

MONUMENTAL MOMENTS 2015

DODGE CITY FAMILY YMCA

3rd Edition



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

Enjoy every single moment
The good, the bad, the beautiful, the ugly, the
inspiring, the not so glamorous moments and
Thank God through it all

Acknowledgments



The Monumental Moment book highlights the stories and impact we have on the community each year. Every week in staff meetings, the Management Staff nominate stories that pull your heart strings. Each chapter is represented by each month and the story who receives the most votes is the winner for that week. The other stories submitted are not forgotten and Chapter 13 represents all those stories. 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 YMCA Volunteers

All the YMCA Donors, Supporters and other special friends!

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!



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”

***Livestrong Session 1 Participants
Terry & Jerry Gleason, Twyla Taylor and Kate Helfrich***

It is our privilege to dedicate this book to a very special group of people; Terry and Jerry Gleason, Twyla Taylor, and Kate Helfrich. These individuals were a part of our first session of the LIVESTRONG at the YMCA program here in Dodge City. We have been so blessed to get to know these four people in the twelve weeks that we got to work with them. They all have such strong personalities and really rallied around each other in their times of need. We had a lot of ups and downs throughout the program, but we've never seen such strength than we did in them. They are truly our heroes and we couldn't have imagined this program starting with any other individuals. We are so thankful to have them in our lives and as lifelong friends now.

Love, Stacie and Tarica



Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made know to God.

-Philippians 4:6

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**"FAITH, it does not make things easy, it makes them possible!"
- Luke 1:37**

January 8

A Kind Fellow

Cheyenne Schellhamer

While up at the Welcome Center helping Terri with check-ins a man by the name of Bob Soza come up to the desk and wanted information about our facility. I pulled out a brochure and showed him the different prices and what it included. He looked up and noticed Debbie in the doorway and greeted her with a loud HEYYYYYYY!! I was then introduced as the granddaughter and offered to show him around. We got down to the Wellness Center and pointed out Stacie's office and her Verse of the Week. I then went into detail about the upcoming Livestrong program we will be offering. We had just made it to the gym and he stopped and looked at me and said, "Well I've been cancer free for 3 years." Of course tears built up in my eyes and I told him he would be a perfect fit and that I thought he would really enjoy it. It is a true blessing to be able to meet and learn about the people who have overcome the battle of cancer.

January 15

The Family Who Saw the Light

Cheyenne Schellhamer

On that Thursday afternoon, while sitting at my desk I got an e-mail right before staff meeting from an unknown sender. I opened the e-mail that started with an introduction that was followed with her experience with St. Jude's Children's Research hospital. She then went on to explain that when her son was 6 months old they learned that he was diagnosed with Retinoblastoma and will be cancer free for 3 years come February of 2015. She came to me with an idea of having a Zumbathon to help raise money for St. Jude and would like to use our facility. I took the idea to the staff meeting and it was a unanimous vote to do it and be a part of something that could help children. I informed her of the news and she was ecstatic and we went to work planning. It is an AMAZING feeling to be in the position to help others.

January 29

From A to C

Tarica Lare

At a Facilitation training in Garden City, we were asked to present to the class what our favorite program at the YMCA was. Cheyenne presented on the After School Program. She talked about how the program had personally affected her and her family. Her younger sister, Cassity, is involved in the program, and Cheyenne said she had seen Cass go from a C/D student to an A/B student while being in the program. She also said she thought Cass had matured due to the program.

Perspective from a Campaigner

Aaron Conrardy

Hello my name is Aaron Conrardy and I have been a member of the YMCA for three years and a Board Member for the last year and half. I have been blessed to help with the Annual Support campaign the last two years. I feel that the YMCA does amazing things for the Dodge City community. I was hesitant at first to go out and ask people to donate money to the YMCA, but after sharing the stories about the amazing things the YMCA does it became much easier to ask for a donation! I love coming to the meetings and picking my names to go and visit and tell the YMCA stories. After helping the last two years I can say that I will always be here to help the YMCA with the Annual Support Campaign!!

“There are two ways of spreading light: to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it.”

-Edith Wharton



February 5

The Smile

Tarica Lare

One of our favorite kiddos, Trevor, arrives for the After School Program before any other student. He walks in the front door and greets us all with a huge smile. A couple times, our staff for the ASP hasn't arrived quite yet when Trev gets here, so we have him hang out with Terri up front. Trevor is such a happy soul, and greets our members with a smile and hands them a towel! We absolutely love days where Trevor gets to spend extra time with the Directors.

February 12

A Man with a lot of Motivation

Cheyenne Schellhamer

After Aqua Zumba one evening I was talking to Kevin's wife, Tammie and mentioned that I saw her during the weekend with her husband swimming. She then mentioned that he has been using the weight room as well as swimming to help lose weight. I was very excited that they chose our facility to help meet their goals and then she told me that since he has started he has lost 60 pounds!! It is awesome to hear people's stories of accomplishing their goals. Keep it up!!

February 26

Sacred Heart Health Fair

Stacie Droste

I was helped with the Sacred Heart's first Health Fair and we gave them two 3 Month memberships to give away. The fair was done and I was cleaning up my area, I had several Sacred Heart staff come up to me and thank me for taking time out of my evening to participate in their health fair. They also couldn't believe how generous we were to donate the memberships. All the kids were wanting to win the memberships so that they could come and hang out at the Y, I thought that was neat!

CEO Highlight

Chad Knight

Twenty fifteen was a pivotal year for our Dodge City branch which brought a major transition. This was our third year in operation and this meant many factors. The first factor was trying to continue stressing to the staff the YMCA way and always thinking and working like a YMCA. This was evident within the first quarter as the Annual Recognition & Celebration Banquet brought several positive changes. We had over 100 people attend this event and there wasn't a dry eye in the room at the end of the evening. This event recognizes staff, volunteers, donors, supporters and members. There were many highlights throughout this evening. There are also some Monumental Moment stories about this event you need to read. To me as the leader of this association seeing the staff transition to a YMCA Living for a Cause and talking about our movement, this was very powerful! The staff did an AWESOME job talking about the relationships and recognizing everyone. This was a challenge the first two years and staff really stepped up and made a difference. I think the Program Directors attending Program Expo in California helped transform the staff. They also began bringing the 'C' into the YMCA. This started small, but started to expand and has made a wonderful difference. Another major factor was the addition of a new Branch Executive Director to help lead the staff on the YMCA way. This was hard for many of the staff because they were so close to the former Director, but they all stepped up and made a smooth transition. Jonie, our National YMCA Resource Director recommended DeWayne Donaldson and told me to give him a call. I met DeWayne back in 2008 when his daughter was my Child Care Director. I was lucky and fortunate to bring in a Director with over 30 years of YMCA experience and it started on an Interim basis. I visited with DeWayne about coming in and running this branch while we searched for a new Director. During the interview process a month later, DeWayne decided to throw his name in for the position. The interview committee recommended hiring DeWayne permanently. I think the last factor was the budgeting process with an emphasis on a new City of Dodge City Management Agreement. During the budgeting process the past two years, the budget was not approved or finished until the following year which caused many problems. This past year, the budget was finished on time and presented to the Finance Committee and the Board for approval. During this process, it allowed the Board to engage into a new contract with the City of Dodge City and request additional funds for the fourth year. The Board also requested an increase in program and membership fees. The City of Dodge City was willing to continue the great partnership with the YMCA. This was my final factor as the collaboration with the City has elevated since our start. I think the best chapters to our YMCA are yet unwritten and I look forward to more exciting chapters!

Chapter 3



March 12 The Birthday Call and Email

Stacie Droste

I had called to wish Lisa a happy birthday in the afternoon and she was just ecstatic that so many employees at the Y had taken the time to call or email on her birthday. She said she missed being able to see all of us as much due to working at the school. I then told her she was missed as she always had a smile for everyone!

