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Monumental Moments ... 6th Edition
GARDEN CITY FAMILY YMCA
2014

Acknowledgments



The Monumental Moment book is a cherished book that highlights the different stories and impact we have on the community each year. A big THANKS goes out to everyone involved. Whether it was a staff person, volunteer, member or program participant, we transformed lives and made a difference. Usually, you just hear all the negative day in and day out, this book is all positive and wouldn't be published without the support of all the following people:

All YMCA staff

All YMCA Members

All Program Participants

All the Y Volunteers

All the YMCA Donors and Supporters

Thank you to all the staff. This book would not be possible without your work. The staff helped create these relationships, striving for our three focus areas and putting our mission into action. Keep up the good work!

**WE HAVE
IT ALL
HERE**



Focus Areas:

For Youth Development, Healthy Living and Social Responsibility

Our Mission:

“To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all.”

Our Motto:

“Where Values Meets Value”

In Dedication to Bob and Jeannie Dey



This year embarked a GREAT list of special friends of the YMCA. I have always said we have the best community and support for our YMCA. That is what makes the YMCA a special place for so many people in this community. Our Management Team nominated eight names this year for the book. It was a tough decision for many to vote. Some of our team are very new to the YMCA and don't know about our rich heritage. A few of my nominees

dealt with our cherished past. One of those was the Dey's. Bob and Jeannie Dey volunteered as our YMCA wrestling coaches for 29 years. They moved to Garden City in 1975 and in 1976 help coach the YMCA wrestling club. In those days, they would practice upstairs in our aerobics room and would have to set-up and tear down the mat each night. This doesn't count all the administrative work, fundraising and running our local tournament. Isn't that AMAZING? The Dey's spent countless hours helping mold the future wrestlers in our community and played a very valuable part in developing the tradition-rich wrestling history in our community. The first four state titles for Garden City can be attributed to some of the work the Dey's did in the early stages of their careers. The Dey's stopped volunteering in 2005. In 2010, the two individual champions for the High School – Joey Dozier and Lane Greenlee were taught by Bob and in the YMCA program! The Dey's have joined the YMCA recently and work out pretty regular. Some of you might know this, but some of you don't. The most amazing part about the Dey's is that Bob who I have been told is one of the greatest technicians in the sport is partly blind. And Jeannie is part deaf. But, let me tell you the magic they create to help the sport was unbelievable! Bob was even in the gym the other day helping a wrestler with some moves. He still has it in his blood to help! Please help us by honoring the Dey's with our 2014 Monumental Moment book dedication. This is truly a blessing for us to recognize a great couple who has truly given back to our community in many ways!

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**"And give thanks for everything to God the Father in
the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."**

- Ephesians 5:20

January 7

Job Well Done

Jackie Regan

Over the weekend we had a little “weather” blow in (big surprise in Kansas) and Terry Darden was nice enough to head over to the Y to help with his snow blower and clear the parking lot and the sidewalks. However, he was pleasantly surprised to get here and see that Joe’s staff had done a great job already getting everything cleared for our members. Kudos to Joe’s staff and thanks Terry for being willing to help!

January 14

Amazing

Chad Knight

I was visiting with Charles Aquilera about our spinning classes. He told me that the lady teaching the class was amazing and he didn’t think the class was going to be very hard. His daughter attends a spinning class at the Y in Wichita and she told him to take it. About three months ago, he asked me about them and I told him to try it. He said he finally did and he didn’t think he had those muscles in his body that he has been using. But, he kept on saying the class is amazing and the teacher is great. GOOD JOB Linda!

January 21

No better

Chad Knight

I was attending a funeral for Ray Fox. Ray was the father of one of my high school buddies, Mark Fox. Ray also was a member at the YMCA and used our PREP program with Sarah Tighe. After the funeral, I went to say my condolences to Elaine. Elaine told me that she was very impressed with the work Sarah did with Ray, but Ray said there was nobody better than Sarah. He would tell Elaine that she was better than anybody else that he worked with and really liked everything she did. GOOD JOB Sarah!

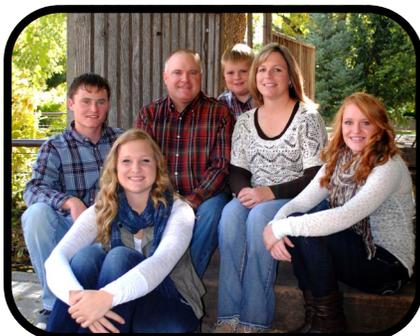
January 28

Exceptional Tours

Sarah Tighe

This winter, USD 457 requested that I speak with their nurses regarding Worksite Wellness in order to help them get a program going throughout the school district. They also wanted to set-up a time for a tour to be given of the facility. Keali, who was our Membership Coordinator at the time, volunteered to give the tour. The nurses had nothing but wonderful things to say about their experience during the tour. They loved how knowledgeable and enthusiastic Keali was while giving the tour. A couple of them even mentioned signing up for a membership because she did such a wonderful job! Keali is a true asset to our YMCA and I am so happy to get to work with her!

Perspective from a Campaigner Loren Goss



Hi my name is Loren Goss, my family and I have been members at the YMCA for the last 10-12 years. I have been helping with the Annual Support Campaign for the last six years and have really enjoyed it. There are times I wonder if I can find enough time to contact potential donors, but I make the time because I know how much it means to so many people. If it wasn’t for the Annual Support Campaign there would be so many individuals and families left out of the activities at the YMCA. I take pride in contacting people to get the donations for the Support Campaign. I appreciate the YMCA for allowing me the opportunity to give back to them by being able to help with the campaign.

February 4

One small step

Jackie Regan

The other day I had member, Arlie Difreese stop by my office and sit down for a minute to chat. He informed me that he had come in to walk on the treadmill and had a goal of ½ a mile for the day. However, when he hit the ½ mile mark and he just kept going. He explained that he had some health problems and knee problems and even with that he was able to go the whole mile. I was proud of Arlie, it's not easy to push through barriers and work to improve even when facing challenges. He should be extremely proud of his accomplishment and continue to set goals and strive to improve and I am proud to work for an organization that helps people do so!

February 11

The swimming effect

Chad Knight

I was swimming in the pool during my usually lap swimming time and recently was joined by Brenda and Drew Unruh. Occasionally, I would race Drew and always visit with both of them. Today, on my visit, Brenda told me how much weight she lost and how she felt so much better. She attributed it all to swimming because that was the only thing she added to her workout and could do with her knees and such. I said GREAT JOB Brenda! Isn't that awesome!

February 18

Don't Give Up

Monica Colborn

Swim team parents are supportive, no matter whether it's their own child competing, or someone else's. It was very evident on Saturday that swim team is one big family, no matter what colors you wear, or what team you swim for.

A little girl competing in an 8 and under event was almost an entire lap behind the rest of her competition. As she made the turn on her final 25, a mom from another team starting cheering her on. Before long, the entire crowd was shouting her name and cheering for this little girl. When she emerged from the water, she had such a smile on her face, you would have thought she won the event.

February 25

Jayhawk Soup

Jackie Regan

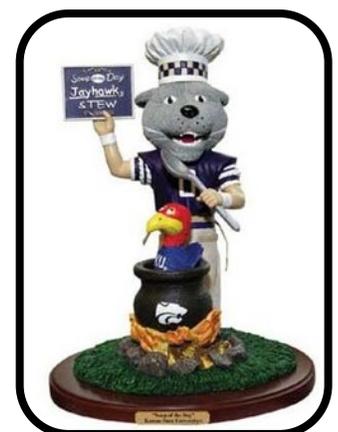
I have been working with the great staff over at Commerce Bank on organizing a training we are hosting for our staff at their facility. I emailed Rich regarding lunch and received the following email:

Jackie,

We would like to provide lunch for your group. Please let Torre know how many will be attending and we will have it ready for you. Your staff does an amazing job for the Y and the community.

P.S. If Chad plans to attend, we can also provide Jayhawk soup. It does not cost much and the soup will make you a lousy football player after you eat it.

I literally laughed out loud when I read this on my phone during the meeting and immediately shared it with the staff. Thanks Rich, for the compliments and the laugh at Chad's expense.



CEO Highlight Chad Knight

Each year the YMCA continues to add exciting chapters to our rich heritage. This year, my highlight is our two main meetings we held this past year; our Annual Recognition and Celebration Banquet and our Hall of Fame Celebration Banquet. The past 15 years, I have been in charge of the annual meeting. When I took on this task in 2000, I wanted to create a bigger event for everyone to enjoy. This would allow more people to know and understand what the YMCA is all about. The ARC Banquet gives us a chance to tell our YMCA story and hear the powerful messages about the lives we help transform. In 1999, when I was first involved with the annual meeting as a program director, we had one award that was given; Spirit, Mind and Body. This was essentially the Coach of the Year in the Sports Department which was an award I wanted to use to recognize a volunteer who went above and beyond the call of duty. Since then, we have added the following awards:

- 2000: Mission Champion, Committee Champion and Award of Merits.
- 2001: "Mac Foreman" Courage Champion and Character Development
- 2002: Partner in Health (PIH) and Service Award. The PIH is our Corporate Member of the Year.
- 2003: Employee Champion
- 2006: Family Champion
- 2007: Healthy Heart Awards
- 2008: Humanitarian Champion, Member Champion and Ambassador Champion
- 2010: "Darlene Mathias" Volunteer Champion
- 2011: Healthy Living, Social Responsibility and Youth Development Champion.
- 2012: Changed the name to Annual Recognition and Celebration Banquet
- 2013: John Wooden Character Champion and ASC All-Stars

The "Mac Foreman" Courage Award and "Darlene Mathias" Volunteer Champion are two awards we present that are very close to my heart. First of all, Mac Foreman was a long-time member of our YMCA. He even had the bus bring him every day when he was in assisted living and was not able to drive anymore. One year, I believe it was in 2004 my staff and I decided to rename our Courage Champion, the "Mac Foreman" award. This was one of the best things we ever did! It was something that Mac cherished and I would venture to bet he is still grinning each time we give this award. One of our members, who used to take care of Mac in the nursing home, said he would tell him every day the YMCA named an award after him. When we first opened the youth fitness center, I would check on the volunteers that supervised. One day I asked the volunteer why she was willing to volunteer for us. She said "because the YMCA saved my Dad's life". I found out she was Mac's daughter. Believe me, I was taken back. If I would have been sitting, I would have fallen out of my chair. This was UNBELIEVABLE!!! She told me that her dad, Mac Foreman was diagnosed with diabetes and he was very adamant to make it to the YMCA every day to swim. She said it changed his life! WOW! A person like Mac is what the Annual Recognition and Celebration banquet is all about. Everyone should know about him and know his story. Darlene is another great example. What an amazing lady. She is so dedicated to the YMCA. She has volunteered for us for more than 30 years. She cares about her participants, the members and all the staff at the YMCA.



