

## **New Albany's YMCA grand opening set for Nov. 15**

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— Its peerless roof stretches toward the sky and is clearly visible to drivers crossing the Sherman Minton Bridge into Indiana on Interstate 64.

New Albany Mayor Doug England said that's just the way planners envisioned the Scribner Place/YMCA building — a standout structure in the midst of what officials hope is a growing downtown.

"This is like the birth of a new child," England said.

The grand opening for the YMCA is scheduled for Nov. 15, according to England, as construction crews are putting final touches on the building.

The initial day will be a celebration type of event, with the workout equipment set to be available Nov. 16, along with the YMCA's basketball court and the three swimming pools that make up the aquatic center.

After the handwork is finished, the YMCA, LifeSpan and the Horseshoe Foundation — the major donor to the project — can begin moving in furniture and equipment. Officials believe that could start happening as early as two weeks.

"It's progressing very, very well," England said. "Before they open up, they want to have everything ready to go. It's on schedule and on budget."

Even the recent wind storm that rocked New Albany didn't cause much damage to the building, said Les Smith, project manager for James L. Shireman Inc. — the construction company that is building Scribner Place.

"We had some very minor issues [due to the wind]," Smith said at a Redevelopment Authority meeting Monday.

"We're pretty lucky the way we came through it."

Smith has been providing the authority with regular progress updates and said finishing painting, completing mill work and cleaning are the three main tasks left to complete.

The three pools have been finished and tested. The roof installation is complete and work on the skylight is also nearly done.

England believes people will be most impressed by the interior design of Scribner Place.

"The craftsmanship on it has been phenomenal. It was money spent very well," he said.

Joe LaRocca, executive director of the YMCA of Southern Indiana, said approximately 41 people have signed up for memberships so far.

"We've started putting our membership director there every Monday and Wednesday evening with a staff from 4 to 8 p.m.," he said. "We're giving tours and taking sign-ups."

LaRocca said Scribner Place was packed Monday with people wanting to get a glimpse of the new exercise facility and purchase a membership.

"It's been a good response," he said. "It's a nice opportunity for people to see it."

Memberships purchased by Oct. 15 can result in up to \$100 off the joiner fee. There also are other discounts available.

The city-owned aquatic center will not require a membership to the YMCA, as daily permits will be available for purchase for those who just want to swim.

Though the projected opening date fluctuated between October and November, LaRocca said he is also satisfied with the construction schedule.

"It's a big project. There's things that maybe don't go exactly according to plan. We've got a good construction manager, contractor and architect," he said.

A big project indeed, which includes a grant from the Floyd County Horseshoe Foundation worth \$20 million.

England believes the YMCA will serve as an anchor tenant for New Albany, attracting customers from around Floyd and Harrison counties, as well as neighbors from Clarksville. Memberships with the YMCA in Jeffersonville will be reciprocal between the two sites.

"It will have a very positive effect on New Albany and on Southern Indiana," England said.

Businesses and residents are locating downtown in part due to the opening of Scribner Place, England said.

He would like to see more coffee and ice cream shops open nearby to accommodate the anticipated crowds.

"If you're going to come into downtown and do business, you better be prepared to handle these customers," he said.

"I think people will be down here exercising and have time, hopefully, to walk around downtown and see the beautification."

### Floyd County YMCA features

- Wellness center — Features treadmills, ellipticals, lifecycles and stair climbers. There's also resistance training equipment and free-weight stations.
- Gymnasium — Will host league and pickup games for basketball, volleyball and floor hockey.
- Group exercise studios — Classes include pilates, yoga, turbo kick, body pump and cycling.
- Indoor track — 18 laps equals a mile.
- Climbing wall — Three-story indoor climbing wall with classes offered by certified instructors.
- Multipurpose room — Will be used for hosting meetings and group gatherings.
- XRKade — Features equipment such as Dance Dance Revolution, XR board for simulated surfing, snowboarding and skateboarding, and gamebikes.
- Child watch — Free to members, who can drop off their kids while working out.

— [www.ymcasi.org](http://www.ymcasi.org)

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### Photos



Mike Burchell, left, uses a welding torch to put the finishing touches on the gutters of the new pool inside the YMCA at Scribner Place on Wednesday in New Albany. The new facility is scheduled to open in November. Staff photo by Kevin McGloshen



Carpenters work on a rail around the second-floor running track at the new YMCA in New Albany on Wednesday afternoon. Staff photo by Kevin McGloshen