March 19 Fair refs

Chris Alexander

Garden City's boys basketball team told me that our referring was some of the best that was done all year from what he has seen. They said that they were fair on both ends of the court and explained to the kids what the call was.



March 26 Cheyenne ROCKS!

Tarica Lare

I was having a conversation with Ashleigh Drake regarding Cheyenne and all the work that she has done to improve the pool and the Aquatics Department. Ash works for David Reibin and David is an avid swimmer at the Y. Ashleigh stated that David thinks the world of Cheyenne and is so thankful she joined our team!

Perspective from the BOD President Carolyn Banning

What does serving as the YMCA president meant to me?

I enjoyed my year as president of the YMCA. It was a very rewarding experience. Additionally, it was an exciting year to see continued growth in our community.

We had the addition of DeWayne Donaldson. He has added additional experience in building the YMCA core values.

Our YMCA would not be what it is today without our wonderful staff that make each day special for those that spend time at our facilities.

One of the primary areas of focus is "Youth Development". All kids deserve the opportunity to discover who they are and what they can achieve, under the guidance of adults who care about them and believe in their potential. A key part to that development is family time, which we offer you and your family countless opportunities to not only develop as individuals, but to come together as a family, building bonds that create healthy families. We continued to add new programs to help strengthen this area.

The above would not have been possible without our relationships with the City of Dodge City, the School District and many business partners in our community.

I enjoyed giving my time for the children of Dodge City and our surrounding communities.



**Unplanned moments are always better than
planned ones**

April 2

The Best Easter Egg Hunt

Stacie Droste

I hosted my first Easter Egg Hunt run on Saturday March 28. I didn't have a huge turnout; I had 10 runners for the 5K and 2 families of 4 for the hunt. The eggs were distributed around the walking trail and finishing up in the big field on the west of YMCA. When the Sutton family got to the field, I went out to talk with them and the boys were so excited. All they could talk about was how many eggs they had found and that it was the "best Easter egg hunt ever!" That next week when I came in for class, I saw Jeff and he told me that the hunt was still the talk of the house. Not only did the kids have fun but he and Nicole did too. So it may not have been a financial success, but it was a success none the less!

April 9

My little helper

Tarica Lare

On a day that school was out of session, Ashleigh Drake brought her awesome kids to see us here at the Y. Her oldest, Cash, who is a kindergartener thought he was too old to play in the Child Watch room with the little kids. So, instead he asked if he could hang out with me and help me work! Of course I said he could!! He hung out with me for about an hour, helped me label a mail out, made copies, carried things back and forth from the front office for me, etc. I love when I get to spend quality time with the Drake kiddos! This day was super special for me! I absolutely love Cash's sweet personality and desire to serve!

April 9

Y that makes her feel like we do

Tarica Lare

It was a sad day when Lauren Allen, avid member of the YMCA and a member of my Family Committee, told me her family was moving to Kansas City to follow her husband's job. Lauren and her kids have been a huge part of my Family Department and participate in almost all of my programs. I sat down to catch up with Lauren and see how the moving process was going, and she expressed her fear of moving to KC and not being able to find a Y that makes her feel like we do here. She always feels cared about and at home when she comes to our Y, and it may be hard to find that in a big city. I reassured her that any Y would be lucky to have her family and it's so hard not to love them! Her family will be greatly missed here in Dodge City!

April 16

DC Annual Meeting 2015

Karen Berry

There is a great difference between being a guest and hostess. I arrive and all is ready. I circulate and attempt to introduce myself to everyone, greeting those I know by name. Noel Gaucin, outgoing Board president introduces me to his daughter in such a fashion that I even think whoever he is talking about is impressive. I meet a couple new to the DC Y, he had visited his son in Wisconsin and sought us out. At one point I hear his wife say "everyone here but you are getting awards tonight", at another point I see her crying. Cheyenne introduces Member Champion, a man who encourages her when she changed the pool hours. A slender tall African American man with a gentle spirit and whose face has a story all its own. She also has the Family Champion and they share the struggles of changing the pool back to chlorine, it must have been a difficult because the wife is in tears. There are beautiful children around the room- I expect one to get an award but it doesn't happen. Stacie introduces Healthy Living Champion, a story of a lady who lost over 100 lbs. and how the Y "saved" her life. Stacie also has the Courage Champion. This award goes to a man who has Alzheimer and Parkinson. He was unable to come because of his failing health, as I prepare this moment for staff meeting today I find out he has passed away, 6 days have passed since the award was given. The award is accepted by his friend and caregiver; as he accepts it, he is overwhelmed with emotion and cannot finish. The Spirit Mind and Body Award is presented by Chris to a young man who is coach of the year and in his acceptance he states it is he who is blessed by Y. For the finale, Tarica presents the dedication of the Monumental Moment book. Trevor is a young man with downs syndrome and the biggest smile in the world. When I introduced myself to him I thought he had the softest hands. After 7 people express their love for him, his mom tells him to say thank-you and he sings opera for us. It was a perfect end to heartwarming night.

April 16

The IMPACT!

Chad Knight

After the Dodge City Annual Recognition & Celebration Banquet, I walked around and visited with some folks. I first stopped Mike Weber. Mike was just blown away by the impact of our YMCA. He had no clue how much the YMCA did in the community and the difference we were making. Mike was in awe of our work and had nothing but praise for the staff and the job we were doing. Then, I stopped and talked with Ryan Asmus. I was telling him congratulations and thanks for the work he was doing for the YMCA. He said "no, thank you Chad." He said "this YMCA does a great job and benefits so many people for our community". Isn't that AWESOME? These are two folks who attended the banquet and heard our story. I wish we could get all the community leaders to attend our meeting.

April 23

RIPPED Girls Losing Weight

Stacie Droste

We just finished doing my third RIPPED challenge at the end of March and everyone wanted to keep the challenge going to keep them motivate. Just this past week I had the privilege of seeing a couple of their hard work pay off. Maria Reyes that since she had started the class (she started after the challenge was halfway over) that she had lost weight and inches and she could final feel a difference in her body! Then Elizabeth Hernandez aka Twinka posted a video to Facebook showing how much weight she had lost...she could keep her work pants on without a belt cinched around them. It looked like they were 2-3 sizes too big!! This just reminds why I love what I do!!

April 30

Kids singing Jesus Loves Me

Tarica Lare

On a Funday at the Y, I walked in to the Child Care Classroom to hear my students singing "Jesus Loves Me" as their devotion before lunch time. I looked at my staff with an excited look and they told me that the students just started singing together with no prompt from the staff. This just proved to me that what we do at the Y does make a difference in their lives and we are training them up to be awesome people!!

Branch Executive Highlight

Dwayne Donaldson



With seven months under my belt here I am looking forward to 2016. I feel that we have made positive strides and more are on the planning table for the new year. 2015 was one of great change for the Dodge City Family YMCA in many ways. Staff has reacted well to those changes for the most part and we are putting processes into place to assist them better succeed while increasing accountability. I am excited with the new additions to the Board of Directors and committees. The partnership with the City of Dodge is stronger and both parties are looking forward to working together in the future. We still have challenges

ahead. We must do better at fundraising and membership has to grow. However, I am confident that with the staff and volunteers we have in place this will happen and 2016 will be a prosperous one! Thank you for your support, time, talent and treasure you provide to the YMCA and its staff!

May 7

The Gift

Terri Scharth

We have a group of DCHS student who volunteer their time coming in to clean certain rooms in our facility. They are such a great group of kids, always polite and cheerful, willing to clean anywhere that we need them to. Olne of the kids brought in a handmade pottery mug that they made to Thank Us for what we do for them. That kind gesture made my day!!!!

