



IMPACT NEWS

JANUARY & FEBRUARY 2024 | YMCA OF GREATER SPRINGFIELD

#StrongerTogether



DONNA SITTARD, DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Happy New Year!



HO HO HO...SANTA'S VISIT

What a great Saturday morning with Santa. The YMCA of Greater Springfield is so grateful Santa was able to visit during his busy season. This year the Y was able to provide a pancake breakfast donated by the MOCHA program (Men of Color Health Awareness). With the help of so many, the Y was able to provide breakfast for 150 families and give toys to 500 children.

Whether you collected toys, donated toys, gave the Y money to buy toys, had a table at the event passing out special treats for the children, prepared the food, passed out gifts, helped the children pick out a gift for their loved ones, or did set up or clean up, we are humbled and thankful for your volunteerism to make a fun and memorable morning for the children of the community.



Thank you to our corporate donors and volunteers.

the Y YMCA

YMCA OF GREATER SPRINGFIELD
PANCAKES WITH SANTA

MADE POSSIBLE BY:

TOYS FOR TOTS **PeoplesBank** **Six Flags** **M&T Bank** **Farm Credit Financial Partners**

WELLFLEET **PeoplesBank** **WELLFLEET** **PeoplesBank** **PeoplesBank**

CHG CATERING-EVENTS **NOONAN** **RAYMOND JAMES** **MOCHA**

THANK YOU!

FOOD PROVIDED BY: MOCHA

- Laura Progulske
- Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc.
- YMCA members & staff who donated toys

THANK YOU MGM SPRINGFIELD

We would like to thank MGM Springfield for the cookies and cupcakes for the children, story time and for helping the kids make cards. Also, thank you for the generous gift today in support of the YMCA's youth programs and access to them. Thank you for being a great community partner.



THANK YOU FROM THE LIVESTRONG® AT THE YMCA PROGRAM

On behalf of all those who will benefit from the LIVESTRONG® at the YMCA program, thank you to all those who participated in the basket raffle in December. With the generosity of many, the Y was able to raise over \$5,900 to support this program and its participants. Thank you for making a difference and having an IMPACT on your community.

LIVESTRONG® at the YMCA is a twelve-week small group fitness and wellness program designed for adult cancer survivors. The program is offered without cost to the participants.

Our certified instructors provide a supportive, safe environment for each class. Certificates include specialized training in the areas of cancer, post-rehab exercise, nutrition, and supportive cancer care.

Our goal is to help people build muscle mass and muscle strength, increase flexibility and endurance, and improve functional ability. Additional goals include reducing the severity of therapy side effects, preventing unwanted weight changes, and improving energy levels and self esteem. A final goal of the program is to assist participants in developing their own physical fitness program so they can continue to practice a healthy lifestyle, not only as part of their recovery, but as a way of life.

Research is now showing that physical activity can decrease recurrence and increase survivorship for cancer patients.



LIVESTRONG®
AT THE YMCA



LIVESTRONG
FOUNDATION

For more information about the program,
please reach out to Dawn Lapierre at
413-596-2749 or email dlapierre@springfieldy.org

WEAR RED DAY® – FEBRUARY 2

According to the Go Red for Women organization, “In 2004, the American Heart Association (AHA) faced a challenge. Cardiovascular disease claimed the lives of nearly 500,000 American women each year, yet women were not paying attention. In fact, many even dismissed it as an older man’s disease. To dispel the myths and raise awareness of heart disease & stroke as the number one killer of women, the American Heart Association created Go Red for Women, a passionate, emotional, social initiative designed to empower women to take charge of their heart health.

Signs and Symptoms of Heart Attack

If you have any of these signs, call 9-1-1 and get to a hospital right away.

1. Uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain in the center of your chest. It lasts more than a few minutes or goes away and comes back.
2. Pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach.
3. Shortness of breath with or without chest discomfort.
4. Other signs such as breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness.
5. As with men, women’s most common heart attack symptom is chest pain or discomfort.

But women are somewhat more likely than men to experience some of the other common symptoms, particularly shortness of breath, nausea/vomiting and back or jaw pain.

