

First published in the Grand Traverse Insider On December 27, 2009

WINTER AT THE YMCA

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The Grand Traverse Bay YMCA has something for all ages this winter. Whether it be a New Year's resolution to be more active, improving one's health and fitness, cabin fever, or continuing your life long endeavor of building mind, spirit, and body through activity, the YMCA's 65 programs will have something for you and your family. Some of the Y's bountiful activities this season include:

YMCA Home Page: Visit www.gtbayymca.org for timely information on all programs and activities, as well as downloadable program booklets and registration materials. The Y Front Desk is a clearinghouse of great information, too! Call 933-YMCA (9622).

Trails: Located adjacent to the Garfield Township Nature Preserve, the Y sits on 40 glorious acres of trails for hiking, snowshoeing, birding, and cross country skiing on the beautiful Boardman River. After your winter jaunt, stop in the lobby to warm up with some coffee or hot chocolate.

YMCA Youth in Government: This program brings the workings of state government alive to students, who have the opportunity to discuss current state issues with state administrators, elected officials and students from high schools and YMCAs throughout the state. The Grand Traverse Bay YMCA coordinates the Michigan Youth in Government program for our five-county area. A one-day conference will be held January 9 at the Y Main Facility in preparation for the 5-day event in Lansing this spring.

Y Health and Fitness: Put that New Year resolution on the proper track in our cardio or free weights area, circuit-training room, or during one of our six fitness classes. Choose from Y Pilates, Hard Core, Boot Camp, Total Body Conditioning, Totally Tone, and Cardio/Strength/Intervals. Classes are free to YMCA members and affordable for non-members. Interested in an early morning fitness class? Call Barb Beckett at 933-9622.

Y Gymnastics: Blessed with a great facility and great instructors, Y Gymnastics continues to train one year olds to high schoolers in recreational and state-ranked competitive movement. New this season are beginner, intermediate and advance tumbling and cheer classes. Contact the Y Gymnastics Center for more information at 929-2869. The Center is located at 1100 Woodmere, Suite A, in Traverse City.

Y Tennis: With one of the finest teaching staffs in our region, Y Tennis remains one of the strongest programs we offer. Contract time, lessons and leagues are always popular, so call ahead to check availability. Y members enjoy free tennis from 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. and may reserve courts.

Y Pee Wee Sports: This is new skills program for three to seven year olds to give participants a broad overview of the basics of popular sports. During six weekly classes, children will experience soccer, floor hockey, lacrosse, basketball, T-ball, and golf. Class is never boring and always includes more than one sport/activity. Classes are held at the new YMCA Child Care Center located at 1100 Woodmere, Suite B in Traverse City.

Pickleball: One of the fastest growing racquet and court sports is pickleball, attracting adults of all ages to this fast-paced game. Played on a mini-tennis court with a wiffle-type ball and wood or composite paddles, it is fun for beginners and experienced players alike. Join in the fun Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, from between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. on the Y's three indoor and three outdoor Pickleball courts.

Y Youth Basketball Leagues: League basketball for kids in grades three through six will run for six Saturdays beginning January 9 through February 13. The leagues will be formed by grades and gender with each league moving from basic skills (3rd grade) to more competitive play (6th grade). Participants will play one game per week—either morning or afternoon—at a YMCA gym. Registration fee per player is \$55 for the public and \$35 for YMCA members. Practice time is not included, is not mandatory, and there is a small fee per person to use the YMCA gyms for practice.

Blizzard Tournament: January 30 is the date for the ever-popular “Blizzard” youth full-court team basketball tournament, for boys’ teams in grades 7 and 8. Hosted at several Traverse City-area gyms, this tourney fills up quickly with teams from around the north region. After their school season ends, this is a great way to keep on playing! Registration is due by January 21, but teams are encouraged to register early. For more information, visit www.gtbayymca.org.

Classic Tournament: Our youth “3-on-3” tournaments are always a hit, and this year the “Classic” will be held February 20. Both boys and girls in grades 3 through 6 are encouraged to participate. Registration is due by February 13, but teams are encouraged to register early. For more information, visit www.gtbayymca.org.

Midnight Madness Tournament: The YMCA “Midnight Madness” 3-on-3 basketball tournament is still the most popular and will be held March 19. Play begins on Friday at 5 p.m. and ends around midnight. Registration is due by March 13, but teams are encouraged to register early. For more information, visit www.gtbayymca.org.

Winter Jam Tournament: The “YMCA Winter Jam,” our adult men’s tournament, continues to be the biggest and best tournament of its kind in the north. Slated for February 6-7, it finishes on Sunday just in time for everyone to make it home for the Super Bowl game. Registration is due by January 22, but teams are encouraged to register early. For more information, visit www.gtbayymca.org.

These tournaments are held at the YMCA Main Facility.

Noon Pick-up Games: Ever since its invention in 1891 by YMCA Director James Naismith, there have been “pick-up” basketball games where people come together to just enjoy the sport of playing with others. At our YMCA, pick-up games are Tuesday and Thursdays between noon and 2 p.m. It’s free for Y members, and day-pass rates apply for non-members.

Y School’s Out: When schools are closed due to weather, the Grand Traverse Bay YMCA is not! The YMCA provides a day-camp atmosphere with trained staff for school aged children. The snow day program at the Grand Traverse Bay YMCA Main Facility begins at 6:30 a.m. and ends at 6 p.m. It's meant to help working moms and dads who may not have anywhere else to turn on such short notice. Call the Y Child Care Center at 421-3568 for more information.

Y Family Nights’: As part of its mission, the YMCA builds strong families. This YMCA offers twice monthly family nights. The first Friday of the month Family Night is held at the Y Main Facility from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Enjoy a fun evening with basketball, racquetball, wallyball, tennis, Wii, snacks, pizza, and beverages. The third Friday of the month the fun moves to our new Y Child Care Center, also from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. The Child Care facility has access to a jump house, a gymnasium, and equipment geared toward a preschoolers and a young school-aged group. It’s free for Y members; non-members pay \$15/family at the door.

Y Volunteers: Nearly 600 people contribute 45,000 hours of volunteer time in serving as mentors, coaches and assistants, board and committee people, and even reading to a child, to name some of the activities. Contact us at 933-YMCA and see how you might spend some quality time during these snowy Northern Michigan months.

Y Softball: Registration for Spring Adult Softball Leagues will be held during March. Leagues are formed as men’s, women’s and co-ed groups. Games are played at the Civic Center fields. Watch the website for information.

Y Membership: Start 2010 on a healthy foot for just \$45/month for families or \$25/month for individuals. Members enjoy free or reduced rates on 65+ programs, free morning tennis, free fitness classes, access to three fitness areas, and much more. Free coffee and WiFi, too, all in a values-based community of fun! For a limited time the Y will waive your \$50 joiner fee, so call today. Memberships make great gifts for family and employees.

For more information about these or any of the Grand Traverse Bay YMCA program or membership offerings, call the front desk at 933-9622, visit our website at www.gtbayymca.org, or email us at info@gtbayymca.org.