

Danville Family YMCA

History Summary

1883 Organized by local Evangelists and chartered on December 09, the YMCA held its first meeting, wrote its constitution and formed the Young Mens Christian Association in Danville, Illinois. Charles B. Taylor was the President. Run by laymen in rented facilities and homes. The YMCA in Danville in 1883 was “actuated by a desire to promote Evangelical religion among the men of the city...and to improve their mental, social and physical condition.” “Any young man over sixteen years of age, of good moral character (could) become a member of the Association. The annual fee (was) \$5.00, which admit (ted him) to all privileges.”

“Junior Boys between fourteen and sixteen years of age are admitted to limited membership but are not allowed to use the rooms after 7 o’clock in the evening.”

The YMCA in 1883 had “rented and furnished pleasant rooms in the business portion of the city”...and “raised...about \$250.00...to carry on its work for the coming year.”

1891 By 1891, the YMCA in Danville was located on the second floor of a building then known as the Jacobs Building, now the location of the Heartland Plaza. Educational and religious classes were held with some physical classes.

1901 1901 a building was leased from the C & E Illinois Railway Company. It was leased for \$1.00 a year and dedicated on February 11, 1901. The information was given to our National YMCA office by a Mr. E. J. Gunn.

1910 In the year 1910, the need for a building that would be owned and operated by the YMCA members became known. The need for a building to conduct Men’s Bible Classes, provide housing for young men, offer educational classes and physical activities prompted a formation of a committee to raise money for a YMCA building. “The history of the YMCA movement is a story of ‘fear and trembling’ and of distrust in the ability of Danville to raise sufficient funds to erect a suitable building and to support the institution.” “On November 21, 1910, the ministers of the city issued a public meeting in the interest of the YMCA to be held at the First M.E. Church on Sunday afternoon, November 27.”

1913 Money was raised, and on January 30, 1913, a Mr. Freeman was “employed as permanent Secretary of the proposed association.”

“On February 15, 1913, Mr. Freeman took charge of the secretaryship and established headquarters at No. 514 Temple Building.”

A provisional committee held a meeting at the YWCA on March 26. George Rearick was named Chairman for the YMCA. The amount raised was \$127,790.95, and land was bought on June 20, 1914 at the intersection of Hazel and Madison Streets.

John S. Freeman died on October 31, 1913, and “Mr. Reid N. Radford, Illinois Field Secretary for the YMCA was elected Secretary.”

1914 The Building was “finished throughout by December 1914.” More than 3,376 different people had subscribed to the YMCA fund-raising. Population of Danville at that time was nearly 30,000 people.

The building was dedicated at 15 East Madison on June 22, 1914, at 4:00 p.m.

R.W. Hopper hired as the General Secretary upon Reid Radford’s retirement.

1918 W.H. Debenham hired as the General Secretary

1937 The YMCA survived the depression, but as late as 1937, a study of the Danville YMCA showed that “while expenses were reduced sharply and to the point where the Association has run below the danger zone in its operation, the losses were occasioned by lack of income. The contribution income is exceedingly low; in fact, almost the lowest for any YMCA in Illinois. This is not said critically, but it is a fact that the Community Chest provides less for the Danville YMCA than does any Community Chest in any YMCA in Illinois. This fact is pegged and with supporting evidence to the Community Chest authorities.” Population was 36,800.

1953 Glenn Percifield was hired as the General Secretary.

1959 Glenn Murphy was hired as the Executive Director.

1961 As early as 1961, an intensive “self-study” of the YMCA programs and facilities had been made. The Board of Directors concluded that remodeling the Madison Street facility would not be economically feasible, and the facility would still not be able to meet the future needs of the every growing community. The population was 41,856.

1967 A group of civic leaders met and decided that the building of 1914 could not meet the demands of the day. The United Community Fund agreed. A bold and forthright decision was then made. A new “Family” (a new concept in family service) YMCA was to be built on a five-acre site between the 1100 and 1200 block of Vermilion Street. The population was now over 43,000 with over 10,000 in the school system now known as District 118.

