

Parents Night Out

October, 23, November 20th and
December 18th
6:15–10:00 p.m. • \$25 for members

Enjoy a night out! Kids get pizza and enjoy sports, games and swimming with our childcare staff. Spaces are limited. Pre-registration is required. Visit our membership desk for details.



SAVE THE DATE:

Youth Basketball League (Ages 5-12)

Registration runs through
October 30

Practices and games for this 8-week instructional league start the week of Monday November 2 and end on Friday, December 18. Games will be held on Friday evenings between 5:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. starting Friday, November 6.

For more information, or to register your child, please visit www.annarborymca.org or call Steve Petty, Sports Director, at 661-8018.

Spooktacular Sunday Halloween Party

October 25, 2009
5:00–7:00 p.m. • Ages 2–10

This event is free and open to the public. Join us for healthy trick or treating and games. Please bring a canned food item to donate to Food Gatherers.



President's
Corner

This month, I invite you to read and enjoy the stories of our members and staff who have found friendship and fitness through YMCA programs.



This fall has brought exciting staff changes at the Ann Arbor YMCA!

We welcome **Becca Schnetzer**, whom many of you have known during her past 6 summers as Camp Al-Gon-Quian Director, as our new Membership Director.



Becca Schnetzer

We also welcome **Sarah Kurtz**, who has worked at Al-Gon-Quian for the past four summers in various staff positions, as our new Camp AGQ Director.




Sarah Kurtz

Becca and Sarah look forward to their new roles at the Ann Arbor YMCA.

Contact information for both Becca and Sarah can be found on the staff directory page of our website.

Sincerely,

Cathi Duchon
President and CEO

 We build strong kids,
strong families,
strong communities.

ANN ARBOR YMCA

FALL 2009

Today

A New Path to the Y

July 27, 2009, was Bob Amidon's last day at the *Ann Arbor News*. It was also his first day at the YMCA. Amidon worked at the news in many capacities for the last 15 years, most recently as a customer service specialist. But the paper's closing led him down a completely different path, and that path was to the Ann Arbor YMCA.



The 59-year-old Ann Arbor resident had always been interested in joining the Y. While Bob worked full-time at the *News*, he thought he did not have time to use the Y facility and enjoy its programs. When he lost his job, however, he suddenly found himself with a lot of time—so he walked down to the YMCA on that same day and became a member. It's not big surprise that the affable Amidon found himself in a conversation with Senior Program Director Diane Carr and Fitness Director Dave Morris. He got the idea to apply for a job on the fitness floor, and interviewed that week. He had the people skills to get hired and now works on the fitness floor about seven hours a week. He also works out at the Y four to five days a week.

"It's a job but it's wonderful," Amidon says. "The people here are fabulous – the members are all pretty cool, and I'm running into people I haven't seen in years and years." Before working for the *News*, he worked as an auxiliary police officer, in the bar business and as a supervisor at U of M Hospital. Amidon's most recent path has him learning rapidly and taking stress-relieving steps towards his own health and wellness. He has now mastered all of the fitness machines, is able to give members orientations on the wellness floor and is even considering becoming a personal trainer.

For now, Amidon is collecting unemployment and waiting to see what will come next. But one thing is certain: He has the Ann Arbor YMCA. "Being able to come here, I have no stress," he says. "I plan on being at the Y the rest of my life."

Greetings, Darth Vader: Al-Gon-Quian's Summer Writing Campaign

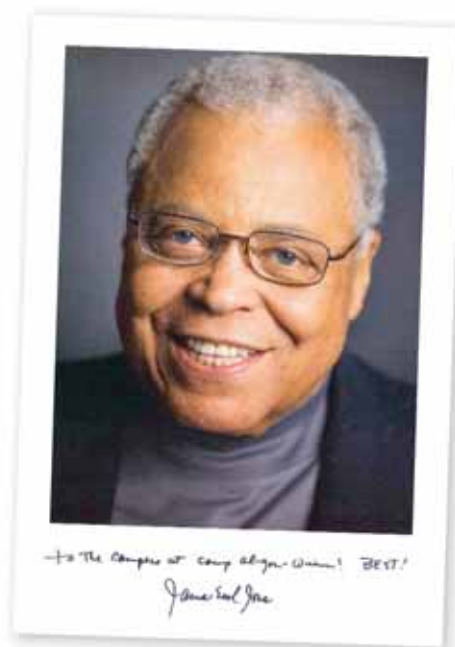
The summer at Camp Al-Gon-Quian started with a plan to write to Barack Obama and ended with a response from James Earl Jones. How did the campers and staff get there? It was all the idea of counselors Bennett Stein and David Shapiro, who head up AGQ's library program.

