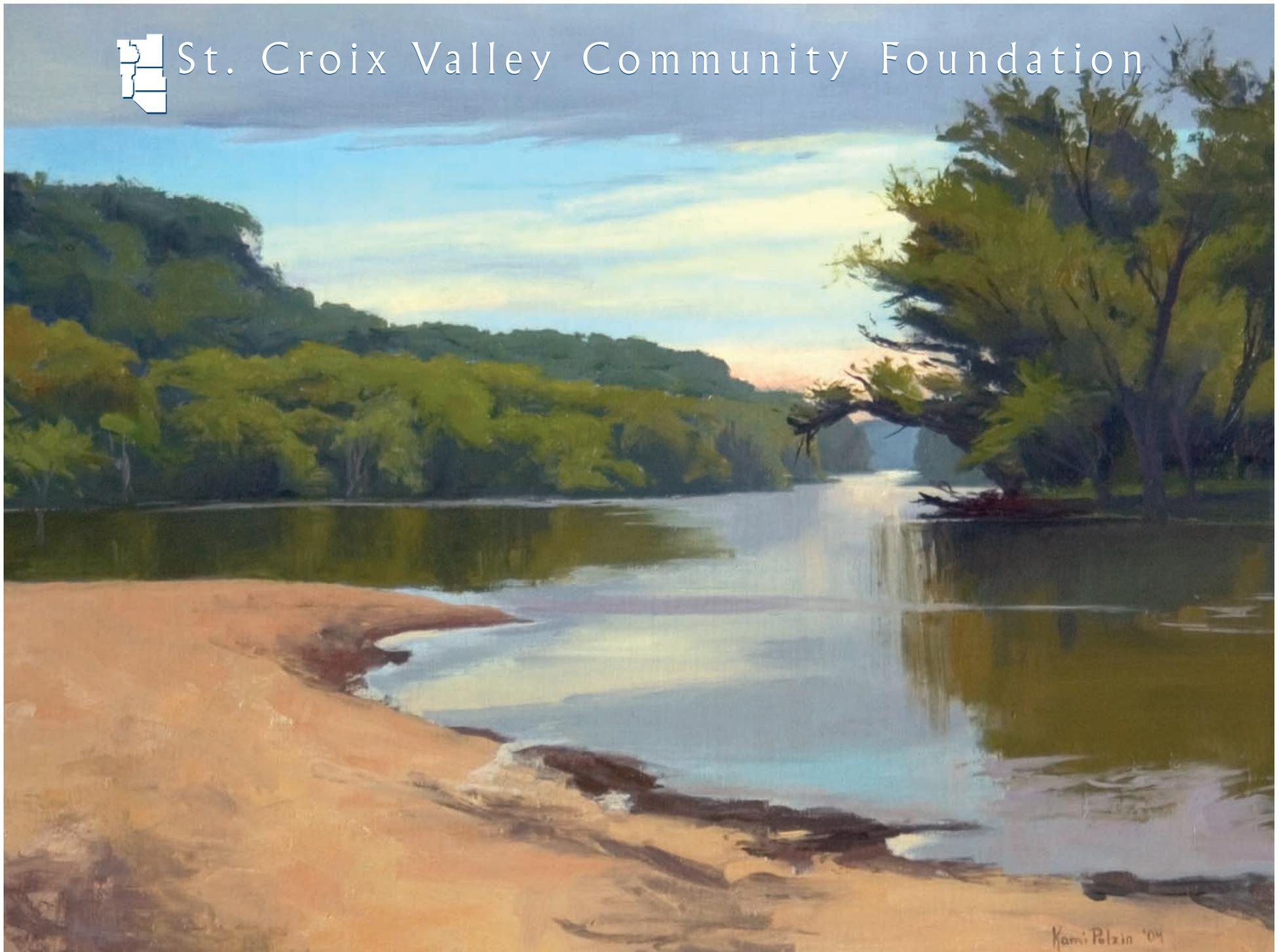




St. Croix Valley Community Foundation



2006 ANNUAL REPORT

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St. Croix Valley Community Foundation

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Our Mission

The Mission of the St. Croix Valley Community Foundation is to enhance the quality of life in the St. Croix Valley by:

Encouraging charitable giving in the valley. Building permanent funds that will provide resources for the needs of today and tomorrow.

Connecting people and programs. Bringing together people's charitable interests and the funding needs of programs and organizations.

Facilitating progressive approaches. Forming partnerships and providing servant leadership through programs that enhance the quality of life in our region's distinct communities.

Cover: Many thanks to oil painter Kami Polzin, Stillwater, MN for permission to use her painting, "It's Where I Paint" on the annual report cover. Her work is available at the Art Guild Gallery and 310 Gallery in Stillwater, the Up North Fine Art Gallery in Lindstrom, MN and on her website at: www.kamipolzin.com

Letter from the Board Chair and President

INITIATING OUR NEXT STAGE OF GROWTH

2005—06 marked the community foundation's first decade and it was a year of remarkable activity and achievement. Building on earlier precedents, we dramatically expanded our program activity in support of the region's non profit organizations, encouraged civic engagement through several notable fiscal sponsorships, and collaborated with partners on public forums that stressed the vitality, character and sustainability of our communities.