1970 On January 1, the fund drive for the new YMCA began. This was the first major communitywide request for capital funds made by the Danville YMCA in over 55 years. The YWCA was asked to join with the YMCA and occupy the same building, but the members of the YWCA Board declined. Pledges were received from more than 5,000 contributors.

1971 On August 11, 1971, ground breaking ceremonies were held, and the new building was begun.

1972 On October 15, the new Danville Family YMCA opened at a cost of \$2.0 million, including land, building and equipment.

- 1973 A completion campaign was held in January to defray the cost of the mortgage.
- 1975 Two tennis courts were built.
- 1977 Two racquetball/handball courts were added.
- 1979 The Men's Fitness Center (full privilege locker room) was expanded, and the number of lockers increased from 250 to 500. The weight room was significantly reduced. The ladies' locker room and exercise areas occurred. The general weight room was begun.
- 1981 John Brasor was hired as Executive Director following Glen Murphy's retirement.
- 1982 The pool was tiled, ending a yearly painting and tremendous maintenance load on the filter; a member service center, a fellowship room, baby-sitting rooms, and a new exercise room, were all completed at a cost of \$90,000. The hours changed to open at 6:00 am instead of 8:00 am. The Triathlon started, and a variety of youth programs started, including day camps, youth in government, and school's out programs.
- 1983 Unemployment was rising in the community, and mortgage rates were at 20%. The financial assistance program began, as did a preventative maintenance plan.
- 1984 The Nautilus equipment was added and a complete new weight room. With the addition of these facilities, the YMCA became the most complete fitness facility in the Danville area. The population of Danville is now 38,000, and the school has 7,629, as opposed to higher figures in 1970. The population compares with that of 1937.
- 1986 The first annual campaign was started for the first time with a goal of \$5,000. The campaign raised \$2,000. Youth Basketball had 400 participants.
- 1987 Installed a complete computer system that traced finances, membership, program registration, and word processing. A cooperative relationship was established with District 118 so that facilities were shared at no cost.
- 1988 The YMCA of the USA recognized the YMCA for its fundraising and Christian values. 1,000 youth attended the Youth Basketball Banquet.
- 1989 Nautilus and racquetball court privileges added to the membership. Membership simplified to three tiers and no extra charges. Annual campaign reaches \$12,000. Endowments grew \$460,000 since 1981. Major repairs to the boiler and roof completed. The bank draft program began, making the YMCA affordable to more people.
- 1990 The YMCA provided support groups to families affected by Desert Storm and gave free memberships to spouses and families that had family members overseas. The upstairs level of the YMCA received new carpet and paint.
- The YMCA withdrew from the United Way, but raised \$34,000 in the annual campaign. The population of Danville now at 30,000 – unemployment is on the rise.

- 1991–92 The YMCA began a long range plan study that included evaluations and recommendations from the members, board, and community. The YMCA contracted with a YMCA architect to complete a master building plan. Population continued to decline, and unemployment continued to go up.
- 1993 The building was completely repainted. Free classes were added, as was free fitness evaluation. A commitment was made to focus on the mission and not on the selling of programs. This was the first year having a full-time maintenance supervisor and business manager. Membership and program grew in 1993.
- 1995 YMCA sponsors Gus Macker 3 on 3-basketball tournament, and over 500 teams participate. Annual campaign finishes at \$21,500.
- 1996 Annual campaign finishes just under \$20,000. Triathlon has over 100 participants. Gus Macker tournament has 560 teams.
- John Brasor resigns as Executive Director in November. Wes Walker, a retired YMCA Executive Director, serves as interim Director for four months.
- 1997 Scott Peterson hired as Executive Director in March. Cost study conducted by Roger Brown from the Milwaukee MRC. Study shows the need for revamping membership structure and emphasizing the bank draft payment plans. Membership growth plan recommended by the Membership and Marketing Committee and approved by the Board of Directors. Membership is turned into single tier with 5 categories of membership. New LifeFitness equipment is installed as part of the plan, adding 11 pieces of cardiovascular equipment and replacing the Nautilus equipment.
- Annual campaign reaches \$34,500 with 100 campaigners. YMCA accepted back as a United Way member with an annual support of \$10,000.
- Two locker rooms renovated so there will be two female locker rooms and two male locker rooms.
- 1998 Annual Campaign hits \$42,500 with 120 campaigners. Corporate gifts of \$1000 and up were solicited, and we were able to obtain 8 gifts at this level. Received \$71,000 from the Vermilion Healthcare Foundation to replace the boiler and rooftop unit. Also received \$23,000 from the United Way for miscellaneous mechanical issues and replacing the lobby floor. Started Teen REACH with a state grant of \$37,500 and a \$3,000 training grant. This allowed us to hire a full-time teen director.
- YMCA takes out loan to consolidate its payables and combine the mortgage on the fitness equipment for a total of \$150,000 over 5 years.
- United Way allocation doubles to \$20,000 for the next two years. Over the last year, the YMCA has been on the front page of the paper or a feature article 8 times – all in a positive light.
- Gus Macker tournament moves to the Village Mall. 350 teams participate. The event nets close to \$35,000.

