supervision of understanding adults." The plan was to start with one childcare center, but eventually expand to satellite locations in other neighborhoods across town.

Of utmost importance to the Task Force was that the childcare be full-day and that it be affordable: the Mary Baldwin College survey revealed that 90 percent of the families surveyed could afford to pay just \$1-10 per week for care (the equivalent of \$8-80 today). With such limited ability for families to pay, it was clear from the beginning that external and community support would be needed.

NEW CENTER MEETS NEED

Community Childcare Center opened in August 1971 in the building it still occupies at 32 Park Boulevard in the West End of Staunton. Initially funded largely by donations and supported by the efforts of dozens of volunteers, CCC (as it was known) served an average of 24 children per day for the first few years. By 1979, CCC was serving 40 children per day, with another 35 on a waiting list.

The Early Years of Community Child Care

To provide “a well-balanced program of food, rest, companionship, play with other children and interesting and stimulating experiences under the supervision of understanding adults.”

- from the original purpose set forth by a childcare Task Force in 1969

In line with the mission to provide affordable childcare for the working parent, the center was open from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. and families paid on a sliding scale. The center was staffed by paid employees with experience in education or childcare, but college students, scouting troops, church groups and senior citizens all contributed time as teaching assistants, bus drivers and volunteers over the years. Individuals, organizations and local businesses also contributed thousands of dollars directly to CCC or through donations to the United Way that provided the funding needed for the center to continue to pay its bills.

The early years at CCC were not without their challenges, however. Staunton resident Rick Chittum, son of founder and long-time board member Elsie Chittum, says he remembers that the CCC board sometimes struggled to get the necessary funding because some potential donors believed that women should be staying home to care for their children, rather than working and seeking outside care for their children. CCC was progressive for its time in both supporting working women and in providing a racially integrated childcare experience for preschoolers in a period when that was not yet common in Staunton and across the South.

By 1974, demand for care for slightly older children led CCC to launch a kindergarten program in a building provided by First Presbyterian Church. In 1981, children were reunited in one space when CCC opened an addition to the Park Avenue building that doubled the number of students that they could serve. The \$180,000 renovation added a second playroom, a new kitchen, larger office space and utility rooms. The architect for the project was R. Tucker Shields and Wilmer M. Phillippe was the builder. Board members, parents and volunteers contributed by painting and installing fencing. Community members contributed toys, games, educational materials and books.

A COMMUNITY EFFORT

An article in The Staunton News-Leader in 1980 detailed the donations that had been made to the center including tricycles, toys, games, educational material and books. Director and former founding board member Jane Shields described how individual volunteers and groups from Stuart Hall School, Mary Baldwin College, the Central United Methodist Church, and even Virginia Tech assisted with everything from taking students on field trips to performing housekeeping duties.

“We couldn’t exist without volunteers,” Shields said in the article. “The work of the community undergirds the center, and it is vitally important for us to have this interest.”

Photographs of CCC students in the 1970s and early 1980s show them engaged in art projects, reading books and playing outside. The Staunton News-Leader periodically covered stories of fundraisers for CCC and students participating in community events and other activities.



In this photo, published in The Staunton News-Leader in April 1973, CCC teacher Audrey Watson helps two students select art to submit to a local competition.



On April 18, students in Shelburne Middle School teacher Jenna Bennett's 7th-grade fitness class took a field trip to visit our facility. "They earned this trip as a reward for their hard work over the semester," Bennett explained. SAYMCA staff led the students through a variety of activities including gaga ball, volleyball, dodgeball, basketball and swimming. "Now they get to see what a real gym is like!" Bennett said with a grin.



Group fitness instructor and Personal Trainer Peggy Smith is no stranger to AVIVA Baldwin Park. She has been leading PACE classes on site to residents for 18 years. "I enjoy meeting people, getting to know them and how they respond to others and the exercises," Smith said. Smith is a versatile instructor who also has her certification in Aquatic Personal Training. She has supported SAYMCA members as they transition from living independently to needing more assistance. Smith continues to rehabilitate from knee replacement surgery in January, but she couldn't stay away for long. She is truly dedicated to the health of our community.



Associate Executive Director Candace Martin and volunteer Tina Simmons received an award at the Salvation Army Annual Appreciation Luncheon on April 29 for "Most Creative Bell Ringing." Every year the Y recruits bell ringers to assist in raising funds for the Salvation Army. Tina and friend Kay Howard dressed as The Grinch and Mrs. Grinch while volunteering. "I knew they would make it fun," said Rhonda Shinaberry, a friend and member of the Salvation Army Advisory Board. You may have seen the cover of our December 2023 newsletter featuring youth from our our Afterschool Adventure Club ringing the bell at Food Lion. Childcare Program Director Andrea Ryder and Full-Day Coordinator Fauve D'orvilliers were also in attendance. SAYMCA bell ringers raised more than \$2,300 last year.

Tips For Taking Care Of Your MENTAL HEALTH



Talk To Someone You Trust



Take Care Of Your Physical Health




Do Activities That You Enjoy




Take Two Minutes To Focus On
The World Around You



Tell Yourself That Everything
Will Be Fine



Mental health awareness helps reduce stigma, promotes empathy, and encourages open conversations about mental health concerns.



Mother/Daughter Duo Share A Commitment to Family and Healthy Living

By Chris Lassiter

On any given morning, Kristen Rupert and Gretchen Schindler may be 10 yards apart.

When Rupert enters the STAUNTON-AUGUSTA FAMILY YMCA, she immediately heads toward the pickleball games in the gym. Just through the large glass window, Rupert can see Schindler exhausting herself on a treadmill in the YMCA's Wellness Center.