She has volunteered for us for more than 30 years. She cares about her participants, the members and all the staff at the YMCA. She is the first to praise someone even if it is something as simple as being impressed with a new lifeguard because he was friendly to the participants in her classes. She always accentuates on the positive. She seldom misses a day. Darlene had a rough year this year with the loss of her husband, Roland after he fought a hard battle of failing health. Even though this was one of the most difficult years of her life she was still dedicated to the YMCA and concerned about her aerobics classes. She was at her classes anytime that she could be and was always thankful when she was able to be there. What a lady! These two amazing people, Mac and Darlene are wonderful examples of why the Annual banquet is so important. The changes to the banquet have been great and give us the opportunity to recognize staff, volunteers, donors and other

special friends of the YMCA. This is a time of celebration as well. It never fails that I will get choked up when talking about some of these special people in our organization. I think everyone knows how passionate I am about the YMCA, but the joy this year was seeing our record attendance for this meeting. This is something that gives us the chance to tell our YMCA story! Honestly, this event can really sway a member into Living Our Cause. I have even recruited a new Board member through this meeting.

A few years ago, we started The Hall of Fame Celebration banquet to induct new members into our Hall of Fame. We had a record in attendance this past year which attributes to the members we inducted; Darlene Mathias, Max & Marianne Miller and Clifford & Pat Mayo. The stories that were read and translated that evening made an impact not only on me, but everyone who was in attendance. They left a lasting impression that will not soon be forgotten.

I am just so thankful for all of you. I am so fortunate to work with such amazing people. Thank you all so much for everything. Words cannot express how grateful I am to each and every one of you. As the CEO, I am proud to lead this wonderful organization and look forward to more exciting chapters yet to be written!

“And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.”

-Matthew 17:20

March 11

Twice Blessed

Karen Berry

Last Tuesday and Wednesday most of the professional staff from both branches met at Commerce Bank for an enlightening training “Introduction to Fiscal Management” conducted by Boyd Williams from YMCA of the Pikes Peak Region. One might have expected this to be a dry training but Boyd was able to make it both entertaining and enlightening. The accommodations at Commerce Bank were very nice. YMCA trainings usually start with a devotion or an inspirational Y story. Boyd shared one with us on the first day and ask for a volunteer for the second day, somehow my hand went up (not sure how that happened) but I am glad it did. I kept thinking it is not just about a story but every person who comes in the Y has a story. Sometimes they may just be bored or stressed and need to work off a little tension, no matter how simple they are there for a reason. It occurred to me that at the place we were meeting there were several YMCA members employed there. I checked with Richard Harp, Commerce Bank President and also a Finance Committee member at the Garden City Family YMCA to see if we could ask one more favor of their time.

The next morning our meeting began with 4 of Commerce Bank staff sharing their personal Y stories. Rich was the first to speak and he very graciously welcomed us to Commerce Bank and went on to share his story with Y. His children grew up in Y sports and he now serves on our Board of Directors. Gabe Gallardo shared about his Y experience and how he became involved in racquetball. Becky Robles shared that she liked the 24 hour access to our fitness center and reported that her children liked the staff (that brought a cheer from her audience). Gerald Miller shared that both he and his wife have had a long term relationship with the Y, a family thing.

I would say we were twice blessed by Commerce Bank. Thanks Commerce!

March 24

Overdue recognition

Chad Knight

I got this email from Sandy Almos, who is the principal at Edith Schuerman. Here is a copy of the email:

Wow! I am so happy that Danny is going to go to the YMCA dinner tonight and will be recognized! Please know that I would be there in support of Danny, but Edith Scheuerman has a fundraiser night at Freddy’s and I have to be there instead. We are very proud of Danny and I know the recognition, although well deserved, is hard for him to accept. But, thank you for continuing to support Danny in all of his efforts! Danny and the basketball program he devotes every Saturday to makes a HUGE difference in the lives of our kids. Many start the season/program with little confidence and continually gain skills, a sense of accomplishment, an understanding of teamwork and a bit of swagger :-D as their confidence grows.

Chad, as you know, Tim started this program many years ago and we have had many staff members assist with coaching and attend games in order to support their students. It has been a win-win situation for all of us. We appreciate the YMCA’s support in allowing us to continue this program ~ even when a few opposing spectators had complaints, you stood behind us. We are forever grateful! Thank you!

I thought this was AWESOME and deserved to be nominated for our Monumental Moment book. GREAT JOB Danny!

Perspective from Board of Directors President Justin Sanchez



I took over as the Board President this past year after great previous leadership had developed an amazing staff of forward thinkers. I had served on the Board and Executive Committee for a couple years when I missed a meeting and became the president-elect. This past year gave me insight as to how a "Not For Profit" organization should run. The impact of a well ran organization touches hundreds if not thousands of individuals and families in our community. The piece, which has always intrigued me about the Y, is the deeply rooted Christian values and its willingness to impact lives in community. The Y is a testament of hard work and faith, serving local people through core values of honesty, respect, responsibility and caring.

The Garden City Family YMCA staff and Board do a remarkable job, and I look forward to what the Y has in store for Garden City and this community it serves. Thank you!

April 1

Annual Meeting 2014

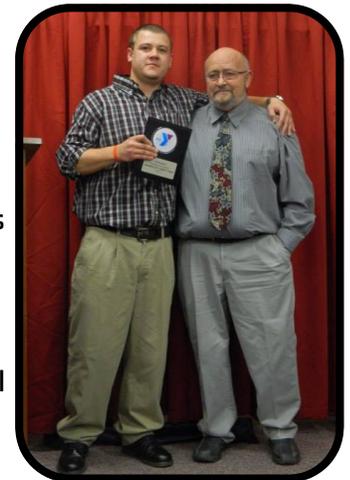
Back in the day there was a rock band called "Blood, Sweat and Tears", and for some that describes the work put into this year's event. Marcy put her heart and soul into making this event happen, she even recruited her father to help. We decided he should receive the Trifecta award. Marcy gave until it hurt and then she gave more.

Beautiful stories were briefly shared about the people who make our Y what it is today. Humble caring people doing their best to become who they are supposed to be.

Ro was there looking so beautiful and our littlest "Y rat" shared a big grin but no words. I cried as Chad awarded the outgoing board member awards, BooYah I believe is the word for that. From eleven months to eighty two years, each came with a story of their own. Friends came, family came; we joined in feasting and fellowship. Our own quiet CJ spoke with the eloquence of a congressman. Doug made us laugh as he roasted Chad. The COOP shared their beautiful facility and Golden Coral feed over one hundred people who gave their time to help us celebrate. We shared loss, we shared hope, we shared joy...everyone told Y.

But for me the most beautiful words I heard was when Jennifer Jones said, "I am just being a Mom."

Karen Berry



April 1

Time in the water

Crystal Ibarra

I was coming to the YMCA, as I walked through the lap pool area I Darlene Mathias, a volunteer that's been here for over 28 years. She greets everyone with a smile and a hello. Darlene teaches our aerobics class Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings. She came in with obstacles in her life, just to have some time in the water. All she needed was 15 minutes and she left with a smile on her face.

April 8

Sharing our Mission

Marcy VenJohn

The first week of indoor soccer has begun and there were videos all over Facebook two in particular were from Leslie Wenzel and Laura Guy both of their girls are on separate teams but they played each other and they are best friends so in their video they were holding hands and everyone was just playing together! It was so wonderful and just put a smile on my face! The girls didn't care whose team they were on they were just having fun and they set a great example for everyone to follow. Also along with that post Doug Marshall our sports director had posted and told the ladies that he was glad that the girls had fun and if they had any questions or needed anything to let him know. The relationships that Doug has with our coaches and parents are amazing and he is a great example that the Y isn't just a gym it is SO MUCH MORE!!



April 15

Scholarships

Crystal Ibarra

I was working at the Welcome Center and I had a prospect member come up to me and say "I just want to say thank you to the YMCA! I had a Gold's Gym membership where I'm from and they offered nothing like this. My two kids and the one on the way will really enjoy this." We have a scholarship program for people who need assistance with paying for their membership. She qualified and was just happy we were willing to help her and her family. We have a Annual Support Campaign each year that helps pay for the ones in need. Knowing we can make a difference in someone's life is amazing.

April 22

Garden City is the YMCA

Keali Carr

Morgan Hagerman is on my Aquatics committee and I believe we were talking about starting a new program call "Master Swim Club." It is a program for adults only receiving beginner, intermediate, advanced, or triathlon skills/trainings. Morgan said that this Master Swim Club program will really help open the Y up to adults in the Aquatics department more. He then said something next that really caught my attention. "I have only lived in Garden City for a short time and when I first thought of Garden City, I thought of work but since I have joined the Y, I have something else to look forward to. Now, Garden City, to me, is known as the YMCA, not just work." I loved it! This is what the Y needs to be known for!

April 29

Director Gio

Krystal Richardson

Isn't it AMAZING the things that come out of the littlest of mouths? I am so blessed to have the opportunity to hear some SUPER FANTASTIC things from several of our childcare kiddos on a daily basis. There is one day in particular that I would like to share with all of you! I was walking down the hallway to go to our Childwatch room and Giovanni Benitez stopped me in the hallway and said "Miss Krystal guess what, when I am older I am going to work at the Y" and I said "oh yeah, it's a GREAT place to work" and he proceeded to tell me that knew how it is AMAZING and that he will have an office of his own and I could come and visit him!!! Gio has been a part of our Four-Year old program for the past year and will be going into our Florence Wilson program when school starts. He is such a kindred spirit and touches everyone's hearts with his enthusiasm and positive attitude. Thank you Gio for helping me remember how great it is to be an employee at the YMCA!



Aquatics Director Highlight Keali Shelton

How do you pick something that highlights your career in one year? Honestly, how can you when you work for a company whose' cause is more valuable than anything else. People walk through the YMCA's doors all the time, changing, gaining a valuable experience, or even completing a goal; how do you narrow all the good surroundings to one? It is really hard.

I have worked at the YMCA for almost 3 years and 1 ½ years out of the 3, I was the membership coordinator so I have heard and dealt with Keeping Our Promise memberships. A KOP is a special membership, award, for students who have been doing well in school and expressing the YMCA's core values; caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. Well, this year, I was able to be part of the presentations and actually experience these awards face to face with the winners.

As I am sitting at my desk, Chad sends out an email with some of the winners of the KOP. I open it and read through the names starting from the top as well as seeing what school they are in. I get to the Buffalo Jones section and thought to myself, "hey, my two sisters go to that school, how cool would that be if one of them won!" I continue to read the names and I read Chloe Car... "that is my sister, she won a KOP!" I immediately buzz Chad and tell him that my sisters' name is on the list and I ask if I can help present this award to her; he told me that it would awesome if I was there. I call my dad and let him know that Chloe won and told him a little about what the KOP is and then I call my step mom and tell her the same story as well. I also asked them both to not say anything about her winning or that I was going to be the one who gave her the award so it would be a surprise.



