

STARS SHINE FOR YMCA FUND RAISER

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By Gregory Foley

Express Staff Writer

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A two-day fund-raising event for the Wood River Community YMCA was declared a strong success Monday, prompting optimism that the proposed Ketchum recreation facility will garner newfound local support.

After the YMCA's annual Celebrity Classic Sunday and Monday at Sun Valley Resort, the organization's director of development, Mike Wolter, said he believes the event raised well in excess of \$100,000 for the project. "The event went extremely well," Wolter said, noting that revenues are estimated to have exceeded those of the 2002 Celebrity Classic fund-raising gala, which brought in approximately \$120,000.

Academy Award-winning actor Tom Hanks hosted the event, which included a dinner and auction at the Sun Valley Inn's Limelight Room on Sunday, followed by a golf tournament with numerous celebrities on Monday.

Tickets for the Sunday dinner and entertainment cost \$250 per person, while entry into the golf tournament cost \$2,500. ___ The Sunday dinner drew a jovial crowd of nearly 300 project supporters. Celebrities attending the event included legendary ski racer Picabo Street, hockey star Jeremy Roenick, actor Tom Poston and author Mariel Hemingway.

Wolter said 17 teams competed in Monday's golf tournament. He added that a "substantial gift" was pledged Monday to the YMCA on the Sun Valley Golf Course, but said he could not disclose the amount.

In a silent auction Sunday evening, supporters bid on fine wines, vacation getaways, furniture and various arts and crafts.

Wolter on Monday said the Wood River Community YMCA—formerly the Bill Janss Community Center—prior to the event had raised and saved approximately \$1.3 million to put toward the estimated \$16 million cost of the proposed facility.

He noted that the \$16 million figure includes approximately \$12 million in so-called "hard costs" to pay for construction of the facility and \$4 million in "soft costs," which include design work, engineering, fees, contingency costs and a \$1 million operating reserve.

The Celebrity Classic event was the fifth of its kind, with previous revenues going to support the Janss Center initiative. The Janss Center earlier this year entered into a partnership with the YMCA, but the new proposal remains very similar to those discussed last year for the Janss Center.

The proposed 95,000-square-foot YMCA—which would be located on the city of Ketchum’s Park-and-Ride Lot—would include an ice rink that converts to an events center, two swimming pools, a fitness center and a climbing wall.

The city of Ketchum has pledged a matching grant of \$3 million for the project that would be delivered once the project managers have raised \$3 million.

Wolter noted that the funds pledged by Ketchum would come from city local-option tax revenues. The city’s pledge also would be subject to voter approval.