The mother, Rupert, and daughter, Schindler, have always had a close relationship. Through the YMCA, the two lifelong members spend their mornings in equally close physical proximity.

"It's a family affair," Schindler said. "I walk in, in the morning, and my twins want to go see their grandmother."

For Rupert, family and pickleball is not a bad way to start the day.

"It is kind of funny. My daughter probably never thought she'd see me every day," Rupert said. "But it's a really good thing to do."

A simple invitation to the YMCA completely changed the trajectory of Rupert's fitness journey.

"A friend invited me to come do aerobics with her," Rupert said. "I said, 'Alright, why not?' They had babysitting, so I could go. I loved it. I went all the time, until I became an instructor for 14 years."

Schindler went from being the child dropped off for YMCA childcare to now dropping her own children off with the SAYMCA playroom staff.

Schindler was a standout volleyball player at Robert E. Lee High School (now Staunton High School), and then a Division I volleyball player at East Tennessee State University.

"I remember being a little girl when this was the Racquet Club," Schindler said. "I think I've seen every renovation of this building in all of its phases. I've been a lifelong member. Even in college, I would come back here and do workouts. I used to do aerobics classes. I remember being trained on the Nautilus equipment and weights when I was in middle school and the beginning of high school.

"It helped me be an athlete and helped me in so many ways. It still continues to help me and my family. We love it."

Rupert convinced the friend who urged her to try aerobics to try pickleball with her. Now Rupert is hooked on the sport.

"We're just going to show up and say, 'Can we play?' And we did," said Rupert, explaining how she



learned the sport. "We were not very good to start with, but we learned. And these people are very nice.

"I've met so many people - you would not believe - just playing pickleball. I thought I knew so many people in Staunton until I came here to play. It's a whole new group of friends. It really is, and we do things outside of pickleball, like a game night."

When Schindler says the YMCA is a family affair, she's being quite literal.

"My mother-in-law is also in here playing [pickleball]," she said. "My dad is here working out. He calls me his gym buddy. We've always been like that. We go in. We do our workout, come out and get my kids, and then we go about our day. It's like that almost every single day."

The connections don't stop with immediate family members. Wellness Center staff and pickleball enthusiast Robert Stuart remembers coaching Schindler as a student. "She's a rarity," he says while she sprints on the treadmill, "You wouldn't know she has four kids."

Personal trainer, Rock Steady Boxing Coach and Group Fitness Instructor Avis Henderson chimes in, "I taught her [Schindler's] husband."

As a former athlete, it's just as important for Schindler to model an active lifestyle for her kids as it is to stay healthy herself.

It's a lesson she passes on from her parents.

"It's super important to me as a mother of four - especially three daughters - for them to see that you get one body, and you've got to keep it healthy," Schindler said. "It's about every aspect of being active, taking care of yourself, and being strong. That's a huge, huge thing for me. I want my kids to grow up how I grew up, with my mother showing me that."

Making a Change, One Kid at a Time

By Caleb King

Eddie Santiago is an integral part of the STAUNTON-AUGUSTA FAMILY YMCA family and always makes a profound impression on those who have the pleasure to meet him.

Hired by the YMCA seven years ago, Santiago has risen to the position of Youth Development Program Director and is flourishing in the role. He was recently recognized for his contribution to local youth when he received a prestigious Dawbarn Education Award from the Community Foundation of the Central Blue Ridge. Recipients are chosen annually for going above and beyond their formal job responsibilities to make a real and lasting impact on the lives of students in Augusta County, Staunton and Waynesboro. Santiago regards the recognition as one of his proudest moments during his tenure at the YMCA.

Jacob Miller, a SAYMCA teen, gave his perspective when asked about the news of Santiago's award: "He deserves it, he's very helpful and he's even gotten me shoes because mine were falling apart" Miller remarked. "He's got all that energy, you can tell he wants to be here."

Santiago's enthusiasm for working with youth extends back to when he was just a teenager himself. He was an active participant in the Boys and Girls Club by age 16 as a summer camp counselor.

"It was really cool, [having] kids calling me Mr. Eddie at 16," he reflected.

He credits his participation in the organization for guiding him away from troublesome activities he might have otherwise been involved in as a youth.

Santiago got his introduction to the YMCA as a Boys and Girls Club leader. He regularly brought kids to swim in the facility, which led to him to participate in Saturday Night Madness events. Noticing his skill and rapport with students, Executive Director Josh Cole approached him with a job offer. Santiago feels like he is just hitting his stride in his career and hopes that he'll remain at the Y until retirement.

That doesn't mean he is complacent about the future of youth programming; he is always looking for areas to improve. When asked about long-term goals for the Teen Center, he was quick to mention the possibility of having a larger space with more options for growth.

"I'd love to have a bigger Teen Center with more to offer, with classrooms, with trampolines, and maybe



even a bowling alley in the basement or something," he said. "Just like a fun factory where they can have classrooms and learn as well."

Although his plans may be idealistic, some are partially coming to fruition through the creation of the new Youth Development Center at 575 New Hope Road that will include a variety of fields and spaces not currently available at the YMCA.

Building on the excitement of future possibilities, Santiago also possesses a keen ability to foster enthusiasm among "his kids" toward current programs. The involvement of teens in the Rally for the Y bike competition - a nationwide tournament held annually amongst YMCAs - is a perfect example. Despite an initial lack of interest, Santiago was quick to highlight the interactive games on Blue Goji Espresso bikes and convince students of the physical and mental health benefits. As a result of his persuasion, several teens combined to ride hundreds of miles that were crucial to our repeat victory.

Santiago's advice for individuals interested in working with youth he emphasized can be summed up in one word: Invest.