Signs and Symptoms of Stroke

If you have any of these signs, call 9-1-1 and get to a hospital right away.

1. Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body
2. Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding
3. Sudden trouble seeing or blurred vision in one or both eyes
4. Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
5. Sudden severe headache with no known cause”



Join NHLBI (National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute and the YMCA of Greater Springfield and wear the color red on **Wear Red Day®** on February 2nd to bring greater attention to heart disease and stroke. Whether it is lipstick, a pair of pants, a shirt, bows in your hair or even a sticker, we hope to bring awareness to our community and make an impact. If you think you or someone you’re with has any symptoms of a heart attack or stroke, call 911 immediately.

While we wear red for women, we are wearing red for everyone.

AMERICAN HEART MONTH

As part of American Heart Month, we thought we would share this recipe www.heart.org. As always, check with your doctor first before beginning any lifestyle changes.

“Get More Vegetables Into Your Meals”



Not a vegetable lover? You're not alone. Only 10% of people in the U.S. eat the recommended amount, which is 4½ cups a day. If you don't like one vegetable, that doesn't mean you won't like a different one. The more you try a vegetable, the more chance you have of liking it. So, keep trying. Here are some creative ways to get more vegetables into your meals and snacks. Shred. Vegetables that can be easily shredded, such as zucchini, beets, carrots or parsnips, can be added to whole-grain

muffins, pancakes, soups, stir-fries, pasta sauce and casseroles. These sneaky vegetables boost flavor, texture and nutrition, often without anyone knowing they're there. Use a box grater, hand grater or food processor to shred vegetables. Or, for convenience, look for bags of pre-shredded produce in the grocery store. Swap. Mushrooms add a savory flavor and texture, especially to meats, along with added nutrients. Replace half the amount of ground beef or turkey for burgers, meatloaf and meatballs with cooked chopped mushrooms. Here's how: First, finely chop the mushrooms. Next, heat a small amount of olive oil over medium heat and cook the mushrooms for 3 minutes, or until soft. Once they have cooled, gently mix them with your ground meat. Continue with your recipe. Puree. Cook and puree orange vegetables, such as butternut squash, sweet potatoes and carrots to add to cheesy dishes, such as macaroni and cheese, lasagna, or baked enchiladas. Simply replace half of the cheese with the pureed vegetables to help reduce some of the saturated fat and sodium found in your meal. It's that easy. To make a smooth, flavorful and filling soup, process the vegetables with some fat-free, low-sodium broth in a food processor or a blender until smooth. Blend. You can load lots of fruit and vegetables into delicious and refreshing smoothies. Start with adding frozen fruit, such as sliced banana, berries, cubed melon and chopped mango into a food processor or blender. Next, add some vegetables, such as spinach, kale, and cooked carrot rounds or chopped squash. Then, add a few splashes of fat-free/low-fat milk, a few dollops of plain yogurt and/or a splash of juice or water. Put in some freshly grated gingerroot or ground ginger, ground cinnamon and ice cubes. Process until smooth. Experiment with different fruits and vegetables to make many delicious combinations.

Written by American Heart Association editorial staff and reviewed by science and medicine advisors. ”

FROM OUR HEART TO YOURS

Happy Valentine's Day. From our heart to yours, thank you for all your support you have given to the YMCA.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH | WE WEAR BLACK DAY: FEBRUARY 23

YMCAs across the country commit to being an anti-racist organization and honor Black History Month in a show of solidarity by wearing black on February 23.

Carter G. Woodson created Negro History Week, now African American History Month, while residing at the Wabash YMCA during the 1910's.



To learn more about Mr. Woodson and his impact on Black History Month, you can scan the QR code.



WHY THE Y

WILBRAHAM LEARNING CENTER

"The Y Early Learning Center has provided our children with a safe, healthy, happy & clean environment to grow & learn in. There is a strong sense of community with the various events held for the families throughout the year and the kids genuinely are happy to be there. The staff are patient, kind and caring. We've seen first-hand their ability to tailor their teaching styles to meet the need of the individual child." - Carra with her teacher Dani



SPRINGFIELD LEARNING CENTER

My daughter Naomi has been attending the YMCA of Greater Springfield since she was a toddler. I'm not sure where I'd be without the support from the staff at the YMCA. As a single working mom, it's reassuring knowing your child is taken care of, loved, learning and in a safe environment.