At the same time, donors continued to express confidence in the community foundation making charitable investments of \$2,486,408 to funds at the foundation. Nineteen new funds were established. At year end, the foundation managed 143 funds. The net assets increased by 20% to close the year just shy of \$9,000,000.

Most notably, grants (some 316) to programs and organizations largely in the St. Croix Valley reached a new high and totaled \$1,287,917. Grants related to civic fiscal sponsorships were \$294,832. The Valley Arts Initiative and the Music Education in the Schools program awarded over \$40,000 in grants.

Funded by a generous grant from the Otto Bremer Foundation, the Community Partnerships initiative expanded its offerings designed to strengthen the effectiveness of nonprofit organizations in the region. Partnering with Bremer Banks, the CPI offerings presented programs by skilled professionals on fund raising, governance, marketing and other administrative areas that play an essential role in the stability and effectiveness of a nonprofit organization. To date there have been 14 workshops that have attracted over 500 attendees — staff and board members alike.

To encourage the implementation of effective organizational practices, the community foundation and Hugh J. Andersen Foundation awarded \$40,000 in nonprofit management assistance grants to local organizations.

Our developing partnerships with the Phipps Center for the Arts and the University of Wisconsin-River Falls stimulate public discussions on rural change, sustainable communities, social capital and the building of community through the arts.

To mark our 10th anniversary, in April we announced a Nonprofit Endowment Challenge Match program. Our goal is to raise \$1,000,000 from our philanthropic partners that selected nonprofits will match on a 1—1 basis for their respective funds at the community foundation. Note: This goal was attained on November 10, 2006.

One of the most energetic projects this year was spearheaded by the Hudson Moms, a group of young parents determined to build a creative, safe and attractive playground for the city's toddlers. Their work, which began last fall and culminated with the dedication of the Hudson Community Built Playground in June, presents a case study in the strength and value of social capital. The group had strong volunteer leadership, a vision, and a determination to succeed. On a very tight timeline, they raised over \$150,000 in cash and contributed materials, and they enlisted the support of hundreds of people throughout the community. Volunteers raised money and joined work teams that constructed the playground on city property. The Hudson Community Fund and the SCVCF were pleased to serve as the fiscal sponsor and provided administrative assistance.

In other examples of serving the common good through fiscal sponsorships, the foundation assisted the volunteer committee dedicated to building a community playground in Lake St. Croix Beach. We also were pleased to serve the Partnership Plan for Stillwater Area Schools during its transition to an independent nonprofit organization, legally separated from the school district. During the year, HomeShare St. Croix received its charitable status, hired an executive director and opened for business serving people who wished to stay in their homes. The Riverway Park, a project of the city of River Falls, the local Rotary Club and the River Falls Community Fund was dedicated last fall.

Change will continue to be a hallmark of our communities and this foundation. In defining a vision for the next 10 years, we must anticipate very different experiences given the external influences of global economies, energy, environment and the turbulent international scene. The increasingly global world will impact the communities of the St. Croix Valley. Patterns of living and working may well be adjusted to respond to new realities. Preserving our community character and working to build sustainable communities during periods of change and growth will require the thoughtful participation of many. This will provide an opportunity for the St. Croix Valley Community Foundation to assume a meaningful role through partnerships, programs and exercising the servant leadership our founders identified as essential core values. We will be measured by the impact we have in addressing real and urgent matters during the challenging years before us.



PETER H. KILDE
Chairman
Board of Directors



DAVID H. GRIFFITH
President

Peter H. Kilde, chair

David H. Griffith, president

Board of Directors

July 2005 to June 2006

Charles Arnason, Marine, MN
William Campbell, River Falls, WI
John Coughlin, New Richmond, WI
Chris Galvin, Woodbury, MN
Karen Hansen, Stillwater, MN
Nate Jackson, River Falls, WI
Michael Johnson, Stillwater, MN
Peter Kilde, Glenwood City, WI, *Board Chair*
Barbara Klemme (deceased) 9/2006
Erv Neff, Stillwater, MN
Lynn Shafer, Stillwater, MN
Heidi Smith Erspamer, Amery, WI
Mark Vanasse, Houlton, WI
Gretchen Stein, Osceola, WI
Dan Willius, Scandia, MN

Former SCVCF Board Members

Sarah Andersen, John Baird,
Lurline Baker-Kent, James Bradshaw,
David Brandt, Kathleen Doar,
Lou Fuller (deceased), Molly Gale-Wyrick,
C. R. Hackworthy, Jim Hanks,
George Hauser, Rod Hofland,
Larry Horsch, Orv Johnson,
Rita Lawson, Daniel Lien,
Marilyn McCarty, Dan McGuinness,
JC Pfeiffer, Thomas Scheuerman (deceased)
Lawrence Severson, John Tunheim

Launching a Second Decade

PARTNERS FOR THE FUTURE

In recognition of our first ten years of encouraging charitable giving in the St. Croix Valley, we launched our second decade by announcing our new *Partners for the Future Initiative*.