"Invest in the kids and make an impact," he said. "One kid at a time, you make that impact - you build that trust, and build that relationship."

YOUTH PROGRAMS

TEE BALL COACHES NEEDED

Pickup a volunteer application and background check at the front desk!

YOUTH TENNIS

With Chris Stambaugh

Early Hitters

Will teach the basics of tennis for ages 5-8. Must pre-register at the front desk.

May/June Session:

Tuesdays, May 21 - June 11 | 5:30-6:30 PM

OR

Thursdays, May 23 - June 13 | 5:30-6:30 PM

Pre-Teen Tennis

Will teach your pre-teen intermediate tennis skills. Must pre-register at the front desk.

May/June Session:

Wednesdays, May 22 - June 12 | 5:30-6:30 PM

Fees:

\$65 Members per session

\$80 Non-members per session

High School Tennis

This will get your high schooler prepared for high school tennis. Must pre-register at the front desk.

May/June Session:

Wednesdays, May 22 - June 12 | 6:30-8:00 PM

Fees:

\$75 Members per session

\$90 Non-members per session

Private Tennis Lessons

1 HR: \$60 Members / \$75 Non-members

30 MIN: \$35 Members / \$60 Non-members

Semi-Private Lessons

Per person

\$38 Members / \$55 Non-Members

*If siblings, second person receives 10% off

YOUTH EQUIPMENT ORIENTATION

Ages 12-14

Fees: \$25 Members for four classes. Sign up at front desk

PROGRAM DIRECTOR CONTACT:

Windsor Vaughn | windsor@saymca.org |

540-885-8089

YOUTH BOXING

Want to try something new? Boxing gives youth an opportunity to stay active through the summer. REGISTRATION OPENS MAY 13

THURSDAYS: 6:00 - 7:00 PM

June 13 - July 25

No class July 4

AGES: 14 - 20 YEARS

Fees:

\$45 Members per session

\$60 Non-members per session

Youth Volunteer Corps

YVC is a free program for youth ages 11 - 18. Together we discover and provide fun community service projects in the Staunton and Augusta County area.

For more info find us on Facebook:

Youth Volunteer Corps - Staunton, Va.

or visit yvc.org

Contact Stephanie Mason at saymca@yvc.org with any questions.



YOUTH VOLLEYBALL CAMP

Does your child want to work on their volleyball skills in a fun and positive environment? This camp will offer them the opportunity to work with the coaches and students of the Staunton H.S. Varsity team. For beginners.

REGISTRATION OPENS APRIL 15

4:00 - 6:00 PM

June 26, 27, 28

AGES: 8 - 11 YEARS

Fees:

\$45 Members per session

\$60 Non-members per session

The price includes a T-shirt!



Did you know siblings receive a 10% discount after the first child enrolls in a program?



The Club at Ironwood Pool Membership

STAUNTON-AUGUSTA FAMILY YMCA

What it includes:

When purchasing a **Club at Ironwood** membership, you will have access to the Volleyball Court, Tennis Court, Pickleball Courts and the Pool. You will also be able to purchase food and drinks from the Cabana next to the Pool. No outside food or drinks permitted.

Dates and hours:

Season **starts** May 25, 2024

Season **ends** September 2, 2024

Hours of operation are
11:00 AM - 7:00 PM daily.

Registration opens April 15 at 9:00 AM

Membership Prices:

YMCA Members:

\$430 Family Membership

\$330 Single Membership

Non-member:

\$580 Family Membership

\$455 Single Membership

Got questions?

Contact Aquatics Director Beth
Valentine at beth@saymca.org



Bruce Blair leads the SAYMCA Afterschool Adventure Club through a project that helps teach awareness, how to appreciate everyone's unique gifts and emotional regulation.

Serving the Community's Mental Health Needs

By Bruce Blair

"If only" is a phrase we hear too often in mental health. If only we knew what was going on. If only they knew they weren't alone. If only we had recognized the signs. If only we had access to treatment. If only.

Unfortunately, the conversation tends to be short and after tragedy has already struck – suicide, homelessness, unemployment and incarceration.

As I sat in a room full of teenagers and listened to how so many youths have been affected by the death of a friend or classmate by suicide, I could no longer ignore the data that was staring us in the face. The data said that youth mental health challenges and substance misuse were at an all-time high. Locally, the data was often more extreme than the national averages. I knew Mental Health America of Augusta (MHA-A) needed to change.

We needed to be willing to reach the most vulnerable. Therefore, MHA-A is committed to investing in youth, veterans, the homeless and families to help our community fight the mental health crisis.

Fortunately, we know how to act early. Studies around the country prove over and over again that we are able to prevent or mitigate the effects of mental illness and allow individuals to live fulfilling, productive lives in the community, "if only" we are willing to provide them with the tools to be successful. We must be willing to provide HOPE.

STARTING WITH COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Knowing that change needs to take place is one thing,

but as a small organization, implementing that change can be overwhelming. Yet, as the former Senior Program Director at the SAYMCA, I knew the SAYMCA viewed the community the same way I did in many ways. The Y understood how partnerships help to ultimately understand the current issues and foresee the future needs of the people and communities and allow us to tackle the challenges together. And that's what our community has done.

YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

To make measurable change we had to stop waiting until a crisis occurred. We needed to switch to a more proactive approach that focuses on prevention. Therefore, in June 2022, with the support of the SAYMCA, MHA-A launched the I.C. Hope program at their summer camps.

I.C. Hope is an evidence-based program that focuses on prevention-based educational and interactive presentations for youth pre-K to 12th grade. It's designed to eliminate mental health stigmas and develop coping skills for mental health issues such as bullying, self-esteem, risky decisions, substance use and depression. I.C. Hope is taught through hands-on learning and activity based format that allows youth to engage with one another to learn how to work through their emotions.