- Ashley Charles & daughter Naomi

BIG Y COMMUNITY BAG PROGRAM

We are so excited to let you know Scantic Valley YMCA – YMCA of Greater Springfield has been selected again by the Store Leadership Team as a Big Y Community Bag Program Nonprofit Partner! This time, your organization will receive \$1 for each \$2.50 reusable Community Bag sold during the month of February 2024 at:

1180 THORNDIKE STREET, ROUTE 32, PALMER MA



So if you purchase a bag in February at this store you don't have to do anything, because the Scantic Valley YMCA will automatically be the recipient of your bag purchase. You can buy a bag at any Big Y at any time, and just by following the instructions on the card attached to the bag, you can designate the Scantic Valley YMCA or the Downtown Springfield YMCA to be the recipient of your purchase and generosity. Every purchase makes an impact for the community through the Y, thank you.

VOLUNTEER & SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR 2024

The YMCA of Greater Springfield has several volunteer and sponsorship opportunities including but not limited to:

VOLUNTEER

- Corporate Board and Committees
- Advisory Board: Downtown Springfield YMCA and Scantic Valley YMCA
- Special Events & Fundraisers
- Camp Clean Up & Camp Close Up
- Host a Toy Drive
- Yards work: Scantic Valley YMCA, Camp Stony Brook Acres & North End Youth Center
- Be part of the teen program: Mentor, tutor, Sports & Rec./Coaching, Arts & Crafts
- Preschool Youth Sports Instructor: Scantic Valley YMCA
- Child Watch/Club House: Scantic Valley YMCA
- Reading to the Youth
- Youth Arts & Crafts Projects

SPONSORSHIP

- 2024 Golf Classic
- Rooms at Scantic Valley YMCA and Downtown Springfield YMCA
- Electronic Bulletin Board – Downtown Springfield
- Healthy Kids Day
- Designer Purse Bingo
- Comedy Show
- Birthplace Celebrity Classic Basketball & Bowling Night Activities
- "I Survived The Summer" health challenge
- "Welcome Week" of all nationalities
- Trunk or Treat
- Thanksgiving CommUNITY Dinner
- Visit with Santa



For more information, please contact Donna Sittard, Development Director at dsittard@springfieldy.org.

NEW PAYMENT OPTIONS AT THE YMCA OF GREATER SPRINGFIELD

We have listened and have made changes to add new credit card options at our YMCA. To make your gift giving and program and membership payments easier, the YMCA of Greater Springfield has added American Express and Discover, in addition to MasterCard and Visa, as new methods of gift giving and payments to the Y.

Become a monthly donor along with your membership. Our membership staff will be happy to set that up for you. Just ask them how you can become a GEM. Visit our website at www.springfieldy.org to make your gift today.

Thank you for making the YMCA of Greater Springfield one of your top charities of choice. By doing so, you are making an IMPACT right in your own community.



AN EARLY REMINDER

In 2024, Daylight Saving Time begins on Sunday, March 10. So when you go to bed on Saturday March 9, don't forget to forward your clocks one hour... Spring Ahead.

WEATHER UPDATES!

Don't forget to follow our social media pages. That will be another way the YMCA of Greater Springfield will be able to communicate with you about weather related delays and closings. We do our best to be OPEN, but Mother Nature does not always cooperate.

YMCA of Greater Springfield

www.facebook.com/YMCAofGreaterSpringfield



Scantic Valley YMCA

www.facebook.com/ScanticValleyYMCA



Downtown Springfield YMCA

www.facebook.com/DowntownSpringfieldYMCA



LIVESTRONG® at the YMCA

www.facebook.com/livestrongspringfieldymca



Summer Programs & Camps

www.facebook.com/ymcaspringfieldsummercamp



YMCA of Greater Springfield Learning Centers

www.facebook.com/YMCALearningCenters



CONTACT INFORMATION

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FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/YMCAofGreaterSpringfield

INSTAGRAM: www.instagram.com/ymcaspringfield/

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