

**WOOD RIVER/SAWTOOTH REGION EMS ASSOCIATION
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January 30, 2004

Mr. Mike Domitrz
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PO Box 20906
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Re: Blaine County, Idaho ~ Rape Awareness Week

Dear Mike,

As the excitement of this week's successful series of 12 presentations turns into the sheer joy of having made such a large imprint on the fabric of our children's lives, we want to say 'THANK YOU'! Thank you because you connected so easily and comfortably with our students, and thank you because you also connected with their parents and with many others in our adult community. The outpouring of positive and grateful comments I am still hearing, shows what can happen when a caring professional uses his considerable skills to assist a community, by providing education on sensitive social and emotional issues.

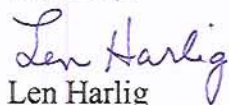
Sexual assault is every community's worst secret. When we decided to confront this issue head-on, we put together a community-wide coalition of public and private resources and called ourselves, "*The Rape Awareness Task Force*". Rape is more than just a four-letter word. It is also a frightening word, surrounded by misinformation and misunderstanding. Taking this issue on in a community as diverse as ours, with private schools at one end of the spectrum and Alternative Schools at the other, and with rural farm communities, religious schools, and working-class children in between, was an empowering feeling for us. Taking it on so successfully was due, in large part, to your presentations and the flexibility you provided in tailoring your presentations, in an age-appropriate manner, to our multiple needs and diverse audiences.

Of all the many compliments I've heard from our school principals and staff members, your willingness to listen carefully to the needs of each different school and grade-level, and your ability to incorporate those needs into each separate presentation, made their lives easier and gave them a greater level of comfort in allowing discussion of sensitive topics. Not far behind that compliment was your ready-accessibility by phone or e-mail whenever they had a question or concern. We all felt you were part of our Task Force, even though you were miles away. I speak for all the members of our *Task Force*, and in particular the Blaine County School District and The Community School, when I express our gratitude. The next question I get from everyone, including the parents, is, "When can we get him back here?"

You have made a measurable difference in our community. Although we realize this joint effort was just the beginning, it is a very important beginning. Awareness, education, respect, and communication are now words that our residents are using in every day conversations. Many are now asking, "*Can I kiss you*", or the appropriate question for the anticipated behavior, to gain permission on a wide range of dating and intimacy behaviors. It is our goal to continue the education and behavior-change process so that our students and adults will have the tools to reduce the risk of being either the victims or perpetrators of sexual assault.

If any of your prospective clients would like to contact me, you may use me as a respectful and admiring reference.

Sincerely,



Len Harlig

Chairman, *Wood River/Sawtooth Region EMS Association, Inc.*

cc: *Blaine County Rape Awareness Task Force*