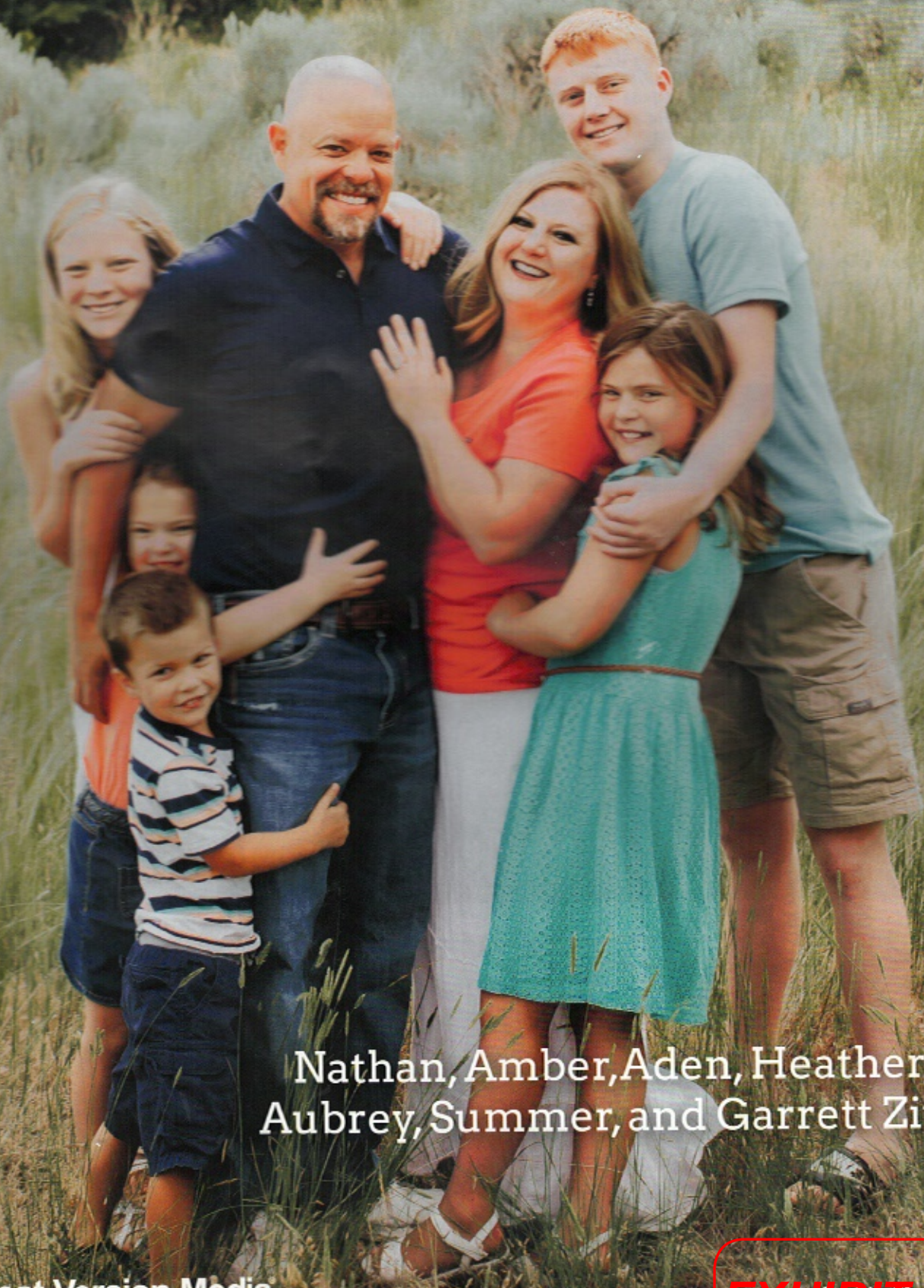


# CliffsideNeighbors

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AUGUST 2020



Nathan, Amber, Aden, Heather,  
Aubrey, Summer, and Garrett Zito

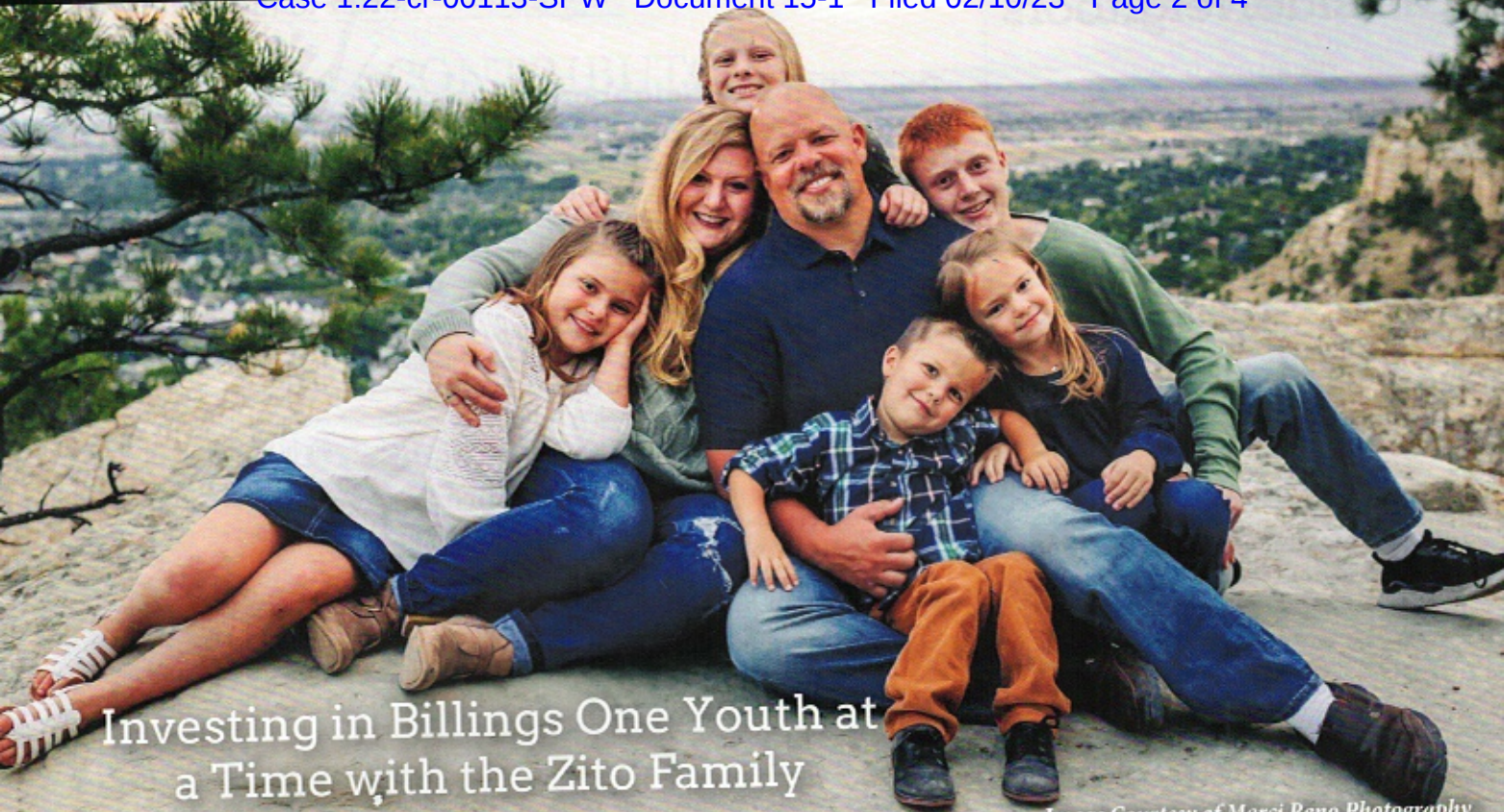


Best Version Media

Cover photo by Whitnie Jones, Billings, MT's Photography

**EXHIBIT A**





## Investing in Billings One Youth at a Time with the Zito Family

By Scott Sery

Image Courtesy of Marci Reno Photography

*We would like to thank Billings Clinic for bringing you this month's cover story.*

Norman Maclean, author of the book *A River Runs Through It*, penned the words, "... all good things – trout as well as eternal salvation – came by grace; and grace comes by art; and art does not come easy." This bit of tongue in cheek advice on the intricacies of learning to fly fish can cause a grin on many anglers. But the grin becomes a bit larger when Nathan and Amber Zito hear it.

When Nathan took his niece down to Riverfront Park for an afternoon of fishing he didn't think it would turn out to be much more than an afternoon with family. While there he saw Amber with a fly rod and a copy of *Flyfishing for Dummies*, attempting to learn the intricacies of the sport without a tutor. Each glance in her direction became more painful, and finally, two hours later, he could stand the suffering no longer. He introduced himself, and offered to teach her the timing of the cast that causes the fly to float through

the air and delicately land on the water's surface. A spark was ignited, and soon the couple was married, and they headed to the Bitterroot Valley on a flyfishing trip for their honeymoon. Over the next 10 years they grew their family and Nathan taught her how to row the boat so that he could fish. Today, they still like to get out, but are now accompanied by Aden (15), Heather (11), Aubrey (10), Summer (8) and Garrett (5) as they strive to make Billings a better place and catch a few trout along the way.

### Making Montana Home to Build Careers

Growing up in Nebraska, Amber knew she needed to live somewhere with a bit more terrain; somewhere with mountains that could be seen jutting into the sky. She was accepted in to the PA program at Rocky Mountain College, and with the help of a presidential scholarship, she brought

herself here over 20 years ago. Upon graduation, she worked in the Billings Clinic cardiology department, and was able to go on many medical trips around the state and to Ghana to help communities that were underserved. After 10 years she decided to "retire" in order to help maintain a house and chase after five kids.

