

September 2009 Success Story

Stephen Taft



**“I could not, at any age, be content to take my place
in the corner by the fireside and simply look on.”**

Eleanor Roosevelt

Stephen Taft has been a YMCA member since 1975, six years after moving to Stevens Point for a teaching position at UWSP. He joined primarily to continue swimming, which, he says, was “the one sport in which I had some ability. In high school I was unable to make any team and in college I got a “D” one semester in Physical Education.”

Since joining, Stephen has also introduced his children to the YMCA. They learned to swim and were involved in a variety of programs including Indian Guides. Eventually his children joined Boy Scouts and Stephen became a Scoutmaster. “I took my troop back-packing to Philmont Scout Ranch twice, Montana and Isle Royale, and a 400 bike tour of Wisconsin.”

While his kids kept him involved, he continued to be active after his children grew too old for Boy Scouts. “At age 49 I did my first triathlon sponsored in part by the Y. I have been hooked ever since. If my body holds up I hope to do my last one at age 80.” He has enjoyed meeting and chatting with other YMCA members, particularly, he says, “The old guys with whom I trade training tips and get to complain about our aches and pains.”

Stephen says, “What success I have achieved I owe to my parents, my graduate professor—Dr Martin J. Ulmer—who would not let me give up, and colleagues who helped edit my scientific papers.” Of the YMCA, Stephen says, “Spending time at the Y has contributed to my physical and mental health and has allowed me to keep back packing, canoeing, hunting and partaking in other outdoor activities.”