With the support of the SAYMCA, the I.C. Hope program is now delivered at 20 different community locations to address the needs of our youth all across our community.

In addition to the I.C. Hope program, MHA-A has partnered with Love: No Ego (LNE) to deliver the Courage to Be You program. LNE and MHA-A provide mentorship programming that includes adventurous mountain hikes, trail walking and running, meditations in nature, nature journaling and hammocking to name a few. By fostering a connection with their intuitive selves through nature, we empower participants to build a resilient foundation that can withstand the external pressures and challenges of our ego-driven world. This approach addresses both immediate needs and proactively prevents mental health struggles from taking root as we strive to build a foundation that is not easily shaken.

SERVING THOSE WHO FIRST SERVED US

They are the men and women who served our country. The ones who made many sacrifices for you and me to experience the freedoms we have today. Yet almost 30 percent of veterans report a diagnosis of at least one mental health disorder following their return to civilian life, and only about half of all veterans who need mental health care ever receive it. With this staggering statistic, MHA-A knew we had to play a role in facilitating partnerships with organizations that serve veterans.

Therefore, a partnership with Valley Community Service Board and MHA-A board member Leah Hale began. Our two organizations provide weekly veteran brunches at Embrace Community Center to help connect veterans, active military and their families with vital community services and resources every single week.

Multiple times a year, the two organizations partner to host a Veteran Feed and Connect event that brings community organizations and vendors and veterans together to connect over food, camaraderie and resources.



A weekly Veterans Brunch is held every Friday from 10:30 AM - 12 PM at the Embrace Community Center in Waynesboro.

PROVIDING HOPE TO THE HOMELESS

A major need in our community has been providing for the needs of the locally unhoused population. MHA-A can assist in providing resources for individuals facing homelessness, but we wanted to do more. Every Friday we provide HOPE through mental health coaching services.

A mental health coach offers a beacon of light amidst the turmoil and uncertainty that often accompanies homelessness. Coaches provide practical support such as coping strategies and resources for managing mental health challenges, but they also provide a safe space for people to express their feelings and fears without judgement. Through empathetic listening and personalized guidance, a mental health coach instills a sense of optimism and resilience in those they work with. Through these relationships, participants are able to recognize their strengths and identify their potential for growth. By fostering a supportive environment and empowering individuals to prioritize their mental well-being, the mental health coach plays a vital role in restoring hope and dignity to the lives of the residents at the Valley Mission, reminding them that their struggles do not define their worth.

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

Navigating mental health challenges often feels isolating, but it is crucial to remember that you are not alone in your journey. Countless individuals around the world face similar struggles and triumphs and there is a vast network of support available to you. Whether it's friends, family, mental health professionals or support groups, there are people who understand what you're going through and are ready to offer guidance, empathy and encouragement. Sharing your experiences with others can help break down the walls of isolation, fostering connections and creating a sense of belonging. Additionally, seeking professional help can provide valuable insights, coping strategies and personalized support tailored to your needs. Remember, reaching out for help is not a sign of weakness but a courageous step toward healing and growth. Together, we can navigate the ups and downs of the mental health journey, offering each other strength, understanding and HOPE along the way.

Bruce Blair is Executive Director of Mental Health America of Augusta. For more resources go to mha-augusta.org.



Senior YMCA Members Stress Significance of Regular Exercise

By Dawn Medley

It was an uncharacteristic move. But Vera Flint was buoyed by years of life experiences and wisdom. Ninety years, to be exact.

Shortly after celebrating her milestone birthday at the STAUNTON-AUGUSTA FAMILY YMCA – surrounded by nearly as many family, friends, and staff members as the years she had logged – Flint approached Y executives about offering a discounted fee for members, like herself, who have reached 90.

Eleven SAYMCA members currently benefit from the discounted rate. At just under \$20 per month, it's about 40 percent of the cost for an individual adult member.

"Attending classes at the Y brought structure to her week, and definitely something she looked forward to," explained Flint's daughter and Y member, Ruth Chodrow.

It was also a "point of pride" that she could walk into and out of the building without assistance or a walker, usually to participate in water aerobics or lift weights.

"What I noticed – especially with the water aerobics class – it became about more than just the exercise; it was its own little social club," Chodrow said.

Although Flint has been sidelined since late 2023 due to a fall and health challenges, she stays connected to the Y through Active Older Adults Coordinator Carol Byrd and her workout friends.

"She was thrilled when they were on board with her idea ... and continued going to the Y three times a week until recently," Byrd added. "That's where her 'people' are."

Senior Memberships Support YMCA

Nationally, about 20 percent of YMCA members are 55 or older. This is mirrored at the SAYMCA, which counts 20 percent of its patrons as seniors (age 60 and older). The organization is perpetually evaluating how to best serve the older population, said Candace Martin, Associate Executive Director.

However, seniors continue to be the only membership segment in Staunton that has not returned to its pre-pandemic level, according to Executive Director Josh Cole. Building on the success of their established older participants, Martin and Cole work side-by-side to find ways to encourage more to come back.

In addition to preserving a lower monthly fee – the individual senior rate is \$9 less than the charge for individuals 59 and younger – Martin said that she reminds people that financial aid and scholarships are also available for older adults.

"We continue to be committed to offering classes that are specifically designed for seniors [although not limited to participants 60 and older], such as PACE, Gentle AquaFit and Fit for Life," Martin added.

Extracurricular activities like weekly Bible Study, the Y Not Sing? Singers and nutrition workshops also keep seniors engaged, she said. Whenever she can, Martin also explains to older individuals that they may find it more comfortable to navigate the facility during off-peak hours.

