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**NORTH SUBURBAN  
YMCA**  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**YMCA Basketball Players Celebrate Three Decades of Fast Breaks and Trash Talk**

**Northbrook, IL: June 2015** – Not many community groups can claim the loyalty of members that stretches over the course of three decades – especially when membership includes early mornings, considerable sweat, and the occasional trip to the emergency room. There must be something special, then, about the men’s adult pick-up basketball game that has been taking place since the early 1980s at the North Suburban YMCA in Northbrook and continues now four days a week.

“It is the most gentlemanly game I have been involved with in a long life of basketball,” notes Jack Costello of Northbrook, who has been a regular player at the Y since 1987. “And the trash talking is first rate,” he adds with a smile. “Lots of laughs as well as sport.”

Games tip off at 6:30am on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6:00am on Saturdays and 7:00am on Sundays. The program is intentionally open-ended, allowing for any Y member to drop in and play. Players come from a number of surrounding communities and a wide variety of professional backgrounds, united by a love of the game. At some points in its history, the game was almost too popular for its own good.

“One of our basic premises was that everyone who shows up gets to play,” reflects Sherwin Korey of Deerfield, a 28-year veteran of the Y game. “We would have 30 guys come in on a Saturday and have to tell each other not to talk about the game because there were too many bodies. On weekdays we’d have over 16, with games running on the side courts to accommodate everybody.”

One of the game’s founding members, Cubby Bear owner George Loukas of Riverwoods, promoted participation with customized t-shirts for players. “YMCA programs have been part of my life since I went to summer camp in second grade. Playing basketball there was a way to continue the active life and positive values that I learned there as a kid,” he notes.

Although attendance is smaller now due to retirement, injuries, or relocations, the game continues to attract loyal players and welcome new ones. Longtime participants agree that the games at the Y combine the best of exercise, competitiveness, and camaraderie. They hope to attract new adult players, especially on weekday mornings, who share their enthusiasm.

“Hoops with these guys is something to look forward to,” says Dennis Bruns of Green Oaks, who was brought into the game by a friend 15 years ago. “Think about it, why else would you get up at 5:30 to go sweat your tail off? It is the best exercise on the planet. On top of that, I personally love being around the guys because we have players from every walk of life. It helps round out your life experiences.”

“The men’s basketball game is one of the best traditions of our Y,” remarks Howard Schultz, President/CEO of the North Suburban YMCA, himself a former avid b-ball player in one of the Y’s other pickup games before “retiring” several years ago.

“If you have ever been a competitive athlete at any level, then you understand that there is nothing like playing hoops with the guys to get the competitive juices flowing and enjoy the satisfaction of making that perfect pass or the winning bucket on any particular day. It can feel like winning the NBA championship. And for these guys, nothing stops them from coming out to play and play hard, not snow, cold, or birthdays (well, that can be touchy depending on whose it is). Plus the court had better be ready or I’ll hear about it. If the baskets aren’t returned to the right height or the floor isn’t swept, they make a bee line straight to me. These guys don’t fool around, and I would expect the same as well.”

“After all,” continued Schultz, “basketball was invented at the YMCA Training School in Springfield, Massachusetts in 1891, so who better to be keeping the tradition alive and well than us? Here at the NSYMCA we encourage new generations of players to continue joining in on the fun whether it’s the morning game or one of the other games during the week.”

The North Suburban YMCA is located at 2705 Techny Road in Northbrook. For more information, call 847 272 7250 or visit [www.nsymca.org](http://www.nsymca.org).



***Photo Caption: Adult basketball games take place four mornings a week at the North Suburban YMCA, continuing a tradition that goes back to the 1980s.***

#### **About the North Suburban YMCA**

The YMCA is a not-for-profit entity and relies on donations to make services available for all families and individuals in its 15-city region. All board members are volunteers, who donate their time, talents and

financial resources. Located at 2705 Techny Road in Northbrook, the YMCA has served the northern suburbs of Chicago for over 45 years. The Y is about youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility, providing programs and services that address the needs of our diverse community and are accessible to all. For more information or to make a donation, contact Barb Flanagin at 847-272-7250 or [bflanagin@nsymca.org](mailto:bflanagin@nsymca.org), or visit [www.nsymca.org](http://www.nsymca.org).