



Blue Print

The Newsletter of Blue Mountain Community Foundation

Gates Foundation Convenes Philanthropic Leaders in Seattle



(l-r) Kari Isaacson, Bertha Clayton, Liz McClure, Tom Sawatzki

Isaacson. Key topics included diversity, equity and inclusion, as well as the 2020 U.S. Census, with national leaders in these areas

Over the course of six years, the Building Community Philanthropy (BCP) initiative of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's Pacific Northwest team has brought together 20 partners — United Ways, and other foundations focused on specific regions or values — to learn together, challenge each other and deepen philanthropy's impact in our communities.

BMCF has been involved with the program for all six of those years. Twice a year, a team of four from each organization gathers at the Gates Foundation for two days of discussion, guest speakers and planning. Executive Director Kari Isaacson and Liz McClure (Fund Services Coordinator), along with Trustees Tom Sawatzki and Bertha Clayton, attended the bi-annual meeting in Seattle in January.

"It was one of the best gatherings yet," stated

The Dayton Community's "Club"

The Dayton Elementary school bus delivers dozens of elementary-aged kids each school day to the door of The Club. Entering in a rush of energy and bustle, they line up to have their membership cards scanned. Director Jim Pearson estimates that "one-quarter of our entire enrollment -- which is up to 120 -- are from low income families. Our average daily attendance is between 40-45, with a core group of 20-25 that come every day."

Much more than an after school program, The Club is an incredible testament to the power of community. The dream of Dan and Ginny Butler, fourth-generation



Fun with construction at "The Club"

Waitsburg and Dayton area residents, began with the purchase of a former bowling alley in 2016. Thanks to active fundraising, along with grant funding from Blue Mountain

Community Foundation and others, the building has been thoroughly renovated into a clean, modern and inviting space. Designed to be child-centered, much of the space is still ready to be adapted into whatever arrangement works best for the kids who come to play and learn after school.

A fresh, nutritious meal is provided each afternoon by the Columbia County Hospital District, and Columbia County Health Department employee Leslie Sweetwood offers wildly successful cooking classes twice a week. The Port of Columbia "rents" the indoor play space across the street to The Club, and then donates the sum back each month. A deluxe basketball hoop was donated by Spokane's Hoopfest basketball tournament, and the space was renovated by Columbia County employees to fit a full indoor court with a sport surface.

With operations underway since August, Pearson is still working to create the best fit and flow for the energetic children who attend. Dan Butler's introduction of drone piloting has energized some of the older boys, while a donation of 30 used computers from Eastern Washington University sparked the attention of a crew of older girls – who had all the computers reassembled and the hard drives reformatted in only two days!

With a full staff of seven, The Club will continue its work on building community amongst the kids as well as the parents, while searching for best-fit activities to engage the children.



Welcome to Blue Print, the newsletter of the Blue Mountain Community Foundation. The newsletter has been part of BMCF for over 30 years, and is being revived after five years on hiatus. We will publish the newsletter in hard copy and digitally, and hope you enjoy keeping up with the latest news and events from the Community Foundation.

Much has happened in the past five years. Read about the great community news in Dayton, WA, or the fundraising effort in the Milton-Freewater area. We are proud of the active involvement of so many community leaders and friends.

New Trustees in 2019 are Barb Roloff of Milton-Freewater, OR and Dr. Michelle Janning of Walla Walla, WA. Ms. Roloff is part of the Seven Sisters Consulting Firm, a national firm serving organizations with Federal grants and contracts. Dr. Janning is Chair of Whitman College's Sociology Department, whose most recent book is *Love Letters: Saving Romance in the Digital Age*. She is also the author of *The Stuff of Family Life: How Our Homes Reflect Our Lives*.

High School Friends Join Together for Community Advocacy

The Milton Freewater Athena Weston Fund Moves Forward with Community Leaders

Attending a meeting of the steering committee for the Milton Free-water Athena Weston Fund is a lot like attending a class reunion. Jokes are told, reminiscing is done, and the relationships and knowledge of the community seems to span the whole of Umatilla and Walla Walla Counties.

In fact, five of the committee members are graduates of Mac-Hi in Milton Freewater, including Leslie Brown, Randy Grant, Rick Rambo, Sam Tucker and Carl Wheeler. "We all have deep connections to Umatilla county – we all have been raised here and have families here, and in fact, our parents grew up here, too!" said Leslie Brown in a recent conversation. They are joined on the steering committee by Athena High school graduate Tim Kennedy and McEwen High School graduate Chris Jay.



Mac-Hi 1975 Boys Varsity Basketball Team - Rick Rambo, far left; Leonard Brown, second from left. Courtesy Leslie Brown.

Begun in 2017, this Advised Field of Interest Fund supports the funding needs of Walla Walla's neighbors to the south. A recent fundraising effort attracted twenty-five donations at the Founder level, enabling the fund to award its first two grants this past December. Grants were given to weekend food backpack programs for students at Athena Elementary and at Milton Freewater Elementary providing much-needed staples to food-insecure youth at those schools.

Advised Field of Interest Funds at Blue Mountain Community Foundation help people support their town, county or an issue that is important to them. Some examples include education, the arts, health, and the environment. These funds provide annual support in perpetuity for the specific purpose the individual grants to a local advisory committee. Field of Interest funds are truly examples of "local wealth under local control for the good of the community."

A Lasting Legacy and a Birthday Surprise

Long time Walla Walla Educators Honored with Scholarship Fund in Their Name

How do you honor your father on his birthday? Eric Miller of Issaquah, WA, contacted BMCF this fall to create the Bill and Kaye Miller Scholarship Fund, honoring both of his parents who were long time educators in the Walla Walla School District.

Proudest of their positions as teachers at Blue Ridge Elementary School – Bill and Kaye Miller were part of the cohesive staff that welcomed the first group of new students when the school opened in 1972; the Millers ultimately taught for 30 years (Bill) and 32 years (Kaye).

Their legacy as educators lives on through the careers of three of their four children, daughter Lisa Hill is a Library Media Specialist in Kennewick, WA; daughter Leslie Sievers is a middle school counselor, in Kennewick; and son Kyle Miller is the principal at Columbia High School in Burbank. Son Eric Miller is a software developer.



Wa-Hi Graduation: Greg Lehman/Walla Walla Union-Bulletin

Open for high school seniors from the Walla Walla Public School District who are 1st generation college students, the Bill and Kaye Miller Scholarship will be available for students enrolled in a 2 or 4 year degree program who are working towards a degree in primary or secondary education.

Are you interested in honoring a loved one's legacy or memory? Call BMCF at (509)529-4371 to learn about creating a Scholarship Fund, a Designated Fund and many other options. Set up is an easy process designed to offer you flexibility and the best fit for your charitable interests. Your tax-deductible donation can have a lasting impact on the community you love, and keep the name of exemplary people alive for a long time.

Foundation Dates of Note

April 10

- BMCF Discretionary Grant Information Meeting – 10 AM – Columbia REA Conference Center, Walla Walla

April 11

- BMCF Discretionary Grant Information Meeting – 10 AM - Liberty Theater, Dayton, WA

April 12

- BMCF Discretionary Grant Information Meeting – 10 AM – Milton-Freewater – location TBD

May 1

- Warren Community Action Fund **Grant Application Deadline**. Online applications can be accessed at www.bluemountainfoundation.org/grants-scholarships/grants

- Dayton/Columbia County Fund **Grant Application Deadline**. Online applications can be accessed at www.bluemountainfoundation.org/grants-scholarships/grants. Paper applications can be obtained at Marinella & Boggs Law Office at 338 E Main St, Dayton, WA.