Actively engaged in aging

Flint's story of maintaining a vibrant Y membership later in life is one that resonates with many local

seniors, whether they joined as children, or became members only recently.

"I don't want to be a couch potato ... I want to stay mobile as long as I can," said Sarah Boney, 80, who is at the Y with her husband each weekday when the front doors open at 5:30 a.m.



The Boneys, Sarah, 80, and Harry, 90, often enter the Y hand-in-hand to start their daily workouts

Pandemic closures and surgery recovery have interrupted the Boneys' workout routine in recent years, but they have been driven to get back on track as soon as possible.

"We enjoy our time here, and the people we have gotten to know," said Harry Boney, 90.

The couple wed in 1995, a few years after both of them lost their spouses, and they have been Y members independently since their youth.

The pair adopted their current early-morning schedule to complement Sarah's rehabilitation after back and neck surgery in late 2022. Harry arrives with her pool noodle in hand, which he passes off as she turns right to go to the water, and he makes his way to the indoor track. After about an hour, they reconvene in the lobby, often catching up on news and activities from Byrd before heading home for coffee and breakfast.

The Boneys' primary motivators are nine grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren and a love of world travel.

"Staying active makes it possible for us to keep traveling - and we'll do that as long as we're able," Sarah said.

When asked where they have visited, Harry responded, "Everywhere!" Among the dozens of countries included in his reply are Iceland, Australia, New Zealand, China, Italy, Norway, Ireland, France, Hungary and Switzerland.

YMCA Membership Nationally

3.4 Million Members 55+

2.2 Million Members 65+



Membership at The STAUNTON - AUGUSTA FAMILY YMCA

20% of our members are 60+

11 of our Members are 90+

Age is how you treat yourself'

Longtime member Robert Stuart, 65, can't imagine his life without the YMCA.

Cancer treatment. Multiple basketball coaching jobs. Twelve-hour overnight shifts at work. Retirement. The Y has been a constant presence, a refuge and a reason for Stuart.

"Age, to me, is how you treat yourself," said Stuart. After decades of playing basketball and working out at SAYMCA locations downtown, on Tams



Robert Stuart, 65, regularly plays pickleball in addition to weight lifting and using cardio

Street, and now on North Coalter, he recently became an employee.

"I was here so much anyway, I figured I might as well have a position," quipped Stuart, who works in the Wellness Center Wednesday through Friday mornings. "I did a little bit of everything ... treadmill, weight lifting, pickleball, you name it."

A lifelong fitness advocate, Stuart is clearly enjoying his semi-retired rhythm, which includes a quick transition into working out after his morning shift, and additional sessions on his days off.

"I honestly feel like I'm living my best life," he said. "I believe what God said that 'my latter should be greater,' and I'm doing my part to get to the 'greater.'"

Stuart hopes that maintaining his fitness will enable him to travel the world with his wife - also a coach - leading basketball camps and motivating the next generation of players. His naturally extroverted personality and desire to shape the community have also led him to consider a run for Staunton City Council in the near future.

"I love being around people, sharing my story, listening to their stories. I feel like I'm right where I am meant to be," he added.

"I'm inspired by watching the people who are older than me putting in the work at the Y. They don't complain or make excuses. We are at the point where we know there isn't time to waste on that; we do the work because we know that there are so many benefits when we do."

Functional Fitness for Life

Increasing one's ability to perform the activities involved in daily living - also known as functional fitness - is important for people of all ages, and it is even more critical as we grow older. Defined as "specific movements and specific patterns to enable more efficient movement," the following exercises form the foundation for a functional fitness routine.

Exercise Actions/Activities Supported

Squat Picking up objects dropped on the floor; lifting objects

Lunge Walking; climbing stairs; maintaining balance

Push-up Pushing; breaking a fall; tasks requiring upper body strength

Standing Row Pulling; lifting; carrying; opening doors and drawers

Hinge Walking or running uphill; unloading the dishwasher; raking or shoveling; lifting a small child

Rotation (using band) Walking; running; crouching; stepping into a bathtub; putting on pants

Walking General mobility; getting from door to car; moving around at home and elsewhere

- Adapted from ageility.com

Functional Strength Training For Active Older Adults

By Eleanor Rixey

Functional Strength training is an important component to any fitness regimen. It involves compound, multi-joint movements that simulate Activities of Daily Living, and it is particularly important for active older adults wishing to preserve function and maintain independence. The other key element to this style of training is core strength and stabilization. As members who attend my classes have heard me say before, the core is everything.

Walking

Walking is such an important exercise for everyone but especially seniors. When you walk you are engaging in balance, strength and mobility training. If you are not currently active begin with five to ten minutes a day. If balance, coordination or fatigue are a concern utilize the Nu-Step machines that are in our Wellness Center. Slowly progress aiming for 250-300 minutes a week of mild to moderate intensity. That breaks down to 30-45 minutes a day, seven days a week.

Squats or Sit to Stands

Squats or Sit to Stands are one of my favorite functional strength training exercises. Every time you sit down and stand back up you are performing a squat. Remember as you squat keep your gaze looking straight ahead, keep your chest lifted and do not bend at the waist, your weight should be balanced through the ball of your feet and into the heels and the knees should not go passed your toes.

To perform a sit to stand pick a sturdy chair or a bench that is high enough that you can sit without "falling" and stand back up without needing to rock.

Push Ups

Push ups can be done standing at the wall, on an incline at a bench or on the floor. If you are new to this exercise begin with the standing variation. Make sure you keep your elbows in at your sides and your hands should be in line with your chest. Lower yourself slowly, feel your shoulder blades come together and then push up with control. Are you still engaging your core? You should be!