May 21

Changing Lives

Stacie Droste

At the end of the school year we received a card for the high school thanking us for our support though out the year. After receiving this card I spoke with the teachers/paras that bring the special needs kids up here to clean and they expressed that the kids that come up here have really blossomed throughout the year and it was because they come here and we as staff treat them like normal kids. We are truly changing lives for the better.

May 28

Happy Camp Dodgers

Tarica Lare

We had a parent stop by the YMCA to pay their fees for Camp Dodge for the summer. She stated that her kids saw the packets in the mail and were so excited to get started this summer. They made mom hurry in and sign up so they had a spot! I love hearing how much kiddos love our programs!



Business Director Highlight Debbie Randle

Year three is in the books and the YMCA has come a long way in a short time. It will always be a work in progress and learning process with things changing at all times. I'm thankful there has always been understanding staff to help us through. Karen Berry, CFO in Garden City, has always been there for me to answer my questions or when I need someone for advice. Without her I would not have made it through these past years. It's not always easy dealing with problems and getting them solved from a distance. It makes life easier when you work with people that make a job enjoyable and a fun place to work. A BIG Thank You to her.

The Y has become a popular place for so many people in the community. There are always new members, new families and new faces to welcome into our YMCA family. It's always a challenge learning names and faces, but we try our best. We hear the stories of how families appreciate the work we do and the programs we offer. I enjoy talking with the ladies that are here each morning for the Senior Exercise program, a fun group of ladies.

As I look back on the past year, working here is always an adventure and I'm thankful for everyone that has made it an easier journey.



June 4 The YMCA was there to help!

Tarica Lare

I received a Thank You card from Chris Perak here recently. Chris' family has been through the ringer the past few months. Her youngest daughter, Bella, was diagnosed with cancer this spring. Bella is the youngest of 5 daughters, and Chris and her husband Dr. Perak, have been strung out trying to attend to their oldest girls while traveling to Denver for Bella's treatment. The YMCA has helped transport girls to the YMCA for our After School Program and help get them to Swim Team practice multiple times a week. We do so out of love and care for this family. They have been so good to the YMCA and we were so saddened to hear of Bella's results. We wanted to do anything to help!

June 11 Donation to Help Save Youth

Cheyenne Schellhamer

Towards the beginning of summer I received a phone call from Val Henton with Henton Plumbing Service. He told me that he wanted to donate to the aquatics program to help offer swimming lessons for students that attend Bright Beginnings. We handed out fifty certificates that were handed out by the teachers at Bright Beginnings. Because of the Henton's and Mrs. Taylor at Bright Beginnings we were able to spread even more water safety awareness to more children and parents. Thank you!

June 18 Y staff cares

Tarica Lare

At our June Family Committee Meeting, our new BED DeWayne got to introduce himself to my committee. While Ash was introducing herself she spoke highly of our YMCA and shared how much the Y staff cares about her and her family. She said she loves bringing her kids here because everyone greets them with hugs and smiles and makes them feel so loved.

June 25 Peace of Mind

DeWayne Donaldson

Allie is a teen new to the area. I noticed her at the Y almost everyday this summer. One day I had the chance to visit with her and hear her story. Allie came here from Oklahoma and really didn't know anyone. Both of her parents work so they wanted her to be in a safe place during the day. The Y was the place to be! After a while Allie felt at home at the Y and even began to help with things. I visited with her mom and she let me know that the Y has been so good for Allie and has given her peace of mind.

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*

Family Director Highlight Tarica Lare

Another year. Another amazing year. Each year when I sit down to write this, I am just at a loss for what to write about. There are so many things that I want to share and highlight, but we could be here all day!! This past year was a big year for me personally and professionally. We had a lot of hardships go through the Child Care Department, but I feel as though we came out stronger than ever. I remember many occasions sitting in my office in tears just wondering what I was going to do to fix things and wondering if I was ever going to be able to please everyone. This is where my professional highlight comes into play. In November, we started our Livestrong in the YMCA program, and I can honestly say that that program and the participants changed my life in so many ways.



Livestrong would meet every Tuesday and Thursday, and each day I couldn't wait for it to start. I couldn't wait to see my new friends and hear how they were. These people are the strongest, most faithful, amazing people I've ever met. They showed me what it was like to have Christ-like faith again and I felt as though a weight was lifted off my chest. I gave all my sorrows, worries, and fears up to God and said, "If they can do it, so can I!" I can't thank these ladies and gentleman enough! It was like they brought me back to life, and each and every day I strove to be the best me that I could be. Whether it was at work, with my babies, or my husband; I just wanted to be better. I saw strength in their marriages, their friendships, and in their fight against this terrible disease. I am just so proud of who they are and who they've taught me to be. I'm so thankful for the opportunity to be a part of their lives. In addition to this amazing professional highlight, I did have a pretty eventful personal life in 2015.

In February, my husband found out we were expecting another beautiful baby in addition to our sweetie, Miss Hattie Jo! We found out during the summer months that we were expecting a baby boy!



YAY! In August, we had a scare. Our little man was being stubborn and wanted to come two months early. I don't know if I've ever been that scared, but thanks to my family, friends, and Y-Family I got through it. We were able to stop labor, but I would be on partial bed rest the rest of my pregnancy. In addition, a few weeks later I was diagnosed with Preeclampsia. Not how I wanted to go through the last few weeks of pregnancy while trying to get ready for maternity leave. THANKFULLY, I have amazing co-workers who helped me in so many ways, including making me sit down, relax, or leave work if I needed to! It once again proved to me that these people aren't just my co-workers, but my family! I love them so! On October 2nd we welcomed Mr. Archie Arthur!! He weighed in at 7lbs 1oz and was 19in long! After such a trying pregnancy, I was full of so much relief and love when he was finally here in my arms! The first people to come visit me were a few of my co-workers! They had worked hard for this baby too, and fought just as hard as I did to get him here safely! I'll never forget the sacrifices they made to help me get through the tough times, and then celebrate with me through the great times!!

I love the YMCA and what it stands for. I love working for an organization that puts God first and stands on Christian values. It may just be what saved me last year! That, and the amazing people I work with! So thankful for the opportunity God gave me to work here and with these people!! We ask each other, "What's your Y?" Well, my "Y" this year was God. I did it all for His glory and to serve His kingdom!

July 9 **Feeling Blessed**

Stacie Droste

Barbara had stopped in my office before starting her workout, as she usually did, but today she had great news to share. Before becoming a member to the YMCA she had been depressed, she wasn't exercising and was eating very unhealthy. Since visiting us every day and changing her diet, she had lost weight and had met her first goal! She showed me pictures of what she had looked like when she was at her worst and to see how far she had come, I felt blessed that she wanted to share her success with me. Keep up the great work Barbara

July 23 **The pool help!**

DeWayne Donaldson

Rowland is an older member that uses the pool almost every day. He is a Vietnam vet and has faced many health challenges because of being exposed to Agent Orange while in the military. Roland has had many surgeries on his joints. The pool allows him to get the exercise he needs without the pain associated with more traditional exercise. There is a regular group that he works out with so the social aspect and support he receives also helps. Rowland is active with the military hospital and retirement center in Ft. Dodge and plans to assist with getting more veterans involved at the Y. Thank you, Rowland for your service!

July 30 **Word Gets Around About a Hero**

Cheyenne Schellhamer

One evening as I was sitting at home enjoying my evening, I received a text message from one of my lifeguards that had a photo of what looked like something off of Facebook. I opened the message and read what was on the picture and I was a post that was on Dodge City Chat. It stated, "To the life guard who saved the girl at the pool today!! You did awesome!!! My son wanted to say thank you for saving her!! (He's only 5) he sure was worried about her! Hope she is okay!" This post also had a comment saying good job, job well done. I shared this with the guard that made the save to let him know his skills did not go unnoticed and that I was very proud and honored to have him be a part of the aquatics staff. Job well done to Ethan Reimer!!