The day comes where I get to help present this awesome award to my very own sister. The ceremony was held at her school and my dad was able to be present and watch. I was literally holding back tears before Chad started speaking. Chad calls 4 kids names before my sisters name and as soon as he starts to say Chloe I am baling. As I look up, Chloe is crying, Susan Dempsey is crying, my dad is crying, and almost every single staff member at that school. I was not crying because it was my sister, I was crying because she won the award by doing so well in school and showing the YMCA's core values. I was so proud of her for working so hard and the fact that I was the one who got to give this award to her was simply amazing!

“Do Justice, love mercy, walk humbly with your God.”

-Micah 6:8

May 6

2014 Prayer Breakfast

Karen Berry

"For where two or three are gathered together in my Name, I am there in the midst of them" Matthew 18:20

Thursday May 1st was National Day of Prayer. Thanks to the help of Terry Major, Leland Jackson, Golden Corral, Marcy, Jackie and Joe's crew we had a very nice celebration. Chad greeted our guest.

We were blessed by Charlie Drussell who shared his story of his experience with death and how God was not done with his work here on earth. He shared his witnessing experiences while in the hospital and other opportunities he has had since then. One man accepted Christ as his savior only forty eight hours prior to his death. It was a beautiful and moving testimony.

Terry and Leland led the prayers for the group. Then each table was invited to pray for our nation, armed services, and local needs and praise. Tables were praying so intensely that we closed about 5 minutes later than intended.

Breakfast continued through the morning and many enjoyed eating after their workouts. Johnny helped with clean up.

Thank you Lord for being among us today.



May 20

The Right Moves

Jackie Regan

As I walked through the gym the other night I noticed one of our members, Bob Dey, had the mat down from the aerobics room and was working on wrestling moves to a kid. Literally, Bob was on the mat demonstrating while the kid and Bob's wife watched. I thought it was AWESOME to see a member give back by volunteering. I know Bob coached wrestling for the YMCA for many years and had many notable wrestlers learn from him. Today, Marcy visited my office and told me that Bob was out in our fitness center singing his heart away. We both looked and he had also broken out into some dance moves! Bob, let me just say that the Y staff think you have "All the Right Moves" and can't thank you enough for the time and effort you give the Y, and the smile you give us as staff. It's truly heartwarming.

For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

-Jeremiah 29:11

CFO Highlight Karen Berry



Wow what a year! My youngest grandchild turned one and my oldest turned five. I am blessed with a job that allows me to spend time with my family and friends, and also make new friends. As with every relationship you will have joys, hurts and blessings.

Probably the biggest hurt this year was disappointing Chad. It was basically a communication drop, which I feel highly responsible; fortunately it was discovered when reviewing year end numbers. Chad is an amazing boss in the fact he has duck feathers, no not literally, but a person can go to him and release all kinds of frustrations even with him; and like water off a duck's back he does not absorb it.

From reading about the phenomenon of water off a ducks back it seems there are a couple of reasons. A special gland that produces and oil and barbicelli on their feathers, baby ducks don't have the oil and unless nurtured by their mothers they will die, at the Y youth are nurtured. Which brings me to the question, what is Chad's oil and barbicelli?

One of his characteristics is his passion for the YMCA, some of that was due to the fact he grew up here. He calls himself a Y-rat, which basically means this, it has been his home for a lot of years. Another observation is he has the God given gift of philanthropy. The definition of that word is: "the desire to promote the welfare of others, expressed especially by the generous donation of money to good causes". Now he may not have the cash to donate but he has the ability to inspire to do so and he gives more time than most have money.

I would say that YMCA of SWKS is very fortunate to have him for a leader. I am blessed to work for this organization, and it does not take but a glance around me to bring me JOY!

What kind of feathers do Jayhawk's have?

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

-Psalm 23

June 3

Greg Flowers

Karen Berry

I got a call from Janee at the front desk she said Greg Flowers was here to see me, I am thinking she must not understand who he really needs to talk to. I know he is not with our audit firm, one of our bankers, or insurance. But I tell Kandace I will go figure out what he wants. As I walk to the front desk I am thinking of all the Flowers I know but no Greg comes to mind. I get to the front desk and no one is waiting, I say who wants to talk to me to Janee and she raises a big bouquet of flowers from behind the counter. It was from my secret pal for my wedding anniversary. She makes us laugh, what a gift!

June 10

Giving so much more

Keali Carr

I was working the front desk that day as part of my DOD duties and we were so busy. A family of about 7, who was new to Garden City, came into the Y told me that they have heard a lot of good things about the Y and wanted to sign up for a membership. I offered them the tour first and then told them we could set up the membership after. They finished their tour and Troy Unruh came in and walked behind the front desk. At first I thought he was lifeguarding for me so I didn't say anything. Andy is getting ready to hand them the membership app and I saw Troy hand the mother of the family a gift certificate for a full year membership. The family had no idea and every single one of them got teary eyed. They were so thankful and it was a good first impression of Garden City and YMCA. Absolutely AMAZING!

June 24

Big Pool Triathlon Prayer

Sarah Tighe

At all of our YMCA races and events, we are asked to find someone to give a prayer before the start of the event. For the Big Pool Triathlon, I decided to ask Vince Koons if he would be interested in leading it at this year's event. His response was so heartwarming. He replied: "Wow...it would be a privilege to lead a prayer before this event. Thank you for offering and looking forward to seeing you Saturday morning. I am not a pastor, deacon or spiritual leader but I do have a favorite passage from scripture...2 Timothy 4:7...'I have fought the good fight; I have finished the race. I have kept the faith.' Kind of appropriate for all of the running and training that I do." I am so glad I had him lead the prayer. Although I was unable to attend the event and hear it, I was told by numerous people that he did a wonderful job.

"When wisdom enters your heart and knowledge is pleasant to your soul, Discretion will preserve you and understanding shall keep you"

-Proverbs 2:10-11

Family Director Highlight Krystal Richardson Rookie Year



Isn't it funny how no matter what you do in life, you will ALWAYS have a rookie year!!! 2014 was in a sense my rookie year here at the Y, but I have been with the Y for almost eight years now! I was however a rookie at taking on our Childcare department, and it like any other rookie year had its ups and downs as well as highs and lows.

My rookie highs consisted of building the relationships with parents and kids and opening up lines of communication for us all! Parents have helped me grow into this

position and become a better person all around! Summer Camp was so rewarding...I was super nervous and scared as to how it would go! Parents were still struggling with having their kiddos attend based on what had happened in prior years, but I reassured them and they gave me and my staff a chance. Our theme for the summer was "Summer of Safety" and we did a "safety" type theme every week throughout the summer. The children and staff learned about everything from first aid, to fire, to bicycle and bus safety. We made books and did different projects along with weekly field trips and the kids and staff LOVED it!!! We would begin every morning with a prayer and devotion and award our "All-Star" of the week...kids LOVE recognition!!! We ended up having 106 kiddos enrolled in our Summer Camp program and an AMAZING 50% of those enrolled were members and on a scholarship! I am so proud of all the kids and staff for making summer such and awesome adventure and I look forward to next summer!!! 2014-2015 school year has been such a blessing!!! I was beyond nervous as some of the problems from the previous year were creeping back into my mind and didn't want to fail. The year began and we were off and running and we have many new faces and friends to make! Currently our enrollment is up and we continue to build relationships daily! We welcomed a new staff member in September as Steven stepped into a new roll here at the Y. Her name is Michelle and she is my coordinator for everything that is childcare! She has inspired me to become a better person ALL around and to lean toward the Lord more for help and guidance. She is a spark of energy, full of new and innovative ideas, loves to learn new things, is and AMAZING teacher and leader and we are lucky to have her! We finished off the year with Holiday Camp and it was super successful, we even got to take the kiddos to Dodge City and go ice skating!

WOW...reading some of my highs, leaves me no room to put any lows!!! It has been a year of learning and growing for me personally and professionally. I am blessed to work here at the Y and even more blessed that parents allow me to take care of their kids from day-to-day. THANK YOU to parents, kiddos and staff for making my rookie year in our childcare department AMAZING!!!

July 1

Superstar of the Week

Krystal Richardson

So far our Summer Camp has been pretty AMAZING if I do say so myself! She have been covering different safety theme each week and the kiddos are all learning new things about safety! This summer we incorporated with our morning devotion and prayer, our SUPERSTAR of the week. This kiddo is chosen and voted on by a staff person and MUST exemplify our core values and mission each day. I was super excited to see what the kids thought of one of their peers winning some cool prizes, getting to be line leader and having their picture taken with a summary written up and hung up on our bulletin board for all to see. Each winner was brought down in front of the group on a Monday morning and recognized in front of everyone and the best part of the whole thing was parents showed up to see this happen. The children were soooo proud to be winning this award and parents were just as proud if not more and showed up to support. Thank you to all our winners this summer and to the parents for making this moment that more special for their child! THANK YOU!!!

July 8

Canada Man

Chad Knight

I was in the steam room and another person was in there. In talking with the gentlemen, he was from Canada and he works in oil fields all over the United States and he was just blown away by our YMCA. He said this is the best YMCA he has used. He said you have it all from the shake bar to great equipment in the Fitness Center to an awesome men's locker room, he said it is pretty cool. He also elaborated that the people are very welcoming and accommodating. I said that is great because I am the CEO at this YMCA. He said that is pretty cool and just went on and on some more about our YMCA.

July 8

A Helping Hand

Marcy VenJohn

The other day I came walking down the hall and saw Orlando helping Oscar down the hall, so I walked down the hall to make sure that everything was ok. Oscar told me he had over did it and Orlando was kind enough to help him out. Oscar was telling both of us all sorts of stories about life as he often does. After we had gotten Oscar to the car and told him to take care of himself Orlando told me that he had seen Oscar get up from the bikes unsteady and he said he almost fell. Orlando then told me he went over to help him out because he didn't want him to fall or get hurt. It's people like Orlando that make your heart smile! Thank you from the bottom of my heart not only for the care you gave my family but the care you gave to a complete stranger! We need more people like you these days!



"When anxiety was great within me, your consolation brought joy to my soul."

- Psalm 94:19

July 22

Blessed

Krystal Richardson



I was absolutely nervous to start my first Summer Camp here at the Y and wanted to make sure it was AMAZING for children, parents and the staff.....I didn't want to fail!!! I had everything planned down to the hour(s) and I was ready to go, even though in my gut I wanted to throw up because I was sooo nervous! Then Wyatt walked in and everything was PERFECT! He has worked here for years and knows the ropes, rules, parents and kids.....he is a BLESSING! Summer went off without a hitch and we flew right through it and then July 17th happened, Wyatt's last day as he was going on a mission trip. It was tough to see him go and not be sure if he would ever be back and below if what is posted on Facebook for ALL to see....