1999 Annual Campaign breaks \$50,000 with 100 campaigners. The Prudential Youth Leadership Institute starts with Danville High School. Ran 3 institutes in 1999. Received \$23,000 from the Vermilion Healthcare Foundation for rebuilding the pool filter tank and motors and to purchase new equipment for the pool for the new swim lesson program. An estate gift of \$15,000 is given by the Heskett Estate with stipulations that it is used. Money used for renovating racquetball court #4 to a multi-purpose room and carpeting the women's locker room. An aquatic director is hired to roll out the new swim lesson program. Scholl's Foundation gives the YMCA \$20,000 for a new van.

YMCA has the entire lighting system in the building retrofitted for energy savings. Illinois Power guarantees \$24,000 a year savings and 3 year payback on the project. Additional loan taken out to pay for the project for \$66,000 over 4 years. After year one, savings was not realized at level guaranteed and a check is written to the YMCA for the difference in the project projected.

Gus Macker tournament hosted at the mall for the second year. 350 teams participate. The event nets over \$30,000.

The YMCA makes front page or has feature articles done on Annual Campaign (3), potential expansion to Hoopeston (4), summer day camps, Gus Macker (4), new swim program roll-out, and youth leadership institute (2).

2000 Annual campaign falls short of \$55,000 goal but still raises more than the previous year. Banner program grows to 16 companies. Received \$10,000 from the Vermilion Healthcare Foundation to replace the floors in the youth and family locker rooms. Day camps break 100 for enrollment in a session. Danville Family YMCA is named the "Best of Danville" for Health and Fitness. Added the new cardio room by the pool office in February. All treadmills (6) and crosstrainers (5) are placed in the room – two of these were purchased this year.

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The final Gus Macker tournament is held at the mall with significantly fewer teams, partially due to a competing Macker in Lafayette. Net is only \$2,000, and the YMCA votes to terminate its contract with Gus Macker.

2001 Attempts are made to partner with Provena United Samaritans with no results.

Scott Peterson resigns in June to take a branch executive's position in Minneapolis.

Board member John C. Alexander is named CEO on October 01.

Through the generosity of the Julius W. Hegeler II Foundation, the front foyer is remodeled by McDowell Builders for \$70,000.

