

SEPTEMBER 2019 MEMBER OF THE MONTH

JIM LAWLEY

This month we have selected Jim Lawley as the Member of the Month! Jim has been a member of the Southern Boone Area YMCA since October 2018. Jim's story about his road to self-improvement is remarkable. He was faced with some tough life decisions and knew that he had to make a change, and fast. I will let Jim tell you his story:

"My name is Jim Lawley and I am a retired United Methodist minister. I had been struggling with End Stage Kidney Disease for three and half years when a living donor stepped forward and volunteered to give me a kidney. She lived in Denver so I went there to meet with the transplant team at the University of Colorado hospital. A detailed examination brought a unanimous decision. I was not healthy enough, and probably never would be, for a transplant. Not satisfied with lifelong dialysis, I came home and joined the Southern Boone Area YMCA. A previous life threatening accident had left me with many orthopedic challenges and many machines would not work for me. However, I found one that I could ride which was the recumbent bicycle. I came every day and rode up to 40 minutes and did other workouts too. After losing 50lbs, I was called back to Colorado. They couldn't believe they were talking to the same person as before. The doctors set the date for the transplant but at the last minute a heart cauterization revealed the need for a heart bypass surgery.

I was sent back home to do cardiac rehab. I went to the hospital three days a week and the other days I came to the YMCA and duplicated the workout. Six months to the day, I went back to Denver and received a kidney that is working perfectly. I still come into the YMCA every day to attempt to improve some cardiac problems that came up during the surgery.

I am grateful to my living donor that made such a sacrifice for me and thankful that we have a YMCA in Ashland that played such an important role in helping me to better my health.”

I was told by several members that Jim would be a great candidate for member of the month but I didn't understand why until I spoke with his wife, Bonnie, on the phone. What a wild roller coaster ride the Lawley family has been through the last couple of years. Jim has a positive attitude and a kind personality. He was deserving of his kidney but he knew that he was going to have to fight to earn it. We are sure happy to hear that Jim is in better health; keep up the hard work Jim!

Sincerely,

Derek Mordica