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## Letter: Boys and Girls Clubs a necessity

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In 1993, routine after-school options in Chico for our children ages 6 to 18 were few and far between. There was not a place designed to enhance learning in a safe environment, affordable and open to all. The community cured that deficiency in 1995 by creating the Boys and Girls Clubs of the North Valley. Today it represents a model operation for other communities to emulate with successful efforts in Paradise and Oroville.

Our struggling economy has made many people vulnerable, as well as confronting our nonprofits and challenging one of the largest providers of after-school services. The Boys and Girls Clubs serve the best interest of our communities' future — our children.

As a prior Chico chief of police, I can unequivocally state our Boys and Girls Clubs are a necessity, not a luxury. The clubs provide a safe environment for children to learn in with outstanding role models, important services that build life skills, tutoring and other learning opportunities. They are a place of work that to our children feels like a place of play.

The Boys and Girls Clubs belongs to the community. Directed by local professionals volunteering their time and managed by highly competent staff, they are a local treasure that is only as good as the amount of support they receive from all of us. Each of us can do something to help — from donating pennies, dollars or hours. Please do your part today. Help our Boys and Girls Clubs be there for our children.

— Mike

Dunbaugh, Paradise

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