

LETTER: BE PART OF THE SOLUTION

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By Jennifer Hazard Davis of Hailey

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I am writing this letter in support of the YMCA as I get ready to attend a YMCA swim team reunion in Boise. Thirty years ago my mom and dad took me to the YMCA to join the swim team and to sign us up as a family for membership. Today the women I call my closest friends are those that I grew up with swimming in the pools at the YMCA.

In those pools I learned what the words commitment, teamwork, friendship and honor were about. Many of those lessons were from a great man named Jim Everett. Jim was one of my first swim coaches and now he is the CEO of the YMCAs in Boise. The Wood River YMCA project is blessed to have a man of his character involved. Jim has been given numerous awards by the Boise community for his love of children and dedication to the community as a whole.

When I graduated from high school I went on to college at Florida State University on a full ride scholarship that never would have happened without the YMCA.

The memories I have of my family time at the YMCA are special. The Y offers a place of community for young and old to share. I know the YMCA saved many of my friends' lives. It was a place that was safe. A place where adults cared about what kids were doing and held us accountable. A place where we found mentors and a place where we became teachers.

The 12 years I spent swimming at the YMCA in Boise were shared with kids from all over the Treasure Valley. At that time there was only one YMCA in Boise. Families from the bench, east side, west side and as far out as Meridian, Eagle and Mountain Home drove to the downtown YMCA to be a part of the amazing organization.

I would urge anyone who is on the fence about a YMCA coming to the valley to call me or to contact any of the YMCA plan coordinators. I would be happy to share my feelings with you and help you to see why I chose to be a part of the solution by getting involved. To me and my family the addition of a YMCA to our valley is a gem.