

On Monday I was devastated to hear of the closure of the Yarmouth YMCA. Today I was delighted to hear that the Province of Nova Scotia has taken the initiative to call for discussions between our three municipal units to consider funding, along with the province, to save this all-important institution which has benefitted the citizens of Yarmouth County for over 160 years.

I have been a member of the 'Y' for the 45 years that I have lived in Yarmouth. On Monday I felt that I'd been dealt a body blow as I believe that I've used the pool on an average of three times per week for most of the last 45 years. As a swimmer the fact that there was a pool at the YMCA was a deciding factor in moving to Yarmouth.

People who are considering a move to our area are not just looking at our favourable climate or our housing prices they are looking for good recreational facilities. At the moment the YMCA has the best ones in the county – and the only real pool. I submit to you that the YMCA is a major contributing factor in the recruitment of medical staff to this end of the province. Please reflect that such staff are, or might be, a major factor in your, or your immediate family's, health in the future. Maintaining or improving the YCMA could be a critical factor in the health of the county since, as you know, we almost lost our surgical unit just last year.

I know that over the years the Y's swimming program for local schools has taught many of our present population how to swim. We have no idea how many losses our families may have suffered had this not been the case. Likewise, with our health in general.

The YCMA's downtown Yarmouth location does not mean that it is used exclusively by residents of the town alone. The majority of the people with whom I share the pool are residents of the two municipalities.

There has been a case for moving the YMCA, or parts thereof, to the Mariners Centre. In that case almost everyone will need a car to get there – not just those from the municipalities but the 'townies' like myself as well – is this a good idea with our present climate change situation? As well, the costs of developing this new facility would be vastly greater than saving and improving the present structure which, after all is not really that old.

Thank you for your consideration in the above matters. I trust that you will consider them in your deliberations to save our YMCA.

Sincerely,

Eric Ruff, FCMA
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