Along with traditional activities like canoeing, archery and landsports, campers at AGQ have the opportunity to choose activities in fine arts. The program includes classes like music, creative writing, arts and crafts, newspaper production and drama. But this season, camp staff added a new class to the mix: Bennett and David led an activity hour in the new AGQ library focused on books and reading.

The campers in the program experienced adventures from reading on different places around camp to trips to local libraries, but the biggest and most memorable aspect of the program from

the summer was a letter-writing campaign to an array of celebrities. Written on construction or looseleaf paper, sometimes in marker or colored pencil, campers (and staff members) tried to entice the recipient to come to Camp Al-Gon-Quian to read a story to the kids. Writers also politely asked for a signed headshot if a real appearance was not possible.

The first recipient of these letters was President Barack Obama, and the idea caught on from there. Throughout the summer, thick envelopes of these appeals were sent to figures from Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and Ellen DeGeneres to Jennifer Granholm and Stephen King. King's publicist sent back a personalized note to our campers, explaining that he was unable to make it to Burt Lake but spends a lot of time at his house in the country, which is kind of like camp. Bennett and David were in the middle of talks with



Mayor H. Ted Pall Jr., M.D., of Petoskey, but the summer ended before they could arrange a date.

But the biggest response thus far was received just after camp ended: A signed headshot from James Earl Jones, most commonly known as the voice of Darth Vader. Jones, who attended the University of Michigan, ended up having an Ann Arbor connection. His photo will be prominently displayed at Al-Gon-Quian, and, as the project continues, we hope more will join him!

An Ironwoman at the YMCA

If you are a regular at the YMCA pool, it's likely that you have seen Tammy McCullough. Starting in March 2009, McCullough spent six months training for the Louisville Ironwoman Triathlon, an event consisting of a 2.4-mile swim, a 112-mile bike and a 26.2-mile run. At the end of August, she completed the Ironwoman challenge in just over 12.5 hours.

McCullough, a marketing professor at Eastern Michigan and a mother of two, spent an average of two to three hours per day training for the event, with some of her land workouts and 90 percent of her swims at the YMCA. She joined the Y in 2005 when she began to train for shorter triathlons, but this was her first Ironman event. "I'm not some extraordinary athlete at all," she says. "I just was disciplined." Her biggest challenge, she says, was balancing her schedule.

For any athlete embarking on a challenge that requires a lot of training, here's McCullough's advice: Find other people to become training buddies.



For the Ironwoman, she had a list of friends she would e-mail on a weekly basis with her workout schedule, and people would volunteer to join her for different parts of training.

Congratulations, Tammy!

Adult Aquatics: TriSwim

Training for a triathlon? Check out the YMCA's Tri-Swim class.

According to instructor Thomas Nyongesa, this class is designed for adult swimmers who wish to improve their basic swimming skills for triathlons or open water swimming. The class helps participants increase their comfort levels in the water, while working on technique and increasing speed. Participants also work on holding good technique while going faster, and creating workout routines. Member registration for the Fall 2 session of Tri Swim starts October 21, and the class begins on November 2.

Recess... For Adults

YMCA Instructor and Personal Trainer Marie Wolfram's new **Punk Rope** class is the perfect answer for those of us who need to have fun while exercising. A combination of cardio, strength building and recess, this class mixes elements of play into a 45-minute full-body workout.

Using relay races, drills, high-power music, and, of course, jumping rope, Wolfram's goal is to get people to have so much fun they don't realize they are working out. Participants are of all different ages (from high school through their 60s) and fitness levels, and interact with each other during the class. If you are itching to go back to the care-free days of elementary school and seek a great way to get some exercise, Punk Rope will give you a chance to do both. Member registration for the Fall 2 session of Punk Rope starts October 21, and the class begins on November 2.

