

IDAHO DADS MATTER!

A Specialty Publication by The Down To Earth Dad® Featuring Idaho Parents!

Volume 2, Number 12

The Ever-Ready Grandfather ...He Shares His Life Lessons

COEUR D'ALENE—Tim Mowery, father to Erika and Nikki and grandfather to Erika's children Ryker, 9, and Carver, 7—says interacting with his grandkids leverages his life skills and keeps him young.

The man whose grandsons call him Opa—an Italian nickname for grandpa that stuck when Ryker was born in Italy while Erika was stationed in the Airforce—love watching movies, building with LEGOs, paddleboarding, and kayaking with their grandfather.

“We have a blast,” Tim said. “It keeps you young, that's for sure. People say, ‘I can't believe you're 55,’ and it's just because I guess, you know, these last 10 years with these kids we've just played all the time. Heidi (grandma) and I play and run with them and try to find something fun and adventurous to do constantly,” he explained.

“It was kind of a new beginning being a grandparent when they (Erika's family) moved back from Italy. Once the grandkids got here, it was kind of like that was my new purpose in life,” he said.

“I like teaching them and doing stuff with them all the time. They come over at least once or twice a week and about one day every other weekend. Erika and Justin (Erika's husband and the children's father) both work and we tend to have weekends off, so we're always ready to take the kids after school or whenever,” he said.

Tim teaches the boys to be polite. “You know, ‘be nice, be kind to people. Don't act a fool toward people,’ and treat people correctly and nicely,” he said. “Be nice to your parents, and don't throw fits when you go places. I kind of teach them right and wrong. I

mean, that's what we're always doing pretty much because if someone's not telling them, sometimes they just think it's okay,” he explained. “They've become respectful kids,” he said proudly.

“Me and my wife have been together since high school, and we just love each other. When we had kids, they were what it was all about, and parenting was what we strived to be successful at. You learn that the important thing in life is interacting with the people around you who you love, and who love you,” he said.

Tim's advice for other dads and grandpas: “You have to be there. I mean, if you're not present and you're not being yourself when you're present with them, then they're not gonna learn anything. Being a grandpa is a hard job, man. It's work, but it's rewarding work. It's the time and the love, and we love them like crazy. Life is very short.”



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— Tim (Opa) Mowery