Healthy Living Director Highlight Story

Stacie Droste

Well, I have just completed my second year as the Healthy Living Director and I still love what I do as much as day one. I tried new things and tried to extend on things that we had done last year to make the YMCA the best place to be.

In January, the Garden City YMCA had their first LIVESTRONG at the YMCA 12 week program, and I was fortunate enough to help with it. There is nothing more rewarding than to know that you are helping cancer survivors get their lives back. The participants in the groups were some the most amazing 6 women I have ever met. They really helped me understand more about this ugly disease and I learned so much from them, I only hope that I taught them something. After getting the program completed, I was eager to get our program started over here. Unfortunately, it took longer than I expected to get the program over here.

In March, I tried to host another run...the Easter Egg Hunt Run. We had a 5k for the runners and then a 1K Easter egg hunt for the kids. I did not have the turn out that I had hoped for. We had about 10 runners for the 5k and 6 kids for the Easter egg hunt. All that participated seemed to really enjoy it, especially the Sutton Family! Jacoby and Jameson thought it was the best Easter egg hunt ever!! Even though it wasn't successful financially, I believed it was successful in other ways.

"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

April 25th, we had our annual Healthy Kids Day. This year I was asked by the ICC group, a group of businesses that work with children ages 0-5, to team up with me. They had grant money that they needed to spend on an event like this. With their grant money, we were able to hand out more than 50 shirts and we had prizes to give away. We doubled our vendors and had variety of things for the kids to do. We did have a better turnout than last year, but I still want it to be better this coming year.

We had the second annual Lite Brite Run in June. We did not have as good of a turn out as last year, but I was happy with what we did have considering one of the churches were hosting a glow run the following weekend. I changed up the route for the run and had glow people standing at each turn. I truly believe that the route change and the markers were the way to go. I hope to bring more participants back this next year and make it a staple event.

September we started our 3rd annual Corporate Cup Challenge. This event gets businesses to put teams together and compete in nightly games for about two weeks. The team that has the most wins gets bragging rights and keeps the travelling trophy at their business for the year. This year we had 5 teams with 2 teams from Western Plains. I have to say that this year went a lot smoother than last year. I believe that everyone really enjoyed the events and there was not the fighting like the year before. On the last day of events, we had a cook off. Each team had one appetizer, main dish and dessert that would be judged by outside people. Then once the judging was done, everyone could sample the food. I think this might have been the favorite event. All the teams were really close this year, but WPMC Staff team pulled through with the win. Besides being tired, I was very pleased with how this event turned out.

Finally in November I was able to get the LIVESTRONG at the YMCA program up and running here in Dodge City!!! I four wonderful people in the program and they are just as amazing as the Garden City group, if not more. They were all apprehensive in doing the program, but have all shared with



me that they are so glad they decided to participate...they even have said that they will do whatever they can to keep the program going after they are done because they believe in that much. All of them want to get their strength back, but even more so, they want to be there for each other. When one is having a bad, the group tries to bring their spirits up. We are halfway through the program and I can already see changes in the group. They are getting stronger and they seem to have more confidence in the Fitness Center and in general. These four beautiful people are my true success story of the year.

I would say that my work life and my personal life were very full and busy this year. After long talks my husband and I decided to keep trying for a baby. April and May was definitely a test for our marriage and me personally. We did a round of IVF in April and were unsuccessful and for about a month, I didn't think I would ever be myself again, so I let myself grieve for a short while. My Y family was so good to me through all of this, I don't know if I would have managed it as without them. Then in June I told Brad I wanted to try one more time, and after a little thinking and talking, he agreed to try one more time. We decided not to share with as many people, since the first time was hard on me to. Fortunately, all we needed was one more time. On September 4th I was told that this time was successful and I was pregnant, I was so happy I cried!!! I couldn't wait to share with everyone at work that had been with me through all my struggles...when I told the few that knew they all shared in tears of joy. As hard as it was to keep quiet, we decided to wait to till I was past my first trimester before we went completely public. Not only were some of my other co-workers were happy, even members shared in my joy. I continue to get closer to more members and I enjoy to not only sharing my life but I enjoy them sharing their lives with me. I am proud to be a YMCA employee!!

Aug 6 **Shout out to the night shift guy** **Stacie Droste**

Very rarely do we get positive feedback on how the 24 hour staff is doing, but this morning when I got to work I had a note in my mailbox. The note said that the new 24 hour staff was doing a awesome job and that he was the first employee that the member actually saw doing work...to keep up the good work!! It's always nice to know that the people you hire to work when you not around are doing what they are supposed to do! Keep up the great work Eric!!

Aug 13 **Exercise was the key!** **Stacie Droste**

Annette has been a long time member and was consistent in her visits. I had noticed that she had not been coming for a while and just thought life had gotten busy for her. It turned out that Annette had a mild stroke and was doing physical therapy at the hospital. When her insurance had expired her physical therapist reached out to me to let me know that she would need further help and I was glad to help her. When I met with Annette she told about her stroke and that the doctors said that she was lucky because it could have been a lot worse. She believed that if she hadn't been coming to the Y and exercising on regular bases, she would have not been so lucky.

Aug 20 **A Positive Soul** **Cheyenne Schellhamer**

As I'm rushing around getting weights out and music ready for Aqua Zumba I notice something is different about Twyla and then it dawns on me that she got her hair cut! To confirm it I ask her and she responded with, "kind of, I'll let your grandma tell you." With a look of confusion on my face I look to my grandma to get an explanation. A minute passes and I have walked closer to Twyla and she tells me that she had breast cancer. As tears well up in my eyes I stand right in front of her and give her a hug and tell her that I'm glad that she is here. She then looks at me and tells me that because of Aqua Zumba she is always excited for Tuesday and Thursdays. The very first song that plays in our class is "Overcomer" by Mandisa. I came across the music video in college and there is a woman in the video who is overcoming cancer and to look at someone in my class who has been the overcomer of something that is out of anyone's control is a very powerful feeling. So keep overcoming any obstacle that may come your way!

Aug 27 **The tips helped!** **Chris Alexander**

A boy with Cerebral Palsy came into my office and wanted to know if you could sign up for tackle football. I asked the mom if he played football before and she said yes but it was not through the YMCA. He could not grip a pencil with one hand. He said he loves to swim in our pool. I gave him some ideas to strengthen the hand on his one side. The mom was not upset with me denying him the ability to play but was more thankful that I was able to give them ideas to help him strengthen his body to not only be able to play football next season but also be able to do more with his hand.

Membership Highlight **Jodi Conrardy**

Membership started out strong with our January promotion, we added 134 new members with the Join for Free promotion. Our Summer for Free promotion was also a big draw with 223 new members joining during the 3 month period. I have enjoyed getting out and attending new business openings, going to Chamber coffees and attending the Tourism coalition . I have been able to meet new people in Dodge City as well as get the YMCA's message out to the community. This year we worked with National Beef to provide payroll deduction for their employees . We spend 2 days at the facility and talked to their employees. We also spend 2 days at the Ford county open enrollment to talk to their employees. We now have a corporate partnership with the county. Growing memberships and helping our members will continue to be my focus for the new year. I am excited about 2016 !

Chapter 9



Sept 3

ASP on the News

Tarica Lare

This past week our After School Program at Northwest was on the news. With all of the negative media around Law Enforcement at this time, our students wanted to shed positive light on our local Police Officers. One of our students has a father that is on the DCPD. Our students wrote thank you notes and presented them to some of the officers. We are so proud of our kiddos and their thoughtfulness in a time of such negativity.

