



Vicki Keith, local firefighter... also swims a little...

**GETTING BACK IN THE WATER -  
"BUTTERFLY VICKI"  
IS COMING OUT OF RETIREMENT IN  
SUPPORT OF THE YMCA**

Kingston (ON), May 5, 2005 (Press release from the Kingston YMCA)– Vicki Keith, Amherst Island's marathon swimmer, is coming out of retirement, this August, to raise money in support of a facility expansion at the Kingston Family YMCA.

Vicki will enter Lake Ontario in Oswego, New York, and swim the butterfly stroke, for over 80 kilometres, to Kingston, Ontario. In doing so, she hopes to raise over \$200,000 in support of the Kingston Family YMCA's new pool, set a new world record, and to reach a personal goal of raising one million dollars for charitable causes. The swim is slated to begin, weather permitting, during the first week in August, and the specific date will be determined according to the weather conditions of that week.

"I am climbing back into Lake Ontario this summer to reinforce in the minds of young people that nothing is impossible. I want to inspire the Y Knot children to reach greater heights. I want to give them the same thing I was able to give to the children at Variety Village – a place to belong," said Vicki.

Known to Kingstonians as "Butterfly Vicki", she returned to Kingston in 2001 to develop the Kingston Family YMCA's Y Knot Programs for children with physical disabilities. The programs support and encourage children with disabilities to achieve new heights by strengthening their mind, spirit and body. They have helped children who were unable to walk, learn to run, and non-swimmers to become some of the fastest in the country in their classification.

"The Kingston Family YMCA's Y Knot Programs are about building self-confidence. They are about showing young people that nothing is impossible – that, with hard work and determination, they can accomplish anything they set their minds on," said Vicki.

Vicki began her marathon swimming career at the age of 23. Today, she holds a phenomenal 14 World Records, has received numerous awards and recognition, including becoming a member of the Order of Canada (Canada's highest honour), and has raised \$800,000, to date, for children with disabilities.

Donations in support of the swim can be made by cash or cheque at the Membership Services Desk of the Kingston Family YMCA. The YMCA is open Monday through Friday from 5:30 am to 11 pm, and Saturday and Sunday from 7:30 am to 8:30 pm.

The Kingston Family YMCA is currently finalizing plans for a major facility expansion and rejuvenation. The vision for the facility includes a new 25-metre pool, expanded health, fitness and recreation areas, a regional physical activity training centre for children with physical disabilities, and improved services to youth, teens, adults and seniors. This expanded facility will enable the YMCA to further respond to the increasing demands from the community for enhanced general and specialized physical activity and child care services.

