

by Karen Vopnfjord

Kim Strachan is the executive director of the Elmwood-East Kildonan YMCA. The following article is about this YMCA and Strachan's involvement with it; past, present and plans for the future.

The Elmwood-Kildonan YMCA has a history dating back to the 1950's. Programs were operated out of the Washington Street Mission, and prior to that a house on Brazier Avenue and Martin Street.

The new facilities at 454 Kimberley Avenue were built in 1963. The YMCA then consisted of only a pool, lockers, exercise room, sauna and preschool gym.

Needing to provide more programming for the area, in 1978 through '79, the YMCA went on a capital campaign. This led to the 1982 additions of a new gymnasium, an indoor jogging track and racquetball

courts.

Strachan began his career with the YMCA in Regina, moving on to the Moncton YMCA in New Brunswick. His background being in aquatics and youth physical education, it's not surprising that the EK YMCA has the largest youth development program of all the Winnipeg Y's.

Strachan feels that it's noteworthy that many school groups use the YMCA facility: Donwood, Angus McKay, Munroe Junior High, Prince Edward, Miles Macdonell Collegiate and St. Alphonsus schools being among them.

The East Kildonan Baptist, Seventh Day Adventist, Grey Street United and Grace Lutheran churches, the Eager Beaver Fitness Club and also people from Lorette, Manitoba come in regularly, said Strachan.

The EK YMCA Mens' Club do much quiet fund raising to aid good works within the facility and the community at large,

Strachan noted.

He pointed out that the EK YMCA looks forward to providing more community services in the future, such as potentially developing a nursery school and expanding much-needed seniors programming; as current classes are very popular. There are also plans to work with the Community Service Order, acting as the community resource centre for North-East Winnipeg.

Currently the EK YMCA has four full-time professional program staff and over 200 trained volunteers. New volunteers are needed in: the preschool department, swim and gym classes for children of all ages, adult fitness, dance and aerobic classes.

To register for the March to June program cycle or for further information call 668-8140.