Wyatt Smith

July 17, 2014 •

Five summers of the YMCA summer camp are now under my belt. Those kids have taught me so much about love, patience, caring, and did I say patience already. I have grown through this job and feel so much more prepared for teaching than I think most of my counterparts will be because of it. There have been days when I questioned my sanity and days when I was excited to go back tomorrow. Today was hard because I don't know if I will ever get to go back and work with them again. Here's to the future and what God has in store for me. Thank you Gc Ymca for the opportunity to work in a fun and positive environment!!! — feeling honored.

Thank you Wyatt for being such and AMAZING example to me and helping me become a better director! You will be missed and I hope to see you again over Christmas break!!!

July 29

Super Awesome

Chad Knight

I received an email from one of our members, Jill Durst. She emailed me to see what I needed when I called her and she added some other things about the YMCA and in particular, Sarah Tighe, our Healthy Living Director. Here is a copy of that email:

“First of all.....Miss Sarah is SUPER AWESOME!!!!!! I am in her kickboxing class and we all just love her! You know she is motivational if she can get people out of bed at 4:30 in the morning”

Isn't that AWESOME!! Good job Sarah.

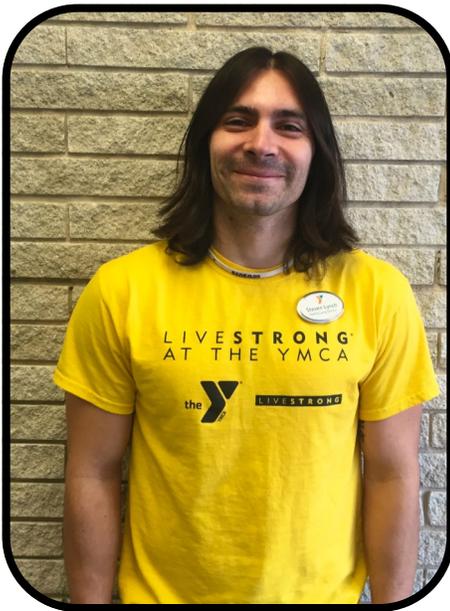
**“I can do all things through
Christ who strengthens me!”**

-Philippians 4:13

Healthy Living Director Highlight Steven Lynch

I am the Healthy Living Director here at the YMCA and I have only been in this position since September of 2014. But if anyone knows me then they know that I have been here longer than that. So my story is my YMCA journey from the time I got here to today.

So I was in Hays only needing my internship to graduate with my Bachelor's degree in Human and Health Performance with an emphasis in Sport and Recreation Management. That is when I sent my resume to different places looking for one. From all the ones that I sent my resume to only two replied back to me was one of the YMCAs in Wichita and Jackie, our Chief Operations Officer. I wanted at first to go to Wichita but I am from Lakin and felt like coming home was what was best. I was all for it when I decided but I also had to convince my wife to move back too, and she is from Holcomb, she felt like moving away from our hometowns. But In the end through talking to Jackie and coming down to Garden City to meet with her and Doug, the sports director at the time, Tina and I decided Garden City was the place. January of 2013 was when I started my internship and it lasted three months. It was a good experience for me to see how a sports program is supposed to be run. As the end of my internship was approaching I needed to figure out what to do next. From being here and working with all the staff I was offered a part-time job from Joe, who is our Maintenance Director, as a building supervisor in the evenings and on the weekends. I worked that job for awhile before I received another opportunity, again within the YMCA, as the Child Care Coordinator. This was all good for me because my wife, Tina, and I had our first child in April of 2013. It was a good job and the good thing is that I was able to stay at the YMCA. With that position I was in charge of the four year old's room. That gave me a enjoyable break from work when I needed to get up and stretch the legs. I worked in child care for about a year and a half before another opportunity to move up became available. The position that became available next would be my current position as the Healthy Living Director. From the moment I began this position it has been busy but it has been a good ride thus far. And I look forward to what the future here has in store for me and look forward to making many more good memories with my fellow staff members and members as well..... Plus still stopping in the four year old room from time to time.



Don't let the fear of striking out keep you from going to bat.

- Babe Ruth

August 12

Staff Retreat 2014

Karen Berry

We began with road games, what's in your purse?, keno, how many commercials do you know? Did someone mention bananas?

Just when you think it just doesn't get any better than this, God says you've haven't seen anything yet. Perhaps some of you remember more than one rainbow story from my Y experiences. it seems God speaks to me with rainbows when He is about to bless me. We were headed to dinner and it was the most perfect rainbow I had ever seen, from



horizon to horizon., clearly showing each of the 7 colors, and there was even a partial secondary one. My thought was I am listening Lord. He allowed me experience each of my co-workers in a resplendent state. We got to dinner at Salt Grass and I was feeling a little insecure I was worrying about the food allotment. At this point you need to understand that this is the first staff retreat with both branches, and although it had been a successful first year the road had it's share of bumps and boulders. I was very aware of how the staff was pairing off and I was wondering what I should do to keep communication open. This dinner was almost an omen, of course when you have that many people someone's order will get lost, fortunately it wasn't mine as I was feeling ignored by the waitress so I over tipped her. The food was most filling and so some of walked back to the motel, , the mountain evening air was refreshing and cleared my mind. Sleep at the Drury inn was restless. Friday is training day, a very hard day for me as I am the least athletic person working for the Y (probably on a national level...a little western Kansas Embellishment there). I do not catch balls, I do not throw balls, I do not understand the rules of the game , I especially do not understand breaking the rules of the game, I do not like knots in my ropes, I do not like blindfolds and the last hurdle I jumped I tore my ACL. Shall we say these games are difficult for me to say the least? By the way Debbie if I hit my bottom I am going for the word behind. Lunch was amazing and a much needed break for me. I had a melt down and Krystal gave me verbal hug. We ate at Poor Richard's pizza downtown Colorado Springs. Joe and Gabe ordered a whole one, later we heard that Gabe shared it with one of the homeless people in the park. In the afternoon Boyd Williams dropped in to say hello, he was a fiscal management trainer, it was great to see him. Off to Denver, we tour other Y's when we go out as a group, usually they make us want but this Y made us grateful for our beautiful and clean facility. Thanks Joe. They did however have some fun things going like laughter classes and Sudoku. Dinner that night was luscious, I tried new things, and everyone enjoyed their meal and the fellowship. Then the van ride to Estes Park., from baritone to soprano let the songs begin. Some were a little off key but singing none the less, there was perfect mix of exhaustion, silliness and laughter. Road construction on dark curvy mountain roads, hmm. We arrived at the YMCA of the Rockies, and shortly after our spouses did as well, I have never seen my husband look more beautiful, guess I should say handsome but he got confused on the way up and visited the ladies room. LOL, I thought that only happened to me. Rise and shine, and that is what we did. I believe I mentioned earlier about a bumpy road with boulders but did I say STEEP and CURVY, we were off-roading, with the most amazing tour guides ever! We learned survival and Earth Science and were put in total awe by God's creation. Back to the lodge there was shopping to do, but some of us chose a much needed nap. Next we are off to the dinner theatre, thanks to Arden our long route to Longmont was much like jingle bells as we were laughing all the way. Another hmm, very talented people singing and dancing and making us laugh, but let's just say hmm.

Games are postponed until morning but a few night owls continue to play and visit. Teams and games the next morning, win a few lose a few. "Dammit" and "Stop, stop, stop" are a few of the frustration lines used. The ride home brought sleeping, reading and long conversations with new friends..."somewhere over the rainbow, skies are blue, and the dreams that you dare to dream really do come true."

August 12

In Good Hands

Crystal Ibarra

Well where do I begin, I heard so many stories on this trip. The first year I started at the YMCA, I knew all the Directors would be going on a retreat but had no idea what it was for or about. The next year there was no staff retreat because some of us went to General Assembly. I just kept hearing Karen say we should have had staff retreat. I didn't know what the big deal was about. This Year Chad and Marcy had talked about "Staff Retreat" so much, I didn't know what to think or what to expect. A trip without my mini me? A trip without work? Whoa, did I have jitters. A Million things going through my mind. But the second we got in the van and everyone started to talk and get along, it made me realize there was nothing to worry about. Not only did I leave my mini me in good hands. BUT I was in good hands. Chad is an amazing boss and I have wonderful coworkers. I will say I'm looking forward to more staff retreats with all these great YMCA employees and spouses and now I know why Karen said "We need staff retreat every year."

August 19

Happy 50th Birthday YMCA

Crystal Ibarra

On August 18th we celebrated our 50th year anniversary. We had 50 cupcakes to hand out and 50 balloons to launch. Any new members may join for free. But the best part was when Chad asked if anyone had anything they would like to say and Joe Gonzales said he enjoys our YMCA and everything we offer. We make a difference. Because of us kids have somewhere to go and be active. He thanked us all and the YMCA. Seeing all the smiles and interacting, made the Birthday at the YMCA special.

August 26

Fun, Quality Care

Jackie Regan

I was visiting with a parent of one of our kiddos in after-school care and she was telling me how much her son LOVES going to the After-school program at Florence Wilson and how his absolute FAVORITE day is when they get to come to the Y each week to swim in the pool! Although it can be pretty hectic getting the kiddos over here to swim each week they truly love it and it is an AWESOME benefit to our program. Kudos Krystal and all staff in the after-school program!

Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success!

-John Maxwell

Chief Operations Officer Highlight Jackie Regan

I believe the highlight of 2014 for me as association staff, was watching both branches grow together and begin to break through barriers, grow relationships with each other as individuals and as one association instead of just two branches.



It has been quite the journey from the time we first began the process of meeting with community members and becoming the YMCA of Southwest Kansas. We have had a lot of stumbles, triumphs and failures. We have much more ahead of us as a group, but as a whole I feel in the last six months of 2014 we have become much so much stronger. Both branches had to make a lot of changes in order to change and grow and that is a hard process.

I believe a big part of our growth as a staff was taking staff retreat in August. Just like any trip that involves 20+ people, there were some hiccups along the way.

But, after a team building session, an off-road adventure, and an interesting dinner show, when we all gathered for Chad's famous minute to win-it games, I looked around the room and saw that many walls had finally come down. I could be wrong; this could have happened for some before, for some after, and for some there could still be some walls, but I truly feel like Staff Retreat truly brought us together as a "YMCA family." And of course, we couldn't get through staff retreat without a lot of laughter and a few tears.... It just wouldn't be normal....

Another huge change this year for both branches has been the addition of Joint staff meetings, which I believe helped us all communicate much better and build better relationships with each other. Quarterly, we meet for a whole morning and play games/team build, discuss items that affect both branches and enjoy lunch as a group together. I believe this has opened the doors for all the directors to discuss issues, concerns, successes and failures with each other and gives them a trustworthy "peer mentor" to help in each individual job. I think this is an invaluable benefit we gained by becoming an association. One challenge is having programs "look" the same at both branches and by staff building relationships with each other and sharing knowledge and ideas we do a better job of overcoming this.