Lunges or Step Ups

Lunges are a versatile leg strengthening exercise. They can be done many different ways. I recommend that my seniors begin by lunging forward while paying attention to the alignment of their knees. The knee should be over the ankle while stepping forward from the hip. Perform this motion with control without "collapsing." This can also be done while holding onto a chair at your side if balance is an issue.

If lunges aren't a good option you can use a low step to help strengthen your legs. If you have stairs in your house you can use those as well. We have a variety of steps in our Wellness Center. Pick the

lowest one to start with, just a few inches off the floor. Step up while standing tall and gaze forward. Use the pattern Up, Up, Down, Down as one rep.

Standing Row

For this exercise you will need a set of light dumbbells and a chair if balance is a concern. Stand with your right foot in front so your feet are in a staggered position. Hinge forward slightly and extend your left arm until it is hanging straight down like you are reaching for your foot. If you are using a chair, place your right hand on the back so that you have extra support while hinging forward. Engage your core muscles so that your torso is supported. Initiate a pulling movement like you are starting a lawn mower by first bringing your shoulder blade toward the center of your back. The arm follows the movement with the elbow bending so that the dumbbell is in front of your hip. Slowly release the shoulder blade so that the arm straightens to the starting position. Perform all of your reps on this side and then switch to the other side.

Planks

I love planks. They are at the very foundation of all of my classes and training sessions. When done properly they are a full body strengthening exercise. There are many ways to modify a plank to suit any level. I often have people begin by standing at the wall. Place your hands on the wall so that your shoulders, elbows and wrists are aligned. Practice good alignment of the pelvis by tucking your tailbone under and "zipping up" the lower abdominal muscles. This will activate your glutes and legs. Even though you are standing this position should feel very active like you are the only thing holding that wall up.

When you feel ready to progress, try these at an incline before going fully horizontal. You can put your hands on a sturdy chair or bench so that you are still slightly elevated. Practice good form, and engage your core so you are supporting your own body weight.

Begin with one set of 8 - 10 reps of each exercise variation two days a week. Slowly progress to three days a week. Start with one set of each move. Slowly increase the number of sets you are performing over a period of three-to-eight weeks. Listen to your body. If a doctor or physical therapist has told you to avoid any of these moves, please abide by that recommendation. Never "push through" a painful sensation. Stop if something hurts or doesn't feel right and give your body time to adapt to these new demands you are putting on it.

Eleanor Rixey is an ACSM certified personal trainer and AFPA certified Group Fitness Instructor. You can reach her at eleanor@saymca.org.

LAND and WATER GROUP FITNESS

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
AQUAFIT 1 9-9:55 AM Peggy No Class (27)	AQUA YOGA 9-9:55 AM Karen	AQUAFIT 1 9-9:55 AM Peggy	AQUA YOGA 9-9:55 AM Karen	AQUAFIT 1 9-9:55 AM Julie
AQUAFIT 2 10-10:55 AM Julie No Class (27)	SPLASHBURNER 10-10:55 AM Karen	AQUAFIT 2 10-10:55 AM Julie Peggy (15)	SPLASHBURNER 10-10:55 AM Karen	AQUAFIT 2 10-10:55 AM Julie
GENTLE AQUAFIT 11:15AM - 12PM No Classes for the month of May	AQUA YOGA 11-11:55 AM Karen	GENTLE AQUAFIT 11:15AM - 12PM Carol	AQUA YOGA 11-11:55 AM Karen	GENTLE AQUAFIT 11:15AM - 12PM Carol
SPLASHBURNER 6:05 - 7 PM Karen No Class (27)	NOW HIRING!!	SPLASHBURNER 6:05 - 7 PM Karen	CERTIFIED AQUATIC G.F. INSTRUCTORS!!	SPLASHBURNER 6:05 - 7 PM Jenn



GROUP FITNESS CLASSES IN THE CARDIO/STRENGTH STUDIO

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Arms & Core | Lift & Pump |
| Bums & Tums (BB Court) | Senior Fitness |
| Barre | Step |
| Fit 4 Life (BB Court) | Strength |
| Full Body Fusion (BB Court) | Tabata |
| | Zumba |

**Cycling classes available in the Cycling Studio
Mondays and Wednesdays at 6 PM**

GROUP FITNESS CLASSES IN THE MIND-BODY STUDIO

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| Adaptive Yoga | Tai Chi Chu'an |
| Chair Yoga | Vinyasa Yoga |
| Gentle Flow Yoga | Pilates |
| Men's Yoga | |
| PACE | |
| Wall Yoga (Racquetball Court) | |



ADULT POWERLIFTING CLUB

500 LB, 750 LB, 1000 LB, 1250 LB

Adult members can apply to join by signing up at the Wellness Center kiosk. Find your cumulative combined weight of 1 rep max Bench Press, 1 rep max Back Squat and 1 rep max Deadlift while following the rules and regulations. Applicants **MUST** be 18 or older. Upon completion of the challenge you will receive a shirt and your name will be displayed in our Wellness Center. Contact Healthy Living Coordinator Krystal Clark at krystal@saymca.org with any questions.

Fees: \$25 Members Only



WOMEN'S BOXING

Tuesdays 6 - 7:15 PM

May 14 - June 18

Fees:

\$60 Members

\$75 Non-members

Bring gloves or purchase ours.

****Don't wait! This class fills up fast!****



CPR CLASS

Thursday, May 16
4 - 9 PM

Fees:

\$75 Members

\$85 Non-members



**FREE Weight Room
Equipment Orientation to
anyone ages 15 and up!**

ONCOLOGY YOGA

This ongoing one-of-a-kind program is designed for cancer survivors and those still undergoing treatment for any form of cancer. This gentle program is being taught by Melissa Anderson Morgan is a certified **yoga4cancer** teacher. Stop by the front desk to pick up a brochure or register.

