

We came to The Soo in February of 1989. Two days later literally before we had even finished unpacking, we joined the Y. For us it was a great place to meet and get to know people in our new community. Little did I know how big a part of my life it would become over the next 30 plus years.

It started ordinarily enough. Going for workouts, kids signing up for swimming and participating in things like summer day camps, Rytac and John Island. This pattern continued for a number of years.

In the mid 90's I was on the board of directors for 6 years.

Then a long stretch of what most would call everyday Y activities.

I can't remember the exact day or even the year but looking for something different to try for cardio I started to participate in cycle class. Must be my Dutch biking heritage because I was hooked immediately. I started attending two to three classes a week.

A few years later I was asked to start teaching. Since then, I have taught literally 100's of classes having a blast putting together both the profiles and the music. Anyone who has ever taken one of my classes knows there isn't an era or genre of music I won't try to turn into a cycle song.

After 20 years off I am back on the board. Now it's my grandkids attending Summer Camp.

For our family, the Y has always been a wonderful welcoming place.

Which brings me to the present.

The Y like many organizations has been greatly impacted by the pandemic.

DID YOU KNOW that the Y has been in the Soo for 120 years serving our community. In that time many things have changed. The Y today is more than just a gym.

DID YOU KNOW That the Y is the largest provider of child care in the Soo.

We have over 450 children enrolled in YMCA daycare. Also the Y provided childcare services to essential workers and first responders through each of the lockdowns.

DID YOU KNOW 6871 adults and children attended Y programs

DID YOU KNOW 100's of kids attend Y summer camps.

DID YOU KNOW that the Y supplied 12,290 dollars to help kids attend camp in the summer.

DID YOU KNOW the Y has over 3500 members.

DID YOU KNOW that the Y offered financial assistance of 96,270 dollars in the last year to families to subsidize memberships.

You can see the Y plays a vital roll in keeping our community strong and active.

To do this the Y needs your help either as a member or if you can to donate to our organization.

Remember that the Y is local. Money stays in town not shipped out to some big corporation for the benefit of their shareholders.

Please consider donating to our STRONG COMMUNITIES PROGRAM. Our next event is the JULY 1, activity day. You can join up and get involved with your whole family walk, bike, swim or canoe.

Sign up today or find a team to donate to.

My grandsons and I are going to ride 120 KM. That's right . . . 120 kilometers on July 1, to honour our country and our Y's 120 year. My 12-year-old Grandson is doing 15K, the 9-year-old is doing 5  
Guess who has the rest.

The Y has been a part of our community for a long time. Please consider helping it stay strong for another 120 years.

Please help make sure THE Y is HERE TO STAY.

Here's a link to a page to help us get to our lofty goal of 1000 dollars.

<https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/ssmymca/p2p/ymceh-activityday/team/pake-and-the-boys/captain/pake-and-the-boys/>

Thanks so much.