

JAMES A. DRAPER

Philanthropist of the Year
YMCA of Frederick County

By Richard Foot

In his sweet and gentle tribute to age and aging, sports columnist and professional musician Mitch Albom, illuminates the gifts of love, insight, courage and generosity he received in the visits he shared on Tuesdays with Morrie. In his every-Sunday visits over a seven year period with his nonagenarian neighbor, our Philanthropy Award honoree, too, learned many valuable lessons of life – foremost the call to serve.

Growing up on a working farm in Frederick County, Jim Draper absorbed the ethic and values that only early-rising and hard work can instill, shaping his life and his service to others.

James A. Draper, Certified Public Accountant, has practiced public accounting in Frederick for over four decades. Formerly a member of the faculty at Mount Saint Mary's University, Jim has broad experience in the field of taxation with a concentration in real estate, start-ups and land preservation.

Isaiah cries out: "You have been a refuge for the poor, a refuge for the needy in his distress, a shelter from the storm and a shade from the heat." Responding to those in our community in need of shelter, Jim Draper has made it possible for the marginalized of our society – those with prison records – to have safe and secure housing in properties he owns, enabling them to rebuild their lives.

This Frederick County farm boy has internalized the maxim from Luke: "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required." As a Frederick JAYCEE, Jim embodied the JAYCEE credo – "Service to humanity is the best work of life." A charter member of the Rotary Club of Fredericktowne, whose motto is "Service Above Self", Jim contributed measurably to the foundation of this local service organization.

Jim's introduction to the YMCA of Frederick County, you might say, was "by the books" – the ledgers and journals of the charitable organization. As a young CPA he was assigned the audit work for the Y in 1975. Through the lens of non-profit fund accounting, IRS Form 990 preparation, and exposure to Y people and programs, Jim discovered that the Y is a powerful association of men, women and children joined together by a shared commitment to nurturing the potential of kids, promoting healthy living, and fostering a sense of social responsibility.

Jim Draper joined the Y governing board in 2009, serving two terms, the final as board chair. Jim has leant his professional skills as a member of the Y's Finance and Audit Committees. Most recently Jim chaired the Inner Family Gifts Division of the Y's South County Capital Campaign. Jim's YMCA Philanthropy has been all-encompassing – Annual campaigns, golf tournaments, hall of fame, and capital campaign. Jim and his wife Laurie are members of the Y's Heritage Club.

Among his civic roles, Jim has provided leadership to the Monocacy Aquatic Club, and has been board chair of Heartly House, whose laudable mission is to end domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse.

Stewardship is a theological belief that humans are responsible for the world and should care for it. Jim Draper subscribed to one of the central traditions of Native Americans:

that the land is sacred, and land should be treated with respect. As the current Treasurer of the Catoctin Land Trust, whose mission is to preserve and protect the rural landscape and cultural history of the Blue Ridge and Piedmont areas of central Maryland, Jim is earnestly working on the merger of four land trusts in Frederick County, fulfilling his role as steward of the manifold grace of God.

Philanthropy has been a fire hot enough to forge a country like America, and remains a passion powerful enough to bind it together today. The YMCA of Frederick County is pleased to honor JAMES A. DRAPER as YMCA Philanthropist of the Year. We salute Jim Draper for his leadership, stewardship and service.

Should you or a loved one be interested in learning more about giving options at the YMCA of Frederick County, please contact Tom Clingman at (301)663-5131 or tclingman@frederickymca.org