

Photo use questioned

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How could you—front page, four boys, big picture! “Summer Fun” was caption. About four-five young 12-13 year-olds having a blast, normal summer activity jumping off bridge, south Cottonwood, Gothenburg, into a canal. Second photo showed all boys back floating in same canal—after the drowning this May of an 18-year-old jumping into the canal off a bridge near Lexington with friends?

He actually was a friend’s son; he reached out and touched a foot of a female friend as he was pulled down to drown in the canal, right near all his friends. And now, another young man, Mr. Martin, drowned in a canal.

So why run a story and promote swimming in a canal without life jackets, without parents, and tell everyone why it’s cool to do it?

Maybe you could call Aracely Hernandez who lost her son in May and explain why it’s a good thing for more kids to jump in and play in canals? Her oldest son is dead. Would you change your story idea and promote fun in the sun at the pool where the bottom is seen, and stable and controlled depths, and lifeguards and flotation devices are available to throw in to save a person’s life or one parent present? That would be responsible reporting. Just because everyone has done it doesn’t make it right to promote dangerous activity.

Did you know a canal is cone-shaped, wider at the top where water flow is very slow, and a very narrow bottom where it flows three-four times faster? Even if you throw a dog out a bone—my ex-husband did—the dog won’t survive.

I was supposed to meet a North Platte fire, search and rescue man. He never showed up. He left for work and that morning, his pickup blew a tire and went into a canal he lived near. He was a strong swimmer—did this all the time with ropes—but the pickup was still floating when co-workers looked for him. He had been drug under and found a few days later.

So, please promote safe play for young people, not another funeral service.