



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **WHY THE Y? HAVING FUN DOING SOMETHING GOOD**

[PORT HURON, November 25, 2011] – Carmen Aguinaga’s ten grandchildren will tell you proudly that their Grandma is working on being a “Healthy 100.” For many years Carmen, now 68, kept active walking outdoors. During the winter of 2006, after hearing someone had slipped on the ice and fell, she decided to take her workout inside and chose the YMCA of the Blue Water Area. Carmen’s goal was to have a safe -ice free- place to workout. What she discovered was a community that has nurtured and challenged her way beyond her own expectations.

Carmen calls herself a morning person and on weekdays you can find her at 5:30 am in Boot Camp, a Cardio Blast class or the pool. Carmen’s secret to workout success “You have to keep moving and find a workout that works for you.” She added that “five years ago I started out at a moderate level and thanks to encouraging instructors and supportive classmates, I have progressed to more challenging classes and gained so much strength and increased my energy level.”

Before joining the Y, Carmen had arthritis in her hand and recalls a time when it was stiff and sore, but that’s all in the past. She is quick to point out that “One of the many benefits of working out is that my circulation has increased to the point where it has strengthened weaker areas in my body to the point where it has diminished my arthritis.”

Another surprise for Carmen is her growing list of completed 5k races. She had never considered running a race until a Y fitness instructor challenged her class to participate in a 5K race. Carmen said “I took up the challenge and learned that my workouts had strengthened my core and that is what gave me the endurance to participate and finish the race. That was 3 years ago and now I’m enjoying a variety of local 5k races and the December 3<sup>rd</sup> Jingle Bell run will be my 14<sup>th</sup> race in 4 years.”

For Carmen, the energy she gains from her Y-time is as much from her workouts as from her classmates, the Y staff and fellow members. She shares her mornings with a diverse group of friends of all ages and walks of life. She describes her Y family as "welcoming and open to new participants. Always a friendly smile and lots of encouragement." Her advice is simple "Come try the Y and find what you're comfortable with. I'm living proof of the benefits of being active."

Volunteers are need to help make the Jingle Bell 5K Run and 2K Walk a success for Carmen and all of the participants, including student teams from Brown City, Crull, Farrell-Emmett, Michigamme, Woodlands, Woodrow Wilson and Yale elementary schools. Show your holiday spirit and make a difference in your community on Saturday morning, December 3. The Y's Jingle Bell Run is one of the season's best Holiday runs with lots of jolly and spirit. To learn more about volunteer opportunities call or email Traci Hofmann, Program Specialist, 810-987-6400 ext. 137. Be there with bells on!

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### ***YMCA of the Blue Water Area***

For 125 years, the Y has been strengthening our community through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. The Y engages men, women and children of the Blue Water Area in nurturing the potential of youth and teens, improving the area's health and well-being, and providing opportunities to give back and support our neighbors. All Y programs and services are designed to build the core character values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility. The Y is a place for people of all faiths, races, abilities, ages and incomes. [www.bluewaterymca.com](http://www.bluewaterymca.com)

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