

A CELEBRATION OF THE



Staff photos by Nick Danna/editor@PhornixvilleNews.com
Staff and administrators of the Daniel J. Detwiler Phoenixville branch of the Freedom Valley YMCA join members of the Detwiler and Thomson families in cutting the ribbon on the newly renovated and expanded facility on Sunday.

Renovated YMCA hosts donors' event

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PHOENIXVILLE — More than anything, Sunday's dedication of the newly renovated and expanded Daniel J. Detwiler Phoenixville branch of the Freedom Valley YMCA was about family.

An emotional event for staff, administrators, members and donors like the Detwiler and Thomson families, the ceremony honored those who have made the YMCA an integral part of their lives.

"My family was like many others with connections to this YMCA," said Fern

Detwiler, speaking on behalf of her family. "Having our Daniel's name on this building is an honor and it warms a mother's heart."

The family of Jonathan and Gloria Detwiler, along with Joe and JoAnn Thomson, were the largest benefactors of the YMCA's expansion and renovation efforts at the facility on Potthouse Road and Sunday's invitation-only event was intended to honor those two families as well as Daniel J. Detwiler and Bradley S. Thomson, whose name adorns the new Activity Center.

"This is really something when you see the community get together and deliver a building like this," said Joe Thompson, speaking to a large crowd on the gymnasi-

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um floor inside the new Activity Center.

With the building's official rededication, **YMCA** staff expressed their excitement at their enhanced ability to provide the services that the Y's members have come to count on over the years, but branch executive director Jon Agnew said that the Y will continue to be more than just a building.

"We're very thankful for this new facility, but it's the people that make the Y — the donors, the volunteers and the staff that make it happen," Agnew said. "It's an exciting day. The expanded facilities are a blessing for the Phoenixville community. It's state-of-the-art and I would put it up against any other YMCA in the country."

Just before the kickoff of Sunday's rededication celebration, another family honored one of its members with a cere-

mony at the Y's new soccer fields.

The family of Craig W. Hennessy dedicated the new fields in his honor at noon on Sunday. Hennessy, a Phoenixville resident who passed away five years ago, was a long-time volunteer and coach at the YMCA, coaching indoor and outdoor soccer for approximately 10 years, according to his brother-in-law Rick Holly.

"It's hard to imagine that it's been five years since Craig was gone," said brother Scott Hennessy. "It seems like yesterday because he lives on in all of us."

Hennessy's children, Amy and Jamie, unveiled a memorial plaque dedicating the fields.

"They were touched by [the experience]," said their mother, Kathy Hennessy-Hartman. "He coached both of them here, and they both play here all of the time."



Staff photo by Barry Taglieber/btaglieber@PhoenixvilleNews.com

Members of the Detwiler and Thomson families sit on the front row during the dedication of the Daniel J. Detwiler Phoenixville branch of the Freedom Valley YMCA and Bradley S. Thomson Activity Center.