Tuesdays at 4:20 PM in the Mind/Body Studio
Each session begins the first week of the month

Fees:

\$25 Members per month

\$40 Non-members per month

****Remember to bring a yoga mat****

ROCK STEADY BOXING

RSB enables people with Parkinson's disease to delay the onset of the symptoms through a non-contact boxing style of fitness. This method has been proven to improve participants' quality of life and sense of efficacy and self-worth. RSB provides encouragement through a "tough love" approach, inspiring maximum effort, speed, strength, balance and flexibility.

Registration is ongoing and available at the front desk. Pick up a brochure today!

Fees:

\$50 Members per month

\$60 Non-members per month

ADULT PROGRAMS

REFORMER TRAINING

with Sheree Kiser

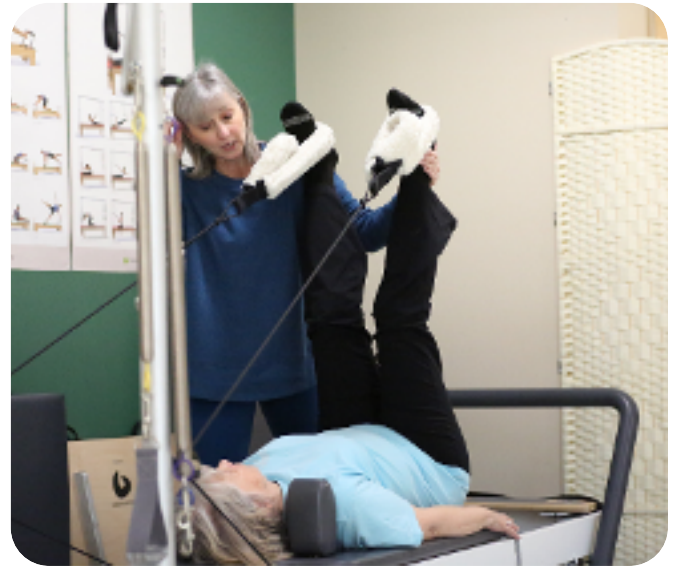
Looking for a full-body workout that targets large and small muscle groups? Build strength and tone muscles while improving range of motion. The reformer provides a low impact and non-weight-bearing strength training experience because of the resistance provided by the ropes and springs.

Improve your core strength and posture!

Reduce stress and improve mental health!

\$40 an hour or \$30 for 30 minutes

Pick up an application at the front desk!



DANCE FOR PARKINSONS

Monthly program that meets

Select Tuesdays at 10:00 AM

May dates: 7 & 21

Drop in fee:

Members: \$10/ Non-members \$15

Pickup intake form at front desk and complete prior to registration



RE:DESIGNING NUTRITION PROGRAM

PACKAGE A:

Food Diary
Review

OR

PACKAGE B:

Full Nutrition
Work-Up

Sign up at
the Front
Desk Today!!

Upcoming Spring/Summer Programs!



NOW HIRING SWIM INSTRUCTORS

TUESDAY/THURSDAY SWIM LESSONS

June 18 - July 18

Member registration opens May 23 @ 5PM

Non-member Registration opens May 24

Registration closes May 30

SATURDAY SWIM LESSONS

June 15 - July 27

Member registration opens June 1

Non-member Registration opens June 2

Registration closes June 9

Fees:

\$60 Members per session

\$75 Non-members per session

WE'RE HIRING!



LIFEGUARD CLASS (15+)

Lifeguard classes are blended-learning with 7 hours of online work that needs to be completed BEFORE the first day of class.

REGISTRATION OPEN. Closes May 4

FRIDAY, MAY 10 | 5 - 9 PM

SATURDAY, MAY 11 | 8 - 6 PM

SUNDAY, MAY 12 | 12 - 5 PM

Fees:

\$275 Members per session

\$325 Non-members per session

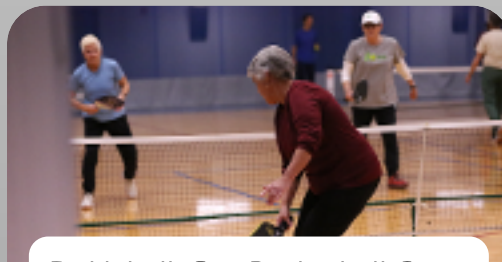
AQUATICS DIRECTOR CONTACT: Beth Valentine |

beth@saymca.org | 540-885-8089

AQUATICS DIRECTOR CONTACT: Beth Valentine | beth@saymca.org | 540-885-8089



Mahjong, Fridays 10:30 AM
Multipurpose Room



Pickleball, See Basketball Court
Schedule



Bible Study, Mondays 11 AM
Multipurpose Room



WE ARE RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS TO HELP WITH OUR:

- 2024 ANNUAL GIVING CAMPAIGN
- CAPITAL CAMPAIGN FOR THE NEW PROPERTY AT 575 NEW HOPE ROAD
- BOARD OF DIRECTORS AT COMMUNITY CHILD CARE
- PLANNING FOR OUR 150th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

PLEASE LET THE FRONT DESK KNOW OF YOUR INTEREST!

ANNUAL GIVING CAMPAIGN



COUNT ME IN!

Name: _____
 Address: _____

 City/State/Zip: _____
 Phone: _____

Check enclosed

Credit Card: _____
 Exp. _____ CVV: _____

Signature: _____

The Annual Giving Campaign is the lifeblood of our YMCA.