During this same time, Nathan was growing his own business. During the summers in his high school years, he had worked in the asphalt industry. He knew the industry, and decided to study Entrepreneurship in college. After a semester of rehashing everything he already knew, he decided to jump right in.

Coming to Billings, he found it hard to get started. Apparently there are few people that want to give a \$5,000 job to an 18 year old kid, no matter if he already had several years experience or not. Persistence, however, seldom goes unrewarded. He scrimped and



saved, and soon landed a highway project to resurface a local roadway. It was a real win-win. He called his friends and family and basically everyone he knew to help him get it done. As he puts it, it was a shoddy looking crew, but that job provided the foundation to build his reputation and things have only grown from there. Today, Z&Z Asphalt is one of the largest maintenance contractors in a 6 state area.

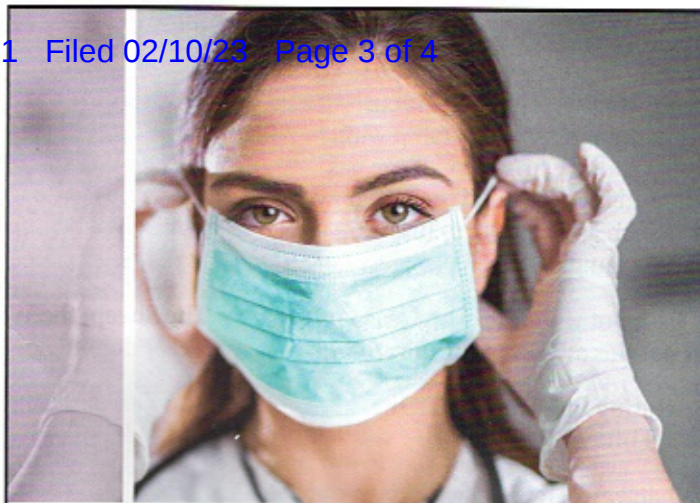
### Mentoring Today's Youth to be Tomorrow's Leaders

When you ask someone who they are or what they do, you likely get a significant portion of the answer that entails their chosen career. The Zito family, however, doesn't want to be known for their chosen professions. Instead, they see these professions as a method to invest back into people in the area.


Running a company means that Nathan has to invest in himself and learn how to lead. But what he has discovered is that throughout our lifetimes, we rarely get the leadership training that we need, until we are adults. He is seeking to change that through a strategic program aimed at youth in our community called R4C.

R4C is a fitness based youth mentorship program designed to help inspire, grow, and train young people who will be the future leaders of our communities. Bringing youth together through the power of crossfit, young people ages 10 to 18 come together to train their bodies. The older members of the group are taught mentorship skills that they can pass along to the younger members. Training focuses on servant leadership where every member of the organization is challenged to become the best version of themselves as possible.

When R4C began just two years ago, it started out with 10 members, and was sponsored by a local gym. Because this type of leadership training is so highly desired in our culture today (often without realizing it, this is what kids crave), the



  
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group grew rapidly to their current 97 members. A partnership with Yellowstone Christian College has allowed them to build their own gym and increase capacity to inspire even more young people.

Check out [www.r4c.org](http://www.r4c.org) to learn more about this awesome organization.

### Investing in Each Other One at a Time

When you're raising five kids, it can get easy for some of them to feel lost in the crowd. It can turn into a lonely feeling despite being surrounded by those who love and care for you. To counter this, the Zito family makes sure to break out and do one-on-one trips with the kids to develop and grow the bonds between parents and kids.

Aden, going into his sophomore year, is an honors student. He plays football and loves wrestling; even going to the state tournaments last year as a freshman. He is a member of R4C and is developing his leadership skills; in 2016 he had the chance to go to Japan on a wrestling tour.

Heather will be in sixth grade and is also an athlete. She started running cross country last year making leaps and bounds that she was able to run on the varsity team. Nathan has coached her soccer team for five years, and the duo took a one-on-one trip to Europe recently. Her training as a member of R4C has helped her on the student council at school.

Aubrey can only be described as spirited and full of life. Together, she and Amber visited NYC not long ago. She has played soccer for 5 years, and is currently doing gymnastics. Her strength building at R4C helps balance out her sports abilities in other areas.

Summer; sweet and inquisitive. A phenomenal piano player was able to perform in front of the entire student body as a first grader. In the athletic world, she's taken a liking to basketball and soccer.

Garrett gets excited about everything. He has the ability to lift the entire

family's spirits with his enthusiasm. He's the outdoorsman of the group, loves to go explore and go fishing. Last year, at just four years old, he made the trek to Mystic Lake and back; an 8 mile trip.

### The Sheep, the Wolves, and the Sheepdogs

The Zito family believes in strong leadership in order to care for those

around you. Whether it's building a company so people can have great jobs, or leading a youth mentorship and leadership organization, it's all about putting others first. Because in this world, there are sheep, wolves, and sheepdogs; the wolves prey on those who cannot defend themselves, but only when a sheepdog is not around.

Zitos are sheepdogs.