Overall, I am excited by 2014 because I think we made some strides within our association. I am excited to be a part of the Y at both communities and KNOW that both Y's have great things in the future!

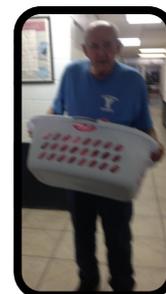
Thanks to both communities, staff, donors and volunteers who spend so much time making our YMCA's a great place to be and a family!

September 2

What a Man

Chad Knight

In the Men's Locker room today, Ron Pettz asked me about the retirement party we had planned for Norm Carr. Ron said he was coming and he said that Norm was a great man. He went on to say that it goes to show you if you take a little pride in your job and always welcome people, good things will happen. He said Norm was always pleasant to talk to and was always looking out for the members of the YMCA and the facilities. He said Norm was quite a man and he was honored to attend his retirement party. We love you Norm and we will always miss you around the YMCA!



September 30

Romana Blackburn

Crystal Ibarra

As I'm walking to the Welcome Center, Romana catches me and starts telling me about how excited she is to be a member of the YMCA. She loves making it a priority to come when she can. She has lost weight and just feels amazing that her clothes are too big. She isn't going to purchase new clothes until she reaches her goals. GOOD JOB RO, Keep up the great work and remember we are here to help you succeed!!!!

Membership Director Highlight Crystal Ibarra



Well what can I say, 2014 was an awesome year. This was my first full year as the Membership Director. For half of the year I had help with Membership Promotions. But in September I took them over. In March of 2014 I also took on the Welcome Center. I hired Ra'Vae as the MSA Coordinator, then in May I hired Janee Schaffer as MSA Coordinator. Janee was promoted in June to Membership Coordinator.

To end the year we had 8,298 members. We had over 8,000 guests for membership. Our shake bar sold over 1,700 shakes. My first 6 months of being Membership Director, I was a little quiet and scared to go out and meet new people. But after I did some volunteer work, it helped me open up. I started going to the Ribbon Cuttings to meet and greet our new businesses. It has been so much easier to talk to people. The end of the year we also added Senior membership rates and a golden membership. The Golden Membership was a big hit. Anyone over the age of 80 receives a FREE lifetime membership. I had so many members come to me and thanked me for this. Seeing how happy it made them, made me smile. What a wonderful feeling it gives me to be able to help out our community.

"And this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from his glorious riches which have been given to us in Christ Jesus."

Philippians 4:19

October 7

Humble Pie

Karen Berry

Oh me, oh my, it's corporate cup season again. Fifty six divided by 6 is 9.33333333...to infinity. Let's just say I bowl better than that. By the way, I am playing pitch and I don't bowl. My partner options are my boss or my husband, usually playing cards with my husband does not bring out the best in either of us, so you guessed it...it's my boss.. The key word in the previous sentence is PLAY. Webster defines it as: vi #1 to move lightly, rapidly, etc "w-e-l-l, not so much" #2. To engage in recreation "some might call it that" #3 to take part in a game or sport "no wonder" #4. To trifle (with a thing or person) "now you're getting there" 5,6,7,8,#9 to impose unscrupulously (on another's feelings) "nailed it". vt #1 to take part (in a game or sport) "as before" #2. To oppose (a person, etc) in a game "I thought we were partners" #3. To do, as in fun (to play tricks)....and there is more. The vi is the intransitive verb: a word expressing action, existence occurrence without a direct object. The vt is a verb with a direct object. My question here is; was Chad or I the direct object? Who knew play was such a complex word. I thought play meant to have fun. "Now this was fun finding out what Webster thought", yes and sometimes I even think I am weird.

Oh ya, back to my story; but some people "P- l -a -y" cards which means they track numbers, count cards and actually know what is happening in the game, sounds like work to me. Games bring out my inner child, whom I might add is very LOUD, and I don't drink so I can't even blame the alcohol. If I am not embarrassed enough by my score, my loudness and my poor moves, I go to the restroom, while washing my hands, I look in the mirror "and what to my wondering eyes should appear" but something green in my teeth. I haven't eaten green since lunch. Chad says our final score was 57, which is 9.5 points per game. .Ahh don't you just love Corporate Cup season, Humble pie, oh me, oh my.

October 21

Super Saturday

Jackie Regan



This past Saturday was our Super Saturday Championship games for tackle football. As always, it was a great experience for all the kiddos playing in our league. Trophies were given out to all the kids, we had our prize raffle drawing, and even had a visit from former KC Chiefs player Anthony Davis. Anthony came out as a representative of Head Up USA Football and talked to the kids and parents about players safety and the importance of playing smart! It was a great experience for the kiddos, and Anthony was an amazing guy to meet. He was great with the kids and took photos with anyone who asked. Overall the day was great and we appreciate all the volunteers who made it possible.

October 28

Girls Volleyball Tournament

Crystal Ibarra

Doug needed someone to coach 5th & 6th grade volleyball and I was the lucky winner. I love to play volleyball but coaching I wasn't sure. We had practice every Thursday and played every Saturday for 6 weeks. When the tournament came up, the girls were nervous. They weren't sure if they could do it. But as the first team showed up, my girls put their hands in and said, "We can do it, Go Divas" We won!!! The next team came and the girls had already lost to this team before, but yet again, they put their hands in and said " We can do it, Go Divas" throughout this game, we were neck and neck. We played 3 games and took the win!!! Wow, the girls were so happy. Last game we played was against the undefeated team. But this time the girls said " We are going to take the win" They all smiled and hugged each other! We started the game off and ended with a WIN. Chad announced the winners and the girls and I were so happy and excited. They all left with smiles. I'm glad I was asked to coach. That team was amazing and I'm looking forward to it again.

Maintenance Director Highlight

Joe Garcia

Well another fantastic year has gone by at the YMCA. Back in January I reached another milestone. Seven great years of being part of the YMCA Staff. As with any job you see new staff and members come and go. There are two gentleman in particular that I miss quite a bit. They are Ed Lewis and Norman Carr, these two men always brought a smile to my face and joy to my heart. Both men are in their 80's, Ed until this year was still playing racquetball and Norman would report to work every day at 6:00am even though his start time was 7:00am. Norman had to retire this year and Ed due to medical reasons can no longer play racquetball. Both these gentlemen are greatly missed. I look around on a daily basis and see all our members, young and old and there are so many that have been here for so many years. I understand the reason why, the Y is family. Everyone has been here for all these years from the older generation to the youngest simply because the Y is home. It is awesome to be a part of this family and I hope I can be here for years to come.



November 11

The Y...So Much More

Jackie Regan



It was the first week of basketball and as with all our sports the most important thing in our programs is teaching our core values and character. In Sports we recite the Sports Pledge before every game. It was so cute this weekend to see the little kindergarten girls recite the pledge for many of their first times. Our referee did a great job getting down on their level and teaching them the pledge. The Y is so much more than a fitness center or gym, it's moments like those you can see that the Y is a movement, a "CAUSE driven" organization!

November 18

Our Y Family Grows

Jackie Regan

It's that time of year again.... Some might think Thanksgiving??? But, for us at the Y, before Thanksgiving we think racquetball! Our second Tier 1 Tournament is in the books. We all survived (although I am still not sure how). Every time we have these tournaments I am so proud to call the Y a part of my life. Familiar faces, hugs, jokes (lots and lots of jokes), wins, losses, and food are just a few words that come to mind when I think about the tournament. The tournament is a time to reconnect with old friends and if you are lucky, make a few new ones. This is an amazing event every year and our Y and our community should be extremely proud to host!

November 25

Good Officials?

Brandon Roberts

Getting a compliment on officials at any level in any sport is not an easy thing to do. My officials work hard week in and week out to do the best job they can do and help the kids as much as possible. Danny Chamberlain, the coach at Edith Sherman Elementary school sent me an email Monday following a good weekend of basketball. "Your referees have done a good job. They hustle and are in position and are nice to my teams". To get a compliment like this from someone who has been coaching in our leagues for as long as Danny means a lot to me and my officials. I am proud of all of my staff from the seasoned vets to the fresh rookies just starting out.

Sports Director Highlight Brandon Roberts

I have not been a part of the YMCA family for very long, but I have had numerous events that have touched my life already and are a perfect example of what we strive to do within the YMCA. The highlight of my year was during our girl's basketball end of the season tournament. One team had to forfeit their game due to not having enough players show up. The kids that did show up from both teams were very upset! My official CJ Covington who referees numerous sports for me and has been doing for years decided to fill in for the team who did not have enough kids to play. Two of my scorekeepers who have never reffed before stripped up and called the game the best they could. Cj allowed the other team to steal the ball from him so they could score. He did not get off the court until each girl made at least one basket. After wards a board member approached Cj and thanked him for allowing his granddaughter to score the only basket she made all year.

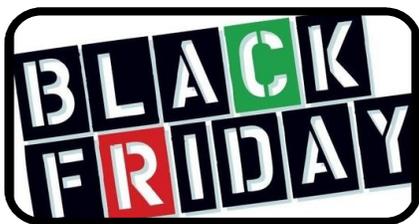


Cj did not have to play with the kids and could have rested after reffing six games for me already. He stood up and did what was best for the children in this situation and made it his social responsibility to make sure they had the time of their young lives to this point. This will be a memory of the YMCA that will stick with me forever. Just the smiling faces of these kids as they got to play when it looked like they wouldn't be able, and to score again or for the first time!

December 2

BLACK FRIDAY

Karen Berry



It's the day after Thanksgiving, we open at 8:00, and most of the management staff has taken the day off to shop. Joe is having truck trouble; the girl working front desk has never opened. The staff was supposed to start using the new time clock this morning but surprisingly all my efforts were to no avail because it isn't working. I am supposed to be working on payroll and doing the deposit but, I cannot figure out how to turn on the lights. BLACK FRIDAY? But you know what, we have some amazing members such as Don Doll and several other members offering ideas on how to get the lights to work and get this place up and running and remind me it is just the day after Thanksgiving, and I am so grateful for the Y and our members.

"Every day so many people pass through our lives, each person leaving behind a small part of themselves, giving us a broader understanding of life."

- Author: Unknown

December 9

The YMCA is my home

Chad Knight

I received an email from Scott Soptick who I nominated for our Member of Month the previous month. Here is the copy of the email:

Chad,

Thanks for nominating me for member of the month. It really means a lot. The Y is a place that I feel at home. In fact, a friend recently asked me what my favorite place in all of Garden City is. I said it's the Y because of the relationships built there and the many laughs, ideas, and education that are shared amongst the members.

My best,
Scot Soptick

WOW, if that doesn't impress you, I think you better go check your heart! I was completely blown away by his comments and I thought that is pretty impressive our staff is doing a great job trying to get members engaged. THANKS Scott for the kind words and we will see you at the YMCA, your home away from home!