Sept 10

A Good Time to Reminisce

Cheyenne Schellhamer

Since starting the adventure as the Aquatics Director I often sit and think about where it all started. Before this building became the YMCA I knew it as the Dodge City Parks and Recreation building or often just the place where grandma worked. I was always up here! Snow days you would find me in the gym shooting hoops in the gym with Putz, eating pizza with the Davis boys and during the summer time, whether I liked it or not I would be at swimming lessons. I don't recall any of my other instructors except for Emily. No matter how much I disliked getting in that freezing cold water early in the morning, Emily always had a smile on her face ready to teach kids how to swim and eleven years later I could still pick her out of a crowd. One afternoon I was in the copy room talking to my sister and a couple approached the desk. Shadoe saw me staring and gave me the sisterly look like "Dude, stop staring!" I couldn't stop looking at her because I knew I knew her from somewhere and before I could stop my mouth from overriding my brain I asked, "You're Kevin Howard's sister aren't you?" She responded with, "Ya, I am!" I then told her that she taught me how to swim and we all laughed. She then told me that she hopes that I learned something and can still swim. I laughed and informed her that I was now the Aquatics Director and thanked her because in the back of my mind if it wasn't for her I wouldn't have the swimming back ground or the since of what an impact an instructor or person in general has on a child. Thank you for being that positive role model for me when I was 10 and for teaching me the importance of swimming. I wouldn't be here without you!

Sept 10

Leading Others to Better and Beautiful Place

Cheyenne Schellhamer

On September 9th I attended my cousin Vernon's funeral and as I took a seat I noticed Jeff at the front of the room so took a look in the program and saw that he was the pastor for the funeral. I mentioned that I wasn't aware he was a pastor but was also touched that he would be putting on the service while also being a Board member at the YMCA. As everyone knows I am a very emotion person so I was really trying to pep talk myself to keep it together though the service. As a staff at the YMCA we use "The Good, The Bad and The Ugly" to improve the quality of our programs and that is the line that started the stream of tears. As he explained Vern's life and the way he had previously lived it and how he was working to improve it he used this line. As I sat their listening to his words I was so touched that he is such an active part in the community and the YMCA. I have seen him so many times walk through our building and to see him there warmed my heart and assured me that he went above and beyond to help Vernon change his life. His words were beautiful and assuring that he helped someone close to my family become closer to Jesus Christ and helped him to understand the Lord's mission for all of us. His ending line is what really stuck. After a friend of Vern's went up and spoke about how every time he came to Dodge City he would always ask how Vern was. He mentioned that on Friday he heard he wasn't doing well so he told himself he would call him Monday. Vern ended up passing on Sunday. Jeff piggy backed with what the man said. He said that instead of waiting to make that call tomorrow or Monday, you should do it today. You never know what is going to happen from now until then, do it now so you won't regret it if you miss the chance. Jeff, I want to thank you for seeing that he make it to a better place where he will feel no more pain and thank you for being such an active member of our YMCA and community.

Sept 17

The Y helps Young Life

Stacie Droste

On July 4th I assisted with The Young Life church group with a 5k run. I opened up the Y so they could use the restrooms before and after the race and volunteered wherever they needed me throughout the race. This past week we received a thank you in the mail for donating time and space. We helped send 32 students and leaders to the summer church camp in Colorado. How awesome is it that this Christian organization could help another Christian organization change lives for the better! Every little bit helps.

Sept 24

A Friendly Comment from a Familiar Face

Cheyenne Schellhamer

As I was sitting in my office right before the 11:30 lap swim hour, James comes walking in my office. I greet him like I normally do and right off the bat he says, "Katelyn has really helped me get better at my swimming!" I told him that was awesome and asked what she has been helping him on. He mentioned that before he had worked with her the back of his neck and shoulders would hurt. Katelyn noticed that he needed a little bit of work on his form and technique so called out to him one morning to have him try it to see if it would help. Two days after he made the comment that her helping him got rid of that shoulder/neck pain. Now that water helps him to relax instead of making him tense and sore.

Chief Operations Officer Highlight

Jackie Regan

In 2014 the YMCA of SWKS began to implement LIVESTRONG at the YMCA, a health and wellness program designed for cancer survivors. As an organization, the Y understands that 1:2 people have someone they know that has been touched by cancer. This program is a FREE twelve week program for adult cancer survivors lead by certified staff with the intention of guiding cancer survivors in finding their "new normal." Beginning this program had many challenges. We put together a team of myself, Stacie-our Healthy Living Director of DC and Sarah, our Healthy Living Director in GC. We started with many conference calls to learn about the program and what it would take to implement. Then, a trip to Chicago and a trip to St. Louis, finally after all the prework in 2014 we were ready to implement in 2015. During the time period Sarah left our Y and Lisa took over. She and Stacie became certified LiveStrong Instructors. We started our first session, our trial run in Garden City. On Tuesdays and Thursdays the group met with Lisa and sometimes Stacie. As a staff, many of us bought yellow LiveStrong shirts and wore them in support. We watched them grow closer and a group and many of our staff bonded with them individually. At the end of it, they did a group potluck and celebrated their "graduation." The most touching moment for me after this was the prayer breakfast. Every year, since the Y is a Christian organization, our Christian Emphasis committee celebrates National Day of Prayer. On May 7th, the LiveStrong graduates were our guest speakers. As each of them told the story of their journey through cancer I saw many wet eyes around the room. Their strength and faith was AMAZING. And the willingness to stand up and tell their stories truly touched me as well as the rest of the staff. What TOUGH, TOUGH women they all are. Implementing the LiveStrong program was a lot of time and hours but the culmination of it hearing those stories on such a blessed day was truly heartwarming and well worth the efforts it took! So to Lacey, Joyce, Tammie, Kay, Julie and Leona-you women inspired us all! You were our first group and will always be special to all of us. God Bless.



"Hear the cry and the prayer that your servant is praying in your presence this day"-Kings 8:28

Oct 1

After School is the bomb

DeWayneDonaldson

I workout in the weight room on a regular basis and met Derek one morning. He is originally from the East Coast but moved to Dodge City a couple of years ago. Derek has a child that comes to the After School Program at the YMCA. He couldn't say enough good things about the program and how affordable it was. His family really appreciates that their child has a fun and safe place to come to after school!

Oct 22

Clean & Nice

Debbie Randle

An away member said he travels around alot and has been to many YMCA's. He said that this one though being an older building was very clean and nice facility.

Oct 29

The AWAY pledge

Terri Scharth

Tyler is an away member form Salina, he has been in 5 or 6 times to use our facility. As an away member you don't pay to use our Y. So the last time Tyler was here he gave me \$60.00 to put toward any fundraiser that we had going on. That \$60.00 went to our KOP campaign. Thank you Tyler!

A.W.A.Y
Always Welcome at any
YMCA



Sports Director Highlight Chris Alexander

This year has been a very good year for the YMCA youth sports. This past summer the youth baseball program was able to send 2 teams to the Babe Ruth state baseball tournament. It has been a long time since Dodge City has sent teams to the Babe Ruth state baseball tournament. The kids that played were very grateful for what the YMCA did for them this summer. The teams may not have had a very good showing at the tournament but they played against teams that they have never played before and did an amazing job. The coaches were amazing and received compliments from everywhere they went. I could not have been prouder of the parents and the kids for showing what people from Dodge City are like.

Chapter 11



Nov 5

Big Picture Deck

Stacie Droste

We had our first class of the LIVESTRONG at the YMCA program. At the end of the class we go into the conference room to have journal and discussion time. To get the participants to learn a little bit about each other, we used the big picture deck. They had two topics and picked a picture for each topic that signified each. The first topic was "How you felt before cancer" and the second was "How you feel now". Even though everyone had different types of cancer the responses were all very similar for the last topic. It brought them closer to their loved ones and strengthened their relationship with God. It still surprises me how so much good can come out of such an ugly disease.