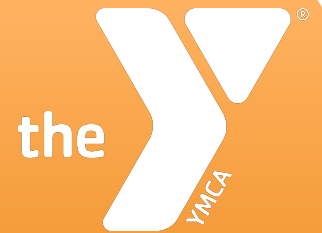
Each year the campaign raises money through charitable donations from individuals, businesses and community organizations. These funds help to ensure that no one is ever left behind regardless of their financial circumstances.

Together we are building a healthier community!



Are you required to take a Minimum Distribution from your retirement account? You can use these funds to benefit the community by making a donation to the STAUNTON-AUGUSTA FAMILY YMCA or COMMUNITY CHILD CARE. Check in with your financial advisor or ask SAYMCA Executive Director Josh Cole for more information about how to maximize your giving potential.

NOW HIRING HEROES!!



MULTIPLE POSITIONS AVAILABLE

It takes all kinds to help us succeed in our mission of promoting healthy mind, body and spirit for all.

CERTIFIED PERSONAL TRAINERS

Contact Krystal Clark at krystal@saymca.org

CERTIFIED AQUATIC GROUP FITNESS INSTRUCTORS

Contact: Wendy Shetty at wendy@saymca.org

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT COUNSELORS/AIDES

Wilson and Clymore Elementary Afterschool Programs: Monday - Friday 2:30-6 PM

Contact: Teegan Lewis (Wilson Elementary) at Teegan@saymca.org & Makenzie Shirey (Clymore Elementary) at Makenzie@saymca.org

PLAYROOM STAFF

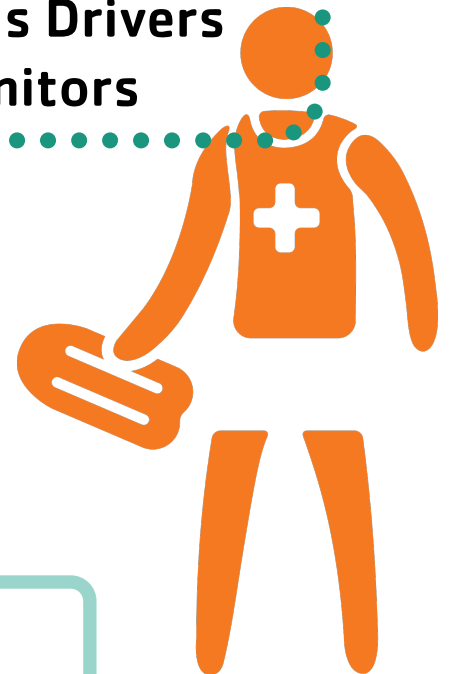
Contact: Dee Valentine at dee@saymca.org

EVENING LIFEGUARDS

Contact: Beth Valentine at beth@saymca.org

Summer Positions Available!

- ▶ Outdoor Pool Lifeguards
- ▶ Summer Camp Counselors
- ▶ Bus Drivers
- ▶ Janitors



SUMMER CAMP COUNSELORS

MAKE A DIFFERENCE!!



For job descriptions and applications scan here!

Or visit saymca.org



SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
			1 Looking for a whole body workout? Ask the front desk about working with Sheree on the Pilates Reformer	2 Thursday Zumbini Begins for 0-4 years old 5:30-6:15PM Register Now	3 Interested in playing Mahjong? Join the Mahjong group that meets at the Y Fridays at 10 AM	4 Saturday Zumbini Begins for 0-4 years old 10:00-10:45AM Register Now
5 Ride the Espresso Ride of the Week! Evening Bliss (2.3 miles)	6 Bible Study: Mondays @ 11 AM No joining fee May 6-9	7 Dance for Parkinson's Disease 10-11 AM No joining fee May 6-9	8 Adult Volleyball 6:15-8:30 PM No joining fee May 6-9 Plant Sale 9am-6pm	9 No joining fee May 6-9 Plant Sale 9am-6pm	10 May Lifeguard Class May 10-12, Sign up by May 4th	11 May Lifeguard Class May 10-12, Sign up by May 4th
12 Ride the Espresso Ride of the Week! Vindicator (12.2 miles) Last day of May Lifeguard Class	13 Bible Study: Mondays @ 11 AM	14 Women's Boxing Class Begins 6-7:15pm Sign-up at the front desk	15 Want to Redesign your Nutrition? We have 2 options: A food diary review or a full nutrition work-up!	16 CPR/First Aid Class 4-9pm Register at the front desk	17 We are Hiring for Summer Lifeguards, Camp Counselors and more! Pick up an application at the front desk.	18 Interested in Joining our New Powerlifting Club? See Krystal for more information!
19 Ride the Espresso Ride of the Week! Fruitdale (4.4 miles)	20 Bible Study: Mondays @ 11 AM	21 Dance for Parkinson's Disease 10-11 AM Youth Tennis Begins Ages 5-8 Years 5:30-6:30PM	22 Youth Tennis Begins Ages 9-12 - 5:30PM Ages 13-18 - 6:30PM	23 Tuesday/Thursday Swim Lessons sign-ups begin at 5 PM for Members Youth Tennis Begins-5-8 Years 5:30-6:30PM	24 Tuesday/Thursday Swim Lessons sign-ups for non-members begins	25 Don't forget to pick up a Group Fitness Schedule and try something new!
26 Ride the Espresso Ride of the Week! City Express (4.5 miles)	27 YMCA is Closed in Observance of Memorial Day	28 Our Annual Giving Campaign Starts Soon!	29 Don't forget to register for Oncology Yoga before June 1	30 Last Day to register for Tuesday/Thursday Swim Lessons	31 Coming Soon! Look for the following youth activities this summer...Youth Volleyball Camp, Youth Basketball Camp and Youth Boxing	