December 16

Merry Christmas

Krystal Richardson

Nowadays it is hard to believe that we still have honest, sincere and generous people around the holidays but, WE DO!!! I am so happy to be sharing this story with you as it brought me to tears. I was working my lunch shift at the Welcome Center on a Monday afternoon when a member came in and brought me some money to help a family in need for Christmas! I was speechless and super excited to go and buy some gifts for the perfect family I had in mind! I went shopping that weekend and with that money we were able to provide an outfit and a toy for four kiddos, some toys and diapers for an infant and a couple of smaller things for mom! We wrapped all the presents and dropped them off as a Christmas surprise. This mother recently lost her husband, has three children of her own and two foster children. She is an AMAZING example to everyone she touches from infant up to adult! I am so happy she chooses the Y as the place for her kiddos to be!!! The feeling you get inside when you are doing something for others is absolutely AMAZING, let's make sure we are ALL paying it forward in some way or another throughout 2015!!!



December 30

Golden Memberships

Crystal Ibarra

This year our finance committee passed our "GOLDEN MEMBERSHIP". This is for anyone 80 & older. They get a lifetime membership here at our Garden City Family YMCA. I'm in my office making sure I change everyone's membership before the 1st of January. I look up from typing and see the Welcome Center is busy. I get up to go help and it was our members just checking in, then Verna Herman a member walked in and asked "Where do I sign the paperwork, I'm 85 years old and get a free membership." I let her know I had already taken care of it. She then thanked me as she kissed my cheek. Staying active is healthy for everyone. Verna takes our Water Aerobics classes Monday, Wednesday, and Fridays.

Development Director Alicia Johnston

I only worked for the “Y” for the last two months of the year, but I have to say it was a great two months. It has been stressful at times (trying to learn my job), but all-in-all I have to say I have really learned a lot about my new work place. The Y does a lot for the community. Being a stay-at-home mom before I started, I came to the Garden City Family YMCA to work out many times. I would skim over the information that they would send me in the mail about what was going on for the YMCA, but little did I know about what they really did.



Now, I handle the developmental side in my job, and am learning quickly about the fundraisers, charities, game nights, raffles, sleep overs, etc... that they do! In just those two months my department alone, with the “Keeping Our Promise” campaign, gave 71 children a year membership to the YMCA (and that doesn’t include some of the family memberships that were awarded)! The children were

awarded in front of their entire school. It was a beautiful sight to see the excitement in their faces! It even brought some tears to our eyes, literally! For Christmas, we had a sock tree in the front lobby and had 143 pairs of socks to donate to the Emmaus House.

I just want to say how excited I am to be a part of this great adventure! Not to mention, how awesome it is to be able to get the chance to meet so many wonderful people. This job is awesome! Thanks for taking me in, Chad!

Last Soccer Tournament for 2014

Crystal Ibarra

I called all my team members last week to let them know we would be playing on Sunday. All the parents were excited and ready. They said “we have an amazing team, it will be a great tournament.” Alazai, Victor, and myself just happen to show up 1 minute late. But as soon as we showed up our team stood up and said “we’re ready”. The officials, coaches, and participants stood up and said the Y pledge. Game started and we won. This was a great game. As the kids go tell the parents their next game is at 4:30. The parents wait on the bleachers as their kids go out to the gym and warm up for the next one. Let’s just say the next game started was one heck of a game. We didn’t win. But the kids played hard. They kept their head up with a smile. They took 2nd place and Stephanie Davidson announced the winners, participants and coaches. Fall 2014 Indoor Soccer was fun. My husband and I enjoy coaching.

A winner is someone who recognizes his God-given talents, works his tail off to develop them into skills to accomplish his goals
-Larry Bird

Over backwards

Chad Knight

As I was walking to the front desk, this lady stopped and introduced herself, Katrina Pollet. I already knew about her because about three months ago she inquired about a locker and I remembered. Well, low and behold she stopped me to tell me how the staff bent over backwards to help her with her new locker. She said she was put on the waiting list and Steph and Keali did a great job and bent over backwards to make sure I was taking care of and had my locker situated. I told her thanks and GOOD JOB Steph and Keali!

Biggest User

Crystal Ibarra

Alazai and I went to Dillon's right after work and she noticed a member. She looks at me and says "Mom, look there is Gary Harley, he's the Biggest User at the YMCA." Gary Harley has been our number 1 Biggest User for the longest time. Each month I run a report to see who has used the facility and how many times. We have our top 10 Biggest User's on the bulletin board between the Membership Coordinator's office and my office.

24 Hour Coverage

Sarah Tighe

At the Y, we have employees that work overnight so that we are able to stay open for 24 hours Monday through Friday. Chris Garcia was covering a 24 hour shift one night and Susan Dempsey made the compliment about how polite and kind he was, along with how hard-working he was. Susan comes in every morning around 4 a.m. and she just couldn't say enough good things about how well of a job Chris did that night. Thank you so much for all of your hard work Chris!

"Ro & Stephanie"

Karen Berry

It was one of those mornings where I "got stuck" at the front desk, and what a blessing it was. Romana Blackburn came to check in and Stephanie said to her we need to change your photo, you don't even look like this anymore. Ro began to tell her story of moving towards a healthy lifestyle and joy spread across her face.

This lady has a very interesting story of determination and struggles against a battle of weight.

Kind Words

Marcy VenJohn

Last night Chad and I took the YMCA Gorilla out to say Thank You to the USD 457 school board and while Chad was giving his speech and thanking the school board and school district for all that they do for us I couldn't help but smile because as I scanned the crowd everyone was smiling. Then upon his completion Dr Gloria Hopkins then commented and thanked us for all that we do for them and for our community and to hear those words from her mouth was so comforting and uplifting in the fact that its reassuring to know that our hard work is paying off in our community! Thanks Dr Gloria Hopkins and USD 457 we couldn't do it without your cooperation and support!

Positive Twist

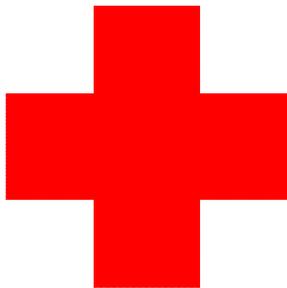
Chad Knight

I went to Mail It, Etc the other day and the manager was helping me and he wanted to tell me about the swim meet. So, immediately I was thinking of any problems or concerns we had. But, he had a positive twist. He went on to tell me how much he appreciated how the swim meet ran and how organized it was. He said he has attended many other events that take forever and are very unorganized. I thought this was AWESOME!!! Good job Monica!

Thanks for the save

Monica Colborn

LIFEGUARD



Lifeguards are trained to be preventative and proactive. They anticipate the worst case scenarios and not so pleasant situations. They are rescue ready. They expect to make a save.

A little boy was swimming with his class in the Family Pool. His teacher told him it was time to go. He climbed out of the water, and took off his life jacket. When his teacher turned to walk away, he made the choice to jump back in the water. He couldn't swim, and he was caught in the waves from the slide. Jamie was rescue ready. She blew three whistles, entered the water, and made the save. The teacher came running over, and Jamie helped the boy climb out. Jamie returned to her stand and began her surveillance duties. The little boy again left his teacher, and ran towards Jamie. He stood right next to her stand, and said "Hey, thanks for the save!" He smiled, and walked back to join his classmates. Lifeguarding can be a thankless job. But when the gratitude comes, it comes in amazing forms!

Breath

Monica Colborn

He loved being in water. It made him free. Movement wasn't an obstacle. There weren't restrictions. Nothing held him back. He was one with the water.

Almost.

He hadn't put his face in the water since the accident. Something he feared. Another thing he felt he couldn't control.

Breath.

It's involuntary. It's just happens. That's how it's supposed to be. Breathe when you need, hold it when you don't. You are in control of it. But when that control is taken from you once, it's not the same. There is an embedded fear deep inside.

But on this day, fear was conquered. Control returned to its rightful owner.

He became one with the water.

Compliments

Jackie Regan



The other day, Arden stopped by to talk to me in my office and ended up having a long conversation with Oscar, one of Sarah's Prep Program participants. Arden ended up inviting Oscar to ride with him on one of his out of town trips that day. When Arden got back he told me that Oscar spoke extremely highly of Sarah and commented how much she had helped him improve after his stroke. Kudos Sarah for all your hard work!

Volunteer Doctor

Jackie Regan

I was extremely impressed and thankful for Dr. Blake Wasinger and his wife, Teresa for their volunteer work at the racquetball tournament. They were both in and out almost the whole weekend and we had many people comment on how amazing it was that they were there. Arden was injured on Friday night, and Blake showed up before he played to work on his leg so he would be able to move. Without their commitment and willingness to offer their services to the Y, I am pretty sure Arden would not have been walking, far less playing over the weekend. Thanks so much to both of you!

Friendly Competition, Fun, and Racquetball

Sarah Tighe

February 28th through March 2nd was our Carl Myer's Racquetball Tournament this year. This was my second tournament that I was in charge of running. These tournaments always bring out a bunch of racquetball enthusiasts that I have really enjoyed getting to know throughout the past couple of tournaments. Logan Reese was a huge help in regards to helping with set-up and tear down, volunteering to officiate when I was in a bind, and assisting in any other way we needed. JD Yager was also a tremendous help as far as officiating when we needed extra help and bringing in some newbies to the tournament. Mike Jones also brought a group of new players to our tournament. It is always nice to see new faces at these tournaments as well as all of the locals who come year after year. All these players' support is greatly appreciated, without them there would be no tournament.

Hot Together

Crystal Ibarra

I was working the front desk and one of our members said "Can I get a guest pass for my husband? I want him to workout with me so we can be hot together." Our members have the benefit to get unlimited guest passes from professional staff any time they would like. Anyone can use guest passes up to 5 times in one year. I was happy to get him the pass. She made my day with her comment.

DRAFT NIGHT

Karen Berry

Good times, good times. Welcome to the BLUE team : CONTRIBUTATORS. Terry Majors, Kelly Drees, Mike Rousell joined Sarah Tighe and myself for the future ASC winning team! Thanks Chad for allowing us to participate and thanks Marcy for creating an atmosphere of play. We enjoyed great food and wonderful fellowship. Mike was the creative person that came up with our super name, even though it won't spell check. Terry started the evening by blessing the food and our event. Kelly was our speaker. "Let's go for ____ ____ oops they got him just 2 picks before us. What about Kandace no that OT got her." In the end we had an All Star lineup, and above all the event was a success at creating Board/staff involvement. The most precious moment was finding out Kelly will have a son in September. It was amazing to get 2 accountants to attend just sixteen days prior to tax day, after our final pick Mike was out the door and headed back to work.

Happy Birthday Jordan

Karen Berry

Sometimes this job is just fun! I was reading down the birthday list today and found a name that caught my eye. Jordan Berry. I called and mom handed the phone to a very polite young man. He told me he was five years old and was having a party with cake. He had the sweetest little voice, it just made my day. I hope you have a wonderful birthday Jordan.