Nov 19

Sharing is VITAL!

Tarica Lare

While in one of our Livestrong sessions, Kate was talking about how much she enjoyed this program and enjoyed even more sharing it with others going through treatment with her each week. She said she wished people understood what this program really does for her and the other participants, but it's hard to put into words. She hopes that by her sharing as much as she can though, that someday these people will join our group!

Aquatics Director Highlight

Cheyenne Schellhamer

In 1997 I took my first steps into the Sheridan (currently the YMCA) to play the first sporting event of my life. At that moment in my life, I fell in love with sports and the feeling of belonging to a team and having that one day in the week where I knew I would get to spend time with my team. While being involved in athletics through DCPR I was also fortunate enough to be in Camp Dodge every summer till I was no longer of age to attend. In the six year that I was able to be in DCPR sports and Camp Dodge I watched many people come in and out of the Sheridan. In 2003 I then walked in the Sheridan as a DCPR athletic alumni. I had hit the age where I was "too old" to participate in sports or Camp, but that didn't stop me from hitting the gym every chance I could.

Rain, snow, or shine I was there and usually Brenda the bus driver got me up there safely. Nine times out of ten I was greeted by "Putz" the Sports Director to pick up a game of P.I.G or H.O.R.S.E depending on the time he had that day and if he didn't have time to get away from his work I would get an assignment. Considering my life goal was to be a point guard in the WNBA, he always made sure I was improving (whether he thought I was going to be a pro or not). As I got older and older I was in the building less and less. When I did get to working age, the Sheridan is where I started and I believe I worked in every department the Sheridan had to offer. In the many years I spent in my second childhood home I created close bonds with all of my Camp counselors and got to see the transition through the full time and part time staff and still to this day these people made everlasting memories with me that I have cherished since the moment they were made, especially the ones made with the front desk lady, Vivian. She was my grandmas' dear friend who would always send you on your way with "Watch out for the roads, their everywhere!" Once I returned from college I came back to even more change. The beloved building that I had grew up in was being transitioned into a YMCA, which came with A LOT of change.

As a new part time employee it was very hard to adjust to these changes that were coming so fast. Then a short time later I became a full time employee and decided that I was going to embrace it instead of resisting it.

So as I kept an open mind of being a Young Men's Christian Association employee I started emphasizing the Christian part of our logo, and I felt it all changing in a good way. Patrons shared their love of my change and that me changing was also helping them to change too. It was good and made my heart truly happy. I found that I loved sharing my knowledge and my faith with everyone. Some were more open than others, but it was satisfying. This change brought more change to my life, and without it I wouldn't have seen God's next opportunity for my life. My experience at the Y was both rewarding and challenging, in the sense of being a piece of the Y and living the cause the YMCA is trying to implement is awesome and could change so many lives for the better, but if you are not willing to change yourself and live by the YMCA's Core Values inside and out of work, you won't be able to change anyone else's life. You lead by example not by meaningless words that flood out of your mouth. Youth watch and observe and learn through visual presentation. If you cannot lead by example you have no right in leading. *Leo Tolstoy, a Russian writer once said "Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one thinks of changing himself."*



Dec 3 **Being in the right place**

Stacie Droste

In the LIVESTRONG at the YMCA program we start each class with the question or discussion of the day and then discuss our answers at the end of the class. The discussion for the day was Tell me the five best things about you. After all the participants went, they asked me my 5 best things. One that I said is that I like to help people reach their goals and better themselves in anyway possible. Kate said that I was definitely in the right place because she can tell that I truly care for all them. Terry then chimed in and said that Tarica, Cheyenne and I were doing a great job and if there was anybody else running this program that it might not be as success. This is why I LOVE what I do!!

Dec 10 **A great partnership**

DeWayne Donaldson

As most everyone knows the Dodge City Family YMCA is a partnership with the City of Dodge and we work closely with city staff and officials. This was evident recently when the Y had a proposal to adjust membership and program fees for the coming year. The city manager, Cherise and her assistant, Ernestor, provided guidance and suggestions on how the presentation should be done and what needed to be included. The city commissioners asked great questions and were very supportive passing our proposal. Dodge City and this YMCA are lucky that this type of cooperation exists and the community will be better for it! Thank you to everyone at the city and the Y looks forward to many more years of support and cooperation!

Dec 17 **The Stair Climber**

Stacie Droste

I was walking into the Fitness Center one evening and Joseph was on the Stair mill. As I walked by to go to my office I said hello to him and he had shared with me how many flights of stairs he had already done. I congratulated him, gave a high five and told him to keep up the great work. Then after he was done working out he shared with me again, how many completed in total. I then said he was stud and she said he got it from his mother. It so nice to see youth getting excited about working out and accomplishing goals and even better when they have great role models at home to look up too! This is such a great family!!!

Property Manager Highlight

Gabriel Del Real

This is the 4th anniversary since joining the YMCA. When I hear the word YMCA, it really rings my ears! I think being part of the of the "Y" is so wonderful. This particular year is going to be good. The change has been so nice. When you talk to YMCA members and listen to them, they appreciate being members of the YMCA.

MSA Highlight

Terri Scharth

This has been another amazing year here at the Dodge City YMCA! I was sitting here at the welcome center thinking about what to write about in my Highlight story and John Trombley walked by. He is one of my favorite people. I got to know John when he first became a Y member and we just seemed to hit it off. He has a great sense of humor and always has a positive attitude. Being a part of the YMCA has allowed me to get to know many amazing people. The list could go on and on in regards to the wonderful people I've gotten to know and care about. There are many of our terrific members I know that if I didn't work here we would still be friends, and I have the Y to thank for that!

**Happy Moments, Praise God,
Difficult Moments, Seek God
Quiet Moments, Worship God
Painful Moments, Trust God
Every Moment, Thank God**

Chapter 13



Kudos

Jackie Regan

January is always super busy and chaotic. I have really been stressing to staff they need to get me information early so I can get it input to our software and also market it. I want to say KUDOS to staff for doing a good job at year end being better prepared for the January madness! Thanks Guys!

Doing the Little Things Right

Cheyenne Schellhamer

One afternoon I was sitting in my office and I heard the MMO kiddos yelling and playing in the gym. I then heard Laura, the childcare teacher telling them to put the toys away. I thought it was very strange that they hadn't been playing long so I stopped what I was doing to listen really close. I then heard her explain the different sports that are played during different seasons. She told them that it is basketball season and then demonstrated the proper way to dribble a basketball. She then let each individual kiddo practice their dribble. It was very cool to see an instructional lesson, instead of the normal free time.

Good Deads

Cheyenne Schellhamer

During a busy evening of open gym I had a club volleyball practice. Towards the end of the practice my girls were conditioning and I was taking down the net so a court would be available for basketball. While folding up the net, two young boys, Xavier Fernandez and Aric Mendoza came up and asked if I needed any help. With the poles being really heavy I let them put away the pads and the net. It was awesome to see young kids, kind enough to offer to help in a time of need.

Helping those of the Future

Cheyenne Schellhamer

On multiple occasions while on my way home or walking through the gym I notice Dominique Carson, player for the Dodge City Law, 24 hour weight room attendant, and lifeguard in the gym or in the weight room instructing kids on proper ways to exercise or dribble a basketball. On top of being here long hours of the night and working the early morning pool shift, he makes time to workout himself as well as helping others to become healthier and better at what they do. Thank you for taking time out of your day to make a change.

