



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

CONNECTION NEWS

Dear YMCA Supporters,

December 2011

The summer zipped by and the holidays are quickly approaching. The YMCA is getting busy with the change in weather and the shorter daylight hours. I wanted to take a moment to report on the good things happening at the YMCA.

June marked our 10th anniversary in this facility. Yes, believe it or not, it has been a decade since we opened this facility. The Y has been through numerous changes over the years. We celebrated in June with a free day for the community, multiple family nights, and food and prizes for our members. Over 100 people came to enjoy the free day. It was good to see so many families enjoy this time together. The family nights were a real success. We had 100 people come enjoy the family bingo night, and 70 for the Y's version of Minute to Win It. After 10 years the Y is in a positive place and ready to continue making a lasting impact for decades to come.



Camp Bishop was busy this summer. We had five weeks of resident camp with 438 campers. It was the first time our campers and counselors had the opportunity to enjoy the remodeled bath houses that



were completed the beginning of the year. Our bath houses normally rated poorly in surveys from campers and user groups but that was not the case this year. I had the opportunity to have lunch twice at camp with the campers. It is rewarding to watch our staff and our camp in action. I have to admit I am always a little nervous being up there for lunch. First, I have to make sure I sit at lunch with a napkin on my lap the whole time. Second, I can't lose my focus and accidentally put my elbows on the table anytime during the meal. Woe to anyone who dares to forget and breaks these rules. Trust me, just because I am a guest at camp and I am

the CEO, they would not hesitate to call me out and make me walk around the table while all of camp shouts out my name. After I make it through lunch the "fun & excitement" does not subside. Then

comes the exciting daily activity of "Mail". Campers love this! They receive letters, postcards, emails and packages from moms, dads, grandmas and grandpas, siblings, aunts, uncles, neighbors....the list goes on. The rule with mail is if you receive three letters or one package on the same day you "get" to jump in the lake. You walk directly from the dining hall to the dock and jump in. You do not to get to change into your swimsuit instead you have the privilege of jumping in with whatever you have on. The campers are beaming as their names are read. They love it when they have to jump in the lake. I thankfully made it through another mail call without a package for me! Camp Bishop truly is an experience of a lifetime for the campers and counselors, because of your continued support.

At the YMCA we believe every child should have the opportunity to experience what it is like to be on a team. To learn the importance of teamwork and know that practice makes a difference. To know that in life, as in sports, you do not always win but with the right attitude you can learn and grow more from losing and getting back up after you stumble. This is why we were excited to collaborate with the Aberdeen School District and now also with the Hoquiam School District to run the elementary sports programs throughout the districts. We scholarship many of the kids that participate in these programs. It is quite the undertaking to coordinate that many kids, volunteer coaches, schedules and facilities. But we know the impact it can have in the life of a child and we believe strongly in youth development.



The Audit Committee and staff were pleased to receive our completed audit for the fiscal year ending March 2011 and have no findings from the auditors again this year. The Board of Directors and staff have been diligent in following our accounting practices which ensure the checks and balances are in place to keep the YMCA moving in the right direction.

I want to thank you for your continued support of the YMCA of Grays Harbor. Your support makes the difference and is truly appreciated. I hope you and your family will be blessed this holiday season.

Sincerely,

Kurtis Dawson
Executive Director / CEO
YMCA of Grays Harbor