Hardware

Jackie Regan



I was perusing Facebook and noticed a post by one of our officials, CJ Covington. CJ received the Youth Development award at our Annual Recognition Celebration, but wasn't able to make it to the dinner. CJ started working for me in high school, and boy did we have some "bumps in the road" for a while. I believe after a "no show" I even "fired" him. That said, I always saw a lot of potential with CJ, and he has always been such a great spirit, with a fantastic attitude. As he has grown up he become a father and he has become an amazing leader. He is an extremely dependable, solid official who truly enjoys working with the kids and making himself the best he can be. I am so proud of him for everything he has done. He truly is a role model and deserved the Youth Development award for all he has done. I loved that he posted a picture of his "hardware" on Facebook and shared his accomplishments with his friends and family!

12 Week Session One

Sarah Tighe

Jill joined my first session of our 12 week body transformation program. She has been such a joy to have in class! She sent me an email after the first couple of weeks or so that said "I LOVE the class. It is so awesome." I am so lucky to have such a wonderful group of people in my 5 a.m. class. I couldn't imagine starting my day any other way!

We're here to help each other out

Crystal Ibarra

A staff member came to me and said "Crystal, I'm sorry but I have to put my two weeks. I really love my job and wish I could stay. But I have no babysitter anymore. I will do my best to finish my two weeks." As she is telling me this I could tell she really loved her job and didn't want to quit. I told her let me do some checking and ask around, I will get back to you. She then said thank you. I talked with Krystal Richardson, she right away said let me talk to my mom. We're a family and I would love to help her as much as I can. Royal of course agreed. My MSA staff was able to stay. She does amazing at her job. I'm glad to say I work for the YMCA and have coworkers who are willing to help out everyone.

Good Comments

Keali Carr

We had just talked about engaging with our Members more, that previous staff meeting so when I ran into Deborah Patterson and Sandy Fine, I took advantage and spoke with both of them for a good 15 minutes. As I was speaking to Deborah, I had told her it has been a while since I have seen her or Sandy in the Y for a while. She told me they both have been extremely busy with work and they were frustrated that they have not been able to come in and work out. I told her it will all be okay and she will find the time once work eases up a little. She then told me that she and Sandy both have marked off a certain amount of time out of their schedules just so they can come in to the YMCA and work out or just to see and visit with everyone.

Breakfast and a Workout

Crystal Ibarra

I was cleaning up the coffee pot area, when an away member came up to me and said "Wow, this is amazing. Who would of thought I could get a great workout in and a great breakfast too. This is neat, thank you." Shelly came in on May 1st which is our Day of Prayer breakfast. This was put on by Karen. We had Terry open with our prayer, Golden Corral provided breakfast and a speaker who was just amazing.

Fun Comments Overheard

Karen Berry

I seldom get to spend much time in the midst of the traffic but on May 1 due to the prayer breakfast these are some fun comments I overheard:

"We tried the rec, but it just wasn't the same."

"It is nice to work out and have breakfast afterwards"

During Terry's prayer he expressed his gratitude for the Y's passion for our community.

In the locker room at 5:30 am "I just joined this weekend, I love the pool".

Troy, Melissa and Keali helped me choose my wardrobe for the breakfast "Wear the jacket" I changed at the front desk.

"I need salsa " That was when I began to dance "for my eggs" I went to the frig and found some.

But my favorite comment for the day was listening to Terry and Leland discuss God's calling in our lives "even the introvert will do well with administration if it is their passion."

Y Family

Jackie Regan

Oh the joy of graduation weekend. Seeing so many kids graduate that have been participants in our programs is Amazing (and a little crazy, I can't believe I have been here this long!) Over the weekend one of our "Y rats" graduated and is going to attend college at Tabor to swim. Samantha has been in many of our sports and aquatics programs and has also been a great employee for the Y as a lifeguard and in the Sports Department. Her mom has been an amazing volunteer for us and I couldn't be any prouder for both of them. Congrats Sam & Mom of course!

Great Members

Jackie Regan

The Monday following Mother's Day one of our AWESOME members, Leo, brought all female staff members a "Mother's Day" Lilly. It was such a sweet gesture and really made my day. I can never say enough how FABULOUS our YMCA members are!

Flower Power

Karen Berry

I was in Topeka this week visiting my daughter and granddaughter, we went into a green house and an employee was wearing a Y Staff Shirt, a new one even, I wanted to visit with her on what she did but she was so busy helping people I never got the chance. I admire our parttime staff many of them work multiple jobs to make ends meet.

Facebook Comments

Crystal Ibarra

I was looking on the Garden City Trader from Facebook when someone asked about a great gym in Garden. I was going to comment when I seen the first comment was from our 2013 YMCA Employee, Ra'Vae Perez. She mentioned the YMCA and posted our hours, our benefits, even our specials. This is the kind of employees we need to make a difference.

Rise and Shine!

Sarah Tighe

Lori Hays is one of the students in my 12 week body transformation program class at 5 a.m. Mondays through Fridays. This class requires people to show up a little earlier than 5 so that they are ready to go by 5 a.m. Lori was so pleased with Cynthia and how she would show up at least 15 minutes early in the mornings to open. She thought it was so great that Cynthia was open and ready to go 10 minutes before the Y was to open. Thank you Cynthia for being so good for our early bird members!

Amazing staff

Chad Knight

The other day I was walking down the hall and I stopped Tara York to ask her how everything was going. Tara told me that the swim team was doing good and she said Rodney and I were talking about how well the staff at the YMCA really cares about their members, their programs and most importantly the staff is amazing and does a good job. WOW!!! I told her thanks for the compliments and I will let the staff know. Before I got to my office, Kandace stopped me to tell me how much the Yorks really appreciate the staff at the YMCA and how well they run everything. I thought this was too cool and all the staff deserves a pat on the back for a job well done. Keep on keeping on!

A moment to Pray

Jackie Regan

On a wet, beautiful morning before we started the Big Pool Tri Vince Koons shared a favorite passage from scripture with the group, "I am not a pastor, deacon or spiritual leader but I do have a favorite passage from scripture...2 Timothy 4:7..."I have fought the good fight; I have finished the race. I have kept the faith." I thought it as a great start to the race.

KOP article

Keali Carr

KOP's are one of many of the YMCA's greatest contribution. My sister actually received one this year and her and my dad got to speak with the newspaper about winning the award and what it means to her and all of the other kids. I had shared the article on Facebook and a long time YMCA member commented on it about KOP's and how great it is for kids to win a free membership just by working hard and presenting the core values.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ME!

Karen Berry

It's July 3 and Corporate Board Meeting is Tuesday and I have only just begun at getting the numbers out for the month of June, never mind quarterly reports for the government. My children and grandchildren are texting me pictures and plans for the weekend, let's just say I am having my own personal pity party. Most of the professional staff is gone today, so I go shopping instead of going into work at 7:45 and I go in at 9:00. 9 to 5 what a concept! Starting to sound like Dolly Parton, never mind the fact we have other things in common..Moving on with my story. I arrive and the Welcome Center, welcomes me...I can tell they would all rather be playing as well...so we plan a pizza party for noon!!My Dad used to love to say to us on our birthday "What do you think this is your birthday?" and we would laugh and well yes. Yeah everyone loves pizza, never mind I brought a salad. I finally get to my office and Kandace, Ethan, Mathea and Johnny come up with a present and birthday cake....did I mention I turn 60 Sunday. Let's not talk about it. What a blessing to work work at the YMCA!

Healthy Living Programs

Sarah Tighe

Jill is currently on her second session of our body transformation program class. She also participates in other classes we offer at the Y. I have gotten to know her throughout my time here at the Y and she is such a sweet person! She sent me an email the other day regarded some of the things we offer at the Y. It read: "I went to yoga at the park yesterday and it was wonderful! Troy does such a good job. My 12 year old son (Lane) came in for his fitness center orientation yesterday and just loved it as well. And then kickboxing class is on a whole other level of awesomeness!!! I guess I am trying to say – we think you all are doing a great job at the Y." Thank you Jill so much for all of your support! We LOVE having you here!

Tears of Joy

Keali Carr

Romona Blackburn has been an inspiring member here at the YMCA. She has gain many relationships with staff and has lost a great amount of weight. Ro signed up for the Body Transformation class and told me that she has never signed up for anything that meant working with other and pushing past her limits. In this class, on Fridays, they ran up and down the stairs and Ro knew she would not be able to run so she powerwalked. I told her I was proud of her for not walking and pushing her limits. She became teary eyed and said this class is helping her conquer her fears and she feels good about it!

Marcy

Karen Berry



Once again we bid farewell to a team member. Marcy has served us a Chief Development Officer; she is leaving to teach VO AG in Holcomb. This is a great loss for us, but a win for the kiddos. She is natural born teacher and has taught me many things. She has had to forgive my PICNICs. (Person in chair not in computer), did I mention, she has been our in-house IT person. She also taught what a 4 way was when we changed the tire on my Fred Flintstone car. Marcy came home from P&P training saying a lady had been stalking her, but she dresses so cute, you can't help but notice her. Best wishes to you Marcy, I know you will succeed wherever you go.

The Wedding

Chad always refers to the Y as his family, and this weekend I got a taste of what he means. Keali Carr , Aquatic Director, was married to Jason Shelton. 2 of her bridesmaids were friends made at the YMCA, a lifeguard and Healthy Living Director. Her program mentioned the Y in it several times, when Brittany, Maid of Honor gave her speech she told how their friendship was born at the YMCA. Y employees took 2 tables side by side and the fellowship was wonderful. Now about the bride; she was beautiful, playful, joyful and in love. The music was amazing, during the Father Daughter dance there was not a dry eye in the place, and yes "momma's really do, do things like that". From the Bride's red heels to her brooch bouquet every detail was planned perfectly. Thanks Keali for sharing your moment with your Y Family.

Karen Berry



Learning From Children

Summer camp has drawn to a close, this place will soon become much quieter; however, we will miss some very heartwarming moments. When all the childcare children are in the gym, they usually end up in my stairway to have their meltdowns. We have one particular little girl that has a hard time, she had her feelings hurt and had gotten quite wound up. A little friend had come over held both of her hands and looks her in the eye and talked her down. I thought I probably had just witnessed a special education teacher in the making. It was quite beautiful.

Karen Berry

Scott City Friends

I had an inquiry today from a friend from Scott interested in coming to Garden with a group of ladies to swim. I can't wait to see them here!

Karen Berry

8th Wonder of the World?

Troy Unruh is a man of many activities. Troy has full time job as an insurance agent at Farmer Credit. During his spare time he is a lifeguard, a yoga instructor, and spin instructor for the YMCA. He is also a leadership coach for KLC and Leadership of Garden City, the president of the band club at GCHS, a youth pastor, a music minister, participates in marathons, and still has time to spend with his wife and 4 kids. Troy does so much for everyone around him and his community!