Compliments from a colleague

Jackie Regan

This past week I coordinated a training with YMCA of Greater Kansas City. Courtney Nigro came down and taught Facilitation Skills to staff from our Garden City and Dodge City branches. She made the point to tell me how great our staff is, how well the two branches get along and how she things it's awesome that we are always coming up with new ideas for the Y movement. It was a proud moment for YMCA of Southwest Kansas.

A great season

Chris Alexander

Had a number of parents compliment me and the YMCA for how good the girls basketball season was for their kids.

Willing to serve

DeWayne Donaldson

It was the first thing on Monday morning and I saw my phone "blinking" letting me know I has a message. Well, many times that is not a good thing the first thing on a Monday morning! Sure enough I listened to a father let me know that he had a "concern" with the girls basketball program from the past Saturday. In fact, I had two messages! Well, I visited with my sports director and had him set up a meeting with the three of us. Well, to make a long story short, we had a great meeting and the father is going to serve on our Youth Sports Committee in 2016. Thank you to a dad that not only let me know that some things might need to be changed but also is willing to be part of the solution!!

A new partnership

DeWayne Donaldson

The manager from the local Browns Shoe store stopped in to visit with me. He wanted to work with the Y and had some good ideas. He had recently moved here from a larger city and said that his family had a membership and really enjoyed coming to the Y. They thought everyone was so friendly and helpful. Way to go staff!

Dodge City's Ironman

Throughout the summer I would walk into the outdoor pool and always see David Snodgrass getting his daily laps in. I heard he is really into Ironman competitions and was very dedicated to his training. As I scrolled through my newsfeed one day I noticed I was tagged in a post from him. The post showed his times in an Ironman he attended in Boulder, CO where he swam non-stop for the first time ever that resulted in 1st place in his age group!

Cheyenne Schellhamer

State baseball

I received a big thank you from parents about the kids who attended the state baseball tournaments across the state this summer. It was the first time the kids have experienced anything of the sort.

Chris Alexander

Very Surprised

My husband had left his billfold in the locker room one afternoon. I was really surprised when one of our young members was kind enough to return it to the front desk!

Jodi Conrardy

St. Mary's stories

I was giving a tour of the YMCA to a family that was back in town visiting. All the siblings (4) had attended St. Mary's College and even their dad had worked at the college. The siblings wanted to show their children a little bit of their past. It was fun giving them the tour as they would share stories of their college years. Two of the siblings talked about playing baseball and softball and the one that played softball was the first to hit a home run on Cavalier Field. I love hearing about others history to this building!

Stacie Droste

The BIG smile!

Annette won our member of the month and when she found out she was so excited! She came in that day with the biggest smile and telling us all how happy we had made her by choosing her for our member of the month

Terri Scharth

You're Never too Young to Learn

In the summer of 2014 while I was the Pool Manager at the outdoor pool, I decided I wanted to start a little tradition where one of our Friday in-services I would get a bunch of volunteers to come join us to be our "victims" while we work on all skills. The last two years the Camp Dodge councilors have picked 10-12 kids to come help and this year I asked all of my staff to bring their siblings or any friends willing to help. I split them evenly into teams and each team got 4 scenarios where they were required to treat it like a normal day. They had to recognize the scenario and make the appropriate save while they were being evaluated by myself and 3 other veteran guards. Each team received points depending on how they reacted and the entry, skill, and steps they took for the incident. As each team finished their scenarios we shared their scores and discussed how everything went and then they all received pizza for lunch. While we all sat with the Camp Dodge kids many of my guards stated that the in-service was really fun but very informative and helped them see and learn in a different more realistic light.

Cheyenne Schellhamer

Stair mill members happy

We got several new pieces of equipment and one of them was the stair mill, which was something that has been requested by a lot of members. Since we have had it, I have had multiple members come and tell me how happy that there are that we finally got it. They have even told non-members we have one and now they are thinking of joining the Y!!

Stacie Droste

No complaints

Larry is very involved at the Y. He uses the pool and, in fact, serves on the Aquatic Committee. Anyone that knows Larry will say that he is very "passionate" about the pool and aquatic staff. One morning last week Larry stopped by my office just to let me know that he was so pleased with the way everything was going. Needless to say all of us were happy to hear this and hope things continue to go well!

DeWayne Donaldson

The Visit

Stacie Droste

Like normal Barbara had stopped in my office to have our talk for the day. She was telling that she is stay at home mom and wanted to get a part time or do some type of volunteer work. She then went on to say that she didn't want it to interfere with her gym time because she really loves coming here to work out and helping other while she is here. What a great member we have in her!! Thanks Barbara!!!

Training Compliments

Jackie Regan

Yesterday, Courtney Nigro, a trainer for the Kansas City YMCA Association came to Garden City branch to do training with staff from both branches. She was very complimentary of the YMCA of SWKS Association and told me that it's awesome how proactive we are towards trainings and the Y movement. She said she often tells other Y's about the good things we are doing out here and uses us as an example for small associations. She also was very impressed and said how much she enjoyed working with our staff that took the training. It was great to hear such nice things from someone who has been to a lot of Y's and worked with so many! Way to go YMCA of SWKS!

Foundation Build on a Strong Faith

Cheyenne Schellhamer

While at a training in Garden, the program directors had to give informative presentations that would teach our fellow directors something. Krystal Richardson was giving her presentation on what the Y has done for her. While giving her presentation she stated that the Y has been her "church" and since being with the Y her faith in Christ has grown and she has become a better person since being an employee there. It was very inspirational to me, as I'm sure to the others how open Krystal was. This day in age it isn't easy talking to people about your faith or just talking about the Lord period. It was beautiful to hear the impact the Y has made on her.

Love the interaction

Chris Alexander

I had a parent come up to me and who said that she really appreciates the pre-k sports that the YMCA has for kids. She said that without that her kid would not interact with other until he got into Kindergarten next year.

Swim lessons Cheyenne good with the kids

Tarica Lare

I took my daughter, Hattie Jo, to the Parent Tot swim lessons this session. Cheyenne teaches this particular class, and I was just so impressed with how well she does with the kiddos. She's so personable and treats each kid as an individual and instructs to their specific needs. I felt that my child got almost one-on-one lessons from her, and so did the other parents. It's just so appreciated to feel like your child matters even in a large class. That's how good Chey is at her job!!

Allie Smith

Debbie Randle

Allie's brother Tyler has cancer and Cheyenne has participated in several events they have had for him. Allie just really loves and admires Cheyenne

A home away from home

DeWayne Donaldson

I was attending a meeting for local United Way agencies and after the meeting began visiting with the new director of the local Big Brothers/Big Sisters. The Y has always worked with BB/BS and I wanted to let her know that the Y was there to support them. She was very appreciative of that and then she said that I must be the DeWayne her daughter talks about. I asked who her daughter was and it turned out to be a new teen to town that was at the Y almost everyday – Allie Pope. Allie's mom let me know how much the family was to have the Y as a place for Allie to spend time. That is what the Y is all about!!

Love the Professionalism

Chris Alexander

During the first week of tackle football had a parent come up to me and the head official and told both of us how professional everybody was during the games.

There is Always a Time for a Compliment

Cheyenne Schellhamer

While performing one of my sidelines in my section at one of the Dodge City Law football games I was stopped by Trenton Moore who wanted to share with me how great he thought the Basketball Tournament went at the Y that day. He shared with me how good the boys did and what place they took.

Healthy Kids Day- Really Good!!

Stacie Droste

This year for Healthy Kids Day, I teamed up with the ICC group which is a group of businesses that work with children 0-5years old, to help make this event bigger. The group had a regional person here to supervise the event. This year, we had more vendors and more activities than last year, so I was definitely busier. After the event was done, the regional person came up and said that is this was on the best events that she had seen this year. It was well organized and everything went smoothly. Even the evaluations that were turned in had positive reviews. Hoping to make next year's even better!!!

