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Attn: News Desk

Christmas News Story Release

The Christmas gift that is more exciting than underwear and more practical than a Porsche!

In a very tight economy and with middle- America worried about their jobs and the economy, practical Christmas gifts are at the top of everyone's Christmas list.

Cyndy Vogt, Director of Communications for the YMCA of Greater Grand Rapids is reporting that YMCA gift card sales are very robust because of the practicality of giving the gift of good health.

Vogt said, "In good times, expensive watches, flashy jewelry and designer clothes capture the majority of the gift giving dollars but this year people seem to be giving more practical gifts and we are very pleased to see that the YMCA gift card is finding its way in Christmas stockings and under the Christmas tree of many West Michigan homes."

Sales reports for the YMCA gift card that come in denominations of \$25, \$50, and \$100 are calculated at each branch location so the total number of sales is still being compiled; however, branch administrators are seeing much more interest in the gift cards this year versus previous years.

The YMCA will be open for much of the holiday season; however, branches will be closed on Christmas and New Year's Day. Members should check www.GRYMCA.org for locations and hours of operation.

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Background:

Founded in 1886, the YMCA of Greater Grand Rapids is composed of eight branches that serve 95,173 residents in the Greater Grand Rapids community. YMCA core programs include: aquatics, child care, family, health and wellness, leadership development, arts and humanities, service-learning, and youth/adult sports. All program curricula is structured to develop the YMCA's core values of Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility. The vision of the YMCA is to be the community leader in building strong kids, strong families, and strong communities. Visit www.gymca.org.