Keali Carr

Live Strong



So here at the YMCA we are getting a program called Live Strong which is a program that is design specifically for cancer survivors. And a week ago Lisa, our Healthy Initiatives Coordinator, did her first intake interview for the program. She was so nervous about it but afterwards she was very excited to get the program started in January.

Steven Lynch

Financial Managers Training

Karen Berry

I have been back from Dallas for 11 days if you count from the first trip, two if you count from the second trip. "Flight to Dallas should be 1 hour and 15 minutes" but we make it in less than an hour-- can you speed in the air? Driving the short way according to MapQuest is 8 hours and 14 minutes, and yes you can speed while driving, perhaps reducing the time by 30 minutes but if you stop to eat it will be longer.

Focus Karen Focus

What I remember about the conference is Abagnale, you remember him from the Catch Me if You Can movie, and Calvo with a child care talk. Basically you can't trust anyone. People cheat because they can and they hurt children because they want to. These are not fun lessons for Pollyanna. Not the way I choose to look at the world, people or life. The Affordable Care Act will consist of a great deal of time and paperwork. Those reviewing the economy will either intentionally talk over your head or skirt the issue.

If you walk in downtown Dallas it is surprisingly clean, you may see 3 young boys running away from something, one with a mask and something hidden under his shirt. You will see homeless, lost and hungry people. But did I mention there were rainbows in my hotel, made by the sun shining through massive windows that had 5 foot long prisms in them. They were so beautiful; I reached out to touch them. Did I mention that I spent hours with Kandace and even got to know her tiny children a little better they are so sweet and kind? Did I mention, I spent hours with people who are much like me- they dress like me- they talk like me- they make me feel accepted? Did I mention, I visited with people who have work ethics and think nothing of working 10 to 12 hour days 5,6 or even 7 days per week. (I have got to say the 7th day is the Lord's Day). Did I mention, when visiting with 2 women in less than twenty minutes time I heard repeatedly "I love my job". Did I mention, there is a cupcake store in downtown Dallas that makes lovely peanut butter cupcakes? Did I mention, that in the heart of downtown Dallas there is a huge beautiful clean Y, built from a parking garage, a generous donor and people with a dream and hope.

Corporate Sportsmanship

Steven Lynch

As everyone knows this time of the year we are in the middle of our Corporate Cup and it is a way to get some friendly competition going between companies and individuals. We were in the middle of the soccer tournament one night and we had a free hour because there was a forfeit. It was actually the second forfeit, but instead of not doing anything for the hour we still had a game. The two teams that showed up for their games but won by forfeit asked if they could go ahead and play in the timeslot. Instead of being bored the two teams played even though it was for fun. To me seeing that between the two teams is what the corporate cup is all about sportsmanship and competition.

Longtime Volunteer

Jackie Regan

Gerry Schultz has served on the football committee on and off since its' inception in 1997. He helped go out and fundraise the money in the beginning to purchase the equipment and has continued to help sell raffle tickets to provide new equipment and offset the cost of the program and provide scholarships so that no kid that wants to play is turned away. Recently, he has been asked to resume his role on the football committee and agreed. Gerry truly realizes the importance of the program and always speaks eloquently about the true purpose of the program. Without volunteers and supporters like Gerry we would not be able to provide the programs we did for our community!

What a neat event

Chad Knight

I was leaving the front desk area and Jean Clifford stopped to tell me how she thought the whole set-up for Super Saturday was very good this year. She said how the games were set-up and having the NFL player there from USA Football to watch the games and take pictures, it was pretty special. She went on to say that the football player was willing to help her out and do anything to get the kids connected to football. She said taking the pictures was pretty neat. She said good job Chad. I said I had nothing to do with it and I will pass it on. GOOD JOB Brandon and Doug! THANKS Jean!

"Where is my Teacher?"

Keali Carr

Myles is a 7 year old boy who is in the Minnow (level 4) swim lesson here at the YMCA. He had a previous lesion with Serina Baca however she was unable to teach this set of lesions. Well, when I had shown up to teach the lesion, Myles had asked where Serina was. I told him why she was not teaching and he had all kinds of questions. "Is she okay?" "Will she be back?" "She is the best teacher ever!" This conversation with Myles shows me that Serina was doing her job to the best of her ability and emphasizing the YMCA core values.

Going the Extra Mile

Keali Carr



Machelle Muhjica was just hired to teach water aerobics for me. She loves the water and loves aerobics and when she called me to ask if she could teach for the YMCA, I thought, why not? Two activates she loves to do combined into one. Machelle had been teaching for a couple weeks now and was telling me that some of the ladies had not shown up for class in a while. I told her some of the get busy and simply cannot make it. She then tells me that she called the ones who have not showed up and asked if they were doing okay and when will they start coming back to class. That is what the YMCA is about! GYM-GEM: Greet your member, go the extra mile. Machelle had only been an employee for a couple weeks and was already going the extra mile for her members!

One for All and All for One

Keali Carr

This is a sad story so I am going to keep it short and simple. Darlene Mathias is our Aquasice 1 & 2 instructor and has been for over 20 years. Well, her husband had been sick for a while and then passed away in mid-November. I attended the funeral in respects and I there was no much love in the room; not only for Darlene's husband but for herself and Maddlyn. Almost every single Aquasice participant, old or new, showed in support of Darlene. That is what the YMCA is all about; one for all and all for one.

Corn bread

Karen Berry

I saw Terry Darden in the hall and he said he was cooking beans and cornbread for his help. Yum I replied and told him my husband loved cornbread. Hardly any sooner than the words were out of my mouth Terry is back with a loaf. Let me just say he does NOT use Jiffy mix. This was unlike any cornbread I had ever eaten. It even had nuts in it. Needless to say it was gone by the next evening. Thanks Terry it was very good.

The most beautiful thing...

Karen Berry



December 4 was actually a vacation day for me, but it was also the day Gertrude Walker students received their KOP awards. I always go to this school's awards as I was an employee there before moving to Scott City. Emiliano Garcia-Jacquez, Samantha Moreno, Alejandra Facio and Alan Chairez-Lopez received KOP memberships for 2015. Alajandra Facio's mom was so excited because she loves the pool. But the absolute most beautiful thing was when one of the boys was announce this little guy was squealing with joy; naturally I thought he had won, but as it turned out he gave his friend a big high five as he walked past; now that is friendship.

And the Winner is...

Krystal Richardson

Ladies,

The results are in and the winner of the 1st Battle of the YMCA Blood Drive is....

GARDEN CITY

Congrats!!!

Here are the final results for both drives:

	GC	DC
Presenting Donors:	30	29
Deferrals:	5	6
Q's (not a full bag):	0	1
Total units collected:	25	22

What a great battle! I hope you both enjoyed it as well. Between the 2 days we collected **47 units**, which can potentially save up to **141 lives**. How awesome is that?!

I have the plaque, which I will get to Bill to be presented to the GC YMCA.

What I would also like to check on is to see if you guys would both be willing to host again. I think we should keep the battle to once per year, but maybe we could go ahead & get you each scheduled for another drive in March or April – before the weather gets too warm. (I know DC doesn't have AC, not sure about GC)

Thanks ladies, and congrats again on successful drives! We really, really appreciate all of the work that you put into these drives.

Krystle Jacobs | Account Manager I
American Red Cross

The queen in Child Watch

Chad Knight

I received an email from one of our staff members and she wanted to pass along a message from one of our members. Kandace Kennis told me that a Brooke Humphreys was outside my office wanting to talk to me but I was busy visiting with other people so she didn't want to bother me. So, Kandace asked her what she needed and she said she just wanted to stop and tell Chad how wonderful Amanda Mitchell is in the Child watch. She said Amanda does a great job and deserves to get a raise. She said she has been taking her kids to Amanda since they were six weeks old and they love it. Her kids are now seven years old and four years old. Isn't that AWESOME! Great job Amanda and THANKS Brooke for the great compliments!

In the Christmas Spirit

Crystal Ibarra

Every year we put up Christmas decorations. I love Christmas but putting up a tree is not my favorite. Well Alicia our new Development Director decided we needed to put up 5 trees. I am in a hurry trying to get up my one tree and Alicia keeps going upstairs to our storage to find more trees and decorations. So many people complimented her on the trees and every time they would tell her our nice it looked she would get a huge smile and say "thank you". I will say our Family YMCA is in the Christmas spirit this Year. Thanks Alicia.

Keeping Our Promise

Crystal Ibarra

Every year the Garden City Family YMCA gives out youth memberships to all the different schools. I had never been to a KOP before. But my first one was at Buffalo Jones. It was amazing as Chad announced the first winner. His friends were clapping and saying "I know him, Good job." All the winners were so happy and the parents were all with smiles. We get to Chloe Carr and as Chad announces her name tears start to shed from her big sisters eyes, Keali Carr our Aquatics Director. As Chloe shakes Chad's hand and goes to give her sister a hug she starts to cry and say "thank you" Everyone in the gym at that time could not hold back their tears. Principal and parents even students were just so happy. I'm glad I work for the YMCA.

Whatever you call it, it is Good

Karen Berry

Chad always calls the Y his family, I must say the first time I heard it, I was somewhat offended because as many of you know Chad's wife is my niece, and we have always taken family very seriously. Time teaches us many things, this is one of them.

My sweet grandbaby has been sick with repeated ear infections for about six months; I left after staff meeting last week to be with her and her Mommy for the ear tubes, her Daddy could not be there because he was stationed out of the states that week. I had asked for prayers during staff meeting; as I left Krystal Richardson says let us know how it goes. After surgery was over and we were back at home, I started to text Krystal but then decided to copy all my Y contacts that all had gone well. No sooner had I laid down my phone and "BING, BING, BING..." went my phone. My daughter said "Wow Mom your co-workers really care about you...." Yes, I would agree.

This chapter comes from our staff and why they enjoy the YMCA and why they put their hearts into making every day a GREAT DAY AT THE YMCA!

Because I am "dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal" and I believe in our mission statement ends with "for all".

Because I am helping children build strong, bright futures!

Because I am building relationships one "HELLO" at a time!

"Because I inform people of healthy habits."

Because I believe in an organization that builds healthy living, faith, friendships and builds character in children.

Because we are a "cause", we are a mission and we are "so much more."

Because I believe that every individual and family should have access to the programs and services necessary to prevent disease, cancer, and other illnesses

Because I fully believe that our Y offers some of these essential programs and services and that we are taking the necessary steps to offer and provide more of these prevention services in our community.

Because I... teach the core values to my swim kids.

Because I...see the value and impact our Y plays in making a difference everyday in our community!





Gratitude

“At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person, each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us.”

- Albert Schweitzer



Thank You to our Members for 50 Years!

**We do not remember the days . . .
We remember the Moments that make our days!**