We LOVED soccer!

Chris Alexander

Had a parent come up to me over the weekend and was impressed on how the coaches were doing with the kids and how the refs were doing during the games. She just thought that the YMCA was a fantastic place for her kid.

The Heart Wants What it Wants

Cheyenne Schellhamer

On Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings I would go on deck of the pool and teach Super Splashers from 9am to 11am. One morning I decided I would change into my suit and join them in the pool. At the end of the first class we were cooling down and I was talking to a newer woman who had joined our class a few weeks prior. She told me that she really enjoyed this class and it has helped her after she had open heart surgery and her fall. She mentioned it has made her feel stronger and healthier.

Books with passes

Jodi Conrardy

I was out one afternoon delivering our Monumental Moments books to business. I had gone into Dr. Gwaltney's office and had left them guest passes as well. The dentist office that is next door heard me and asked for guest passes as well. The ladies were so excited and couldn't wait to come to the Y!

Super Star Swimmers

Stacie Droste

I was doing my night monitor and was in the pool, checking things out. While I was in there, Dani was giving a private lesson. The little boy had swam from one end to the other and when he was done, I cheered. Dani then shared with me that she has lots of super star swimmers. It's nice to see staff praising all the kids that they help!

The BEST!

Chris Alexander

The Kinsley coach who has been coaching the youth teams in the outdoor soccer program said that this year was the best that he has had since he has been coming to Dodge City with his kids programs.

Nice Shot!

Cheyenne Schellhamer

One afternoon while walking up to the Welcome Center Stacie and I ran into Riley Cundiff. She was playing basketball and had a very cute vest on. She was dang near the free throw line and at 4 feet tall she hit nothing but net! While Stacie complimented her vest (where she got at JC Pennys) I mentioned that that was a very good shot. She informed me that one of the firefighters who comes in in the morning taught her how to shot a basketball! It's nice to see random acts of kindness and the "teachers" and "students" we have in our building.

**Appreciate life as it happens. Moments will soon pass
and you will wish you had treasured them more**

LiveStrong Breakfast

I shared with staff the DC staff about the Garden City branch's prayer breakfast. It was a touching breakfast with great speakers. Our LiveStrong group spoke and told the group about their journey with cancer. There wasn't a dry eye in the room. I know this year Dodge is doing their first LS session, and I know they will see the impact of the program for those who participate.

Jackie Regan

Keep it up!

Cheyenne has been doing an awesome job with the pool, keeping it clean and running. Keep up the good work.

Debbie Randle

Very Curious

While Terri and I were out one afternoon we remembered we needed some water for the conference room and decided we would go pick it up from Pepsi. We go out there and walked in and Laurie greeted us and asked what we needed. We told her and since it was lunch time it was hard to hunt someone down to get the cases of water. While we were waiting Terri and I were asking a bunch of questions so Laurie offered us a tour of the place. We thought it was really interesting to hear the areas they covered and all the space they had for such sugary goodness!

Cheyenne Schellhamer

The Thank You Cards!

For their end of the year party, Cimarron school brings their students to the YMCA to swim and play in the gym each May. We love having their group come and their kiddos are always so well behaved. This year we received hand written notes from the kids thanking the Y and telling us how much fun they had! We love seeing kids creativity and core values shining through!

Tarica Lare

Give and You Shall Receive

I was up at the front desk one day working on one of the computers and while I was doing this Robert walked in. I asked him how he was doing and took his card to check him in, then it hit me that I hadn't told him he won the Member of the Month award. I told him very excited and he looked at me and said, "You're joking." Taken aback, I told him I wasn't and that he really did win it and that we all thought he was the perfect advocate for the Y and he always comes in with a smile and calls everyone by name (not only here but at Wal-Mart as well). He heard all of this and was very grateful and told me that he loves this place.

Cheyenne Schellhamer

The Y does so much!

I was attending a Board meeting in Dodge City and Joyce Warshaw was introducing herself as the new City appointee on the Board of Directors. This is something we do every year in the Board meetings so they can get to know each other. Unbeknownst to me, Joyce said she grew up in the YMCA and knows the benefit of having a good YMCA in the community. She said she sees this everyday in her role at the school and in the after school program the YMCA provides. She said she would like to see all the kids grow up and learn in the YMCA. She said it does so much for our community!

Chad Knight

The Visit

I had made a visit to the Dodge City Public library and met with Cathy Reeves the Director. She was really happy that I took the time to come see them !

Jodi Conrardy

Kid who likes tackle football

Had a kid come up to me when I was talking to a coach during a practice and told me how much he loves to play tackle football and how he hopes that he can keep playing next year in the middle school.

Chris Alexander

Live in the moment and make it so beautiful that it will be worth remembering

Going strong at 85

After yoga light, Leona stopped in my office to tell me how class is going. She then started bragging on one of her class participants...an 85 year old lady that is still very flexible. Our flexibility is usually one of the first things we lose and this lady flexibility is still almost as good as a youths. I wish I was still that flexible!

Stacie Droste

Student-Athlete and then Some

Saturday the 12th I was at the high school coaching the freshman through their tournament and once we finish I grabbed my phone and saw that it had exploded with phone calls and text messages from both the YMCA and Rileigh. I was headed up there so I was just going to handle the issue while up there. It turned out the schedule was looked at wrong and Rileigh wasn't scheduled but picked up the shift because the other lifeguard didn't show. As I got here Rileigh was locking up and looked exhausted. I thanked her for picking it up and she went on her way. As I was walking to my office I noticed she was in the gym tossing volleyballs to little volleyball players. As her freshman volleyball coach I stood and watched and at that moment I was very proud of her and the time she puts into being at work, being a student-athlete and now volunteering her time to share her skills with these little girls. I joked with her about not teaching bad habits that we are working with her on, but was still very proud to see the time she was putting in. You have come a very long way Rileigh and it hasn't gone unnoticed. Keep it up!

Cheyenne Schellhamer

CFO Highlight

Karen Berry

Another year has once again flown by. I am sure both branches have experienced death of members; in Garden we have seen the death of a small child, a strong man in mid-life and old friends. Our member's as well have lost loved ones. Both branches have been served by volunteers with both experience and knowledge we would be lost without their help. Staff as usual has come and gone. I have learned from mistakes of my own and of others. I have learned to surrender. I have seen both waste and frugality. I have seen selfishness and unbelievable generosity. I have seen suffering and success; turmoil and peace; strife and understanding. I have been blessed by a mediator, the energy of a cheerleader, the peace of a Christian, the wisdom of good counsel, the experience of time on task, and the struggles of a leader. My heart has been warmed by tears from big black eyes, children recognizing me as part of the Y, couples in love after years of marriage, smiles that encourage me and well-disciplined people that consistently do what it takes to keep growing. I find hope in new lives soon to join our staff members, in new opportunities to serve, and in scripture revealing truth of life. I will end with this beautiful prayer written by Reinhold Niebuhr and his daughter, you will recognize it but read to the very end. I was given this gift a few years ago by kind Christian leader when I was in desperate need of hope and I wish to share it with you:

God, give me grace to accept with serenity
 the things that cannot be changed,
 Courage to change the things
 which should be changed,
 and the Wisdom to distinguish
 the one from the other.
 Living one day at a time,
 Enjoying one moment at a time,
 Accepting hardship as a pathway to peace,
 Taking, as Jesus did,
 This sinful world as it is,
 Not as I would have it,
 Trusting that You will make all things right,
 If I surrender to Your will,
 So that I may be reasonably happy in this life,
 And supremely happy with You forever in the next.
 Amen.



"Only God can hear the cry of his people" Michael Youssef

Thank You

For Year Three!