2002 A \$20,000 project to regROUT and repair tile in the locker rooms and pool is done by Carter Construction.

- 2003 Henneman and Associates is retained for an engineering study to determine repair/update needs in our facility. YMCA of the USA personnel offer facilities advice, and the board receives Henneman's report in September, then sets priorities from Henneman's list of recommendations.
- A new flagpole is installed near our circle drive and dedicated to Leon Ewbank, a former front desk employee and father of Dr. Robert Ewbank.
- A local door alarm system is installed by Alarmax.
- In October, Linda Bolton is seated as the first female president of the Board of Directors.
- An illuminating time/temperature sign and marquee are purchased from Danville High School. Marsters Signs and Time-O-Matic rework the sign and install it along Vermilion Street.
- 2004 Another cost study with Roger Brown is commissioned with results delivered in November and compared to 1999 results. The study is a basis for establishing membership and program dues.
- In July, J. C. Egbert and Associates is chosen from a list of three firms (American City Bureau and Jeffrey Byrnes and Assoc.) and is commissioned for a capital campaign feasibility study. The results indicate a need to wait for a campaign due to other local drives and to continue to build a positive image of the Y in the community.
- In August, the already purchased house at 1120 North Jackson Street is torn down, 20 additional parking spaces are created, and the entire lot is resurfaced. Daniel L. Ribbe Co. is the contractor for the \$155,500 project. \$100,000 comes from a state grant and \$55,500 is funded by the Julius W. Hegeler II Foundation.
- 2005 After a year of planning, the first capital campaign in over 30 years kicks off in November with Mac Leverenz and Dr. L. W. Tanner as co-chairs. Jim Egbert and Daryl Seiplinga serve as consultants. The campaign will eventually raise \$1.5 million through several phases.
- In February, a membership survey is conducted by Seer Analytic that provides satisfaction levels and demographic information. As a follow up, Pam Burgoyne conducts a focus group study.
- 2006 On July 03, construction begins on the \$450,000 remodeling of the pool by McDowell Builders with Henneman as the engineering firm. Problems arise when the steel roof must be replaced due to corrosion. The project replaces the pool HVAC system, adds a dehumidification unit, replaces pool windows and improves ventilation in locker rooms. Project is not officially completed until September 2009 due to noise level remediation.
- The Silver Sneakers program for active older adults starts in September.
- 2007 Ground breaking is conducted on June 12 for the new 5,400 square foot wellness center addition, and construction by McDowell Builders/Walton and Associates Architects

begins on June 22. On December 20, the addition opens. The center is named the Glen Murphy Wellness Center, and a dedication is conducted on December 27 with the Murphy family. Cost of the addition, including 12 Precor treadmills, 12 Precor crosstrainers, Lifefitness circuit, Paramount circuit, bikes and free weights, is \$1.1 million.

Gym floor coverings of 30' X 60' and 60' X 90' are purchased for \$1,976 from Dunlap Industries.

Lynn Cartee donates \$23,000 for a new Dactronics timing and scoring system in the pool.

Doug and Teresa Barnette donate \$25,000 to name the large gym's basketball court for Gene Gourley, retired Danville Schlarman and Armstrong-Potomac basketball coach. A dedication banquet is held December 01 with 125 in attendance.

United Way funding is at \$30,000.

2008

The parking lot is sealed and striped.

With extra classroom space available due to exercise equipment being moved to the new addition, new classes are started, including Kid Possible for special needs kids.

The Julius W. Hegeler II Foundation donates \$16,000 for new exterior landscaping (Berry's - \$11,151) and concrete curbing (Smith Landscaping - \$3,900).

Martial arts room is moved from racquetball court #4 to the former weight room. New padded floor, paint and wall carpet are installed in December.

Mechanical engineer Wayne Robinson meets with Building & Grounds Committee about mechanical needs survey. He steers us to Honeywell, who completes a no-cost study in early 2009, which the board rejects due to cost estimates.

An anonymous donor offers to match \$.50 for every dollar raised up to \$100,000 to finish the capital campaign needs. Jim Anderson and W. John Shane lead the effort that raises \$122,000 plus the \$50,000 match to exceed the goal.

United Way funding is reduced to \$27,000 due to fundraising reductions.

Our 125th anniversary is celebrated with several events, culminating with a Dec. 6th banquet with 80 in attendance.

2009

A project for \$200,670 plus \$7,000 in architectural fees is completed by McDowell Builders to reside the building and replace all other windows other than those at the pool. The project is completed in the fall. McDowell also replaces the front steps and deck for \$9,264.

Carpet is replaced in men's and women's locker rooms for \$11,161.58. Funding comes from extra donations to our donor wall confirmation letter.

A \$450,000 state capital grant for the YMCA is announced to address energy conservation in our HVAC systems.

In February, pool repairs are made to meet the requirements of the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act.

United Way funding remains at \$27,000.

Membership reaches a 6,573 high in March. By comparison, membership in March 2007 was 4,742.

Annual Strong Kids campaign exceeds \$97,000 in cash and in-kind donations.