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Open At Last: Floyd County YMCA welcomes huge crowd on first day

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— The Floyd County branch of YMCA of Southern Indiana opened its doors at 8 a.m. on a historic morning in New Albany on Saturday.

By noon, scores of people filled the aquatic center and exercise facility located at 33 State St. Others waited in line for memberships or for tours.

New Albany resident Rose Munshaur sat on a bench inside the foyer of the Y, ink pen in hand as she filled out a membership application for herself and teenage son, Conner.

“The building is very nice,” she said after getting her first peak at the facility. The Y represents the first phase of the Scribner Place development.

Her daughter is already a member at the Clark County Y, but Munshaur looks forward to shorter drives with the opening of the New Albany facility.

“It’s a lot closer to home,” she said.

Conner added that he joined so he could workout, focusing on his legs.

The family and all members of the Y will be able to utilize the Clark and Floyd locations.

“Our Clark County branch was getting maximum use, too. It’s going to help ease pressures at both locations,” said Dennis Enix, executive director of the Clark County Y, which is located at 4812 Hamburg Pike in Jeffersonville.

“We will have varying class times so that if you don’t see a water fitness class that works for a time over there (in Clark), you can check over here.”

Enix was one of several employees from Clark called to work the opening day in New Albany. It marked a historic date for the organization — as well as the city — as it’s the first time YMCA of Southern Indiana has operated dual facilities.

YMCA of Southern Indiana was established in 1969.

Enix said the organization is approaching more than 5,500 memberships, with 4,000 coming from the Clark branch.

Nearly 1,500 people had signed up for the New Albany Y before opening day, with dozens more joining Saturday.

“We don’t want people to feel like customers,” Enix said of the Y philosophy. The organization strives to be a wellness community instead of just a place to workout.

“We’re different than your gym on the corner,” Enix said.

Approximately 30 percent of kids involved in youth sports through the Y are on scholarships, according to Enix. He said the Y’s Open Doors program assists families who want memberships but need help paying.

The New Albany Y has daily passes available that cover the exercise portion and the aquatic center, which are aimed to increase accessibility.

There are also features of the New Albany Y that separate it from its sister location, including a 40-foot climbing wall and the popular Xrcade.

The Xrcade has an electronic floor and 20 video stations, luring kids to race bikes, snowboard and dance through virtual reality.

“Kids think they are playing, but they are also getting their heart rates up and exercising,” Enix said.

It took nearly two years to construct the Y. Funding sources included: the city, county, Floyd Memorial

Hospital and Health Service, money raised by the Y and a \$20 million grant from Horseshoe Foundation of Floyd County.

“We could not have done this without our partners,” Enix said.

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Photos



Zachary Reid of Georgetown scales the 40-foot climbing wall on opening day of the YMCA in New Albany. Staff photo by C.E. Branham



A little girl goes through a water feature in the aquatic center at the Floyd County branch of YMCA of Southern Indiana. The Y celebrated its grand opening Saturday. Staff photo by C.E. Branham