Partners for the Future is an exciting challenge match initiative that will raise \$2 million dollars dedicated to the future growth of nonprofit organizations in the region. Every dollar a partner organization raises and places in a permanent fund at the foundation will be matched by SCVCF dollar for dollar. Already, SCVCF has raised \$1 million dollars from local foundations to make these matching contributions.

SCVCF expects donors will take advantage of this challenge to invest in those organizations they care most about. With a gift to a permanent, agency-designated fund, each dollar keeps giving to support an organization's mission in perpetuity. Because the St. Croix Valley is changing rapidly, donors' gifts will ensure local organizations are responsive to this dynamic environment.

The Partners for the Future Initiative consists of three components: the matching grants, community outreach, and a series of workshops and coaching assistance to ensure our participating nonprofit partners are successful. Matching grants range from \$25,000 to \$85,000 and our partners have three years to meet their goal. The initiative is designed to strengthen the endowment building skills of both board members and staff, whether they are new or seasoned fundraisers.

SCVCF gives special thanks to the following foundations for their support of this initiative: Hardenbergh Foundation, Otto Bremer Foundation, Bush Foundation, Hugh J. Andersen Foundation, F.R. Bigelow Foundation, John and Ruth Huss Foundation and an anonymous donor.

We are excited about the financial resources this initiative will bring to our region's nonprofit sector and can see no better way to move boldly into our second decade.

We are proud to present our partners in this initiative:

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northwestern Wisconsin
The Partnership Plan for Stillwater Area Schools
Carpenter St. Croix Valley Nature Center
The Phipps Center for the Arts
Courage St. Croix
Standing Cedars Community Land Conservancy
Family Resource Center St. Croix Valley
Turningpoint for Victims of Domestic and Sexual Violence
FamilyMeans
United Way St. Croix Valley

HSI – Human Services, Inc. in Washington County
West CAP
Hudson Health Foundation
West Wisconsin Land Trust
Kinship of Polk County
Young Life St. Croix Valley
Lakes Area Youth Service Bureau
Youth Service Bureau
New Richmond Preservation Society

Founders' Society

BUILDING A COMMUNITY FOUNDATION IS A LONG-TERM VENTURE.

Since its founding in 1995, a number of individuals, businesses and private foundations have provided program and operating support to SCVCF. We are pleased to recognize those who have contributed and pledged \$5,000 or more

to further the mission of the Foundation during its formative years. Please contact us for further information on becoming a member of the Founders' Society. The following list includes all members through June 30, 2006.

Fred C. and Katherine B.
Andersen Foundation
Hugh J. Andersen
Foundation
Sarah Andersen
Anonymous Donors
Charles and Peggy Arneson
John and Nancy Baird
Bayport Foundation of
Andersen Corporation

James and Jayne Bradshaw
David and Sandy Brandt
Otto Bremer Foundation
Loren and Ruby Croone
The Dietz Family Fund of
the St. Paul Foundation
Kathleen Doar and Alan
Sinaiko
First National Bank of
Hudson

James and Mary Gillespie
David and Katherine Griffith
C.R. and Cynthia Hackworthy II
Karen and Craig Hansen
Gerald and Yvonne Hoel
Jack and Joyce Hooley
Hudson Community Fund
Michael and Jan Johnson
Orville and Kathleen Johnson
Joyful Women Fund

Rita and Bill Lawson
MAHADH Fund of HRK
Foundation
McKnight Foundation
Margaret Rivers Fund
Patrick and Jeanne Riley
St. Croix Foundation
S & C Bank
Gretchen Stein and
Greg Wickenhauser

Tozer Foundation
John and Kathryn Tunheim
William Voedisch and Laurie
Carlson
Archie and Bertha Walker
Foundation
Wipfli CPA's and
Consultants
Wisconsin Arts Board

People Choose to Give through Community Foundations because...

- We are a local organization with deep roots in the community.
- Our professional program staff has broad expertise regarding community issues and needs.
- We provide highly personalized service tailored to each individual's charitable and financial interests.
- Our Donor Advised Funds help people invest in the causes they care about most.
 - We accept a wide variety of assets and can facilitate even the most complex forms of giving.
 - We partner with professional advisors to create highly effective approaches to charitable giving.
 - We offer maximum tax advantages under state and federal law.
- We multiply the impact of gift dollars by pooling them with other gifts and grants.
- We build endowment funds that benefit the community forever and help create personal legacies.
 - We are a community leader, convening agencies and coordinating resources to create positive change.

Funds of the St. Croix Valley Community Foundation

Inspired Giving

Our purpose at the St. Croix Valley Community Foundation is to help *you* give to the issues or organizations *you* are most committed to—whether it is vital support for immediate needs or by creating a legacy for future generations.

Like you, other donors who give to the foundation share one important value—they care. Some want to determine which nonprofits will benefit from their fund. Others look to the foundation for personalized assistance in identifying specific agencies that address the causes they care most about

UNRESTRICTED ENDOWMENT FUND Donations provide the directors of the foundation with the flexibility to respond to the changing needs of the community over time. The funds are entrusted to the board to use the Foundation's knowledge of the community when investing in programs and responding to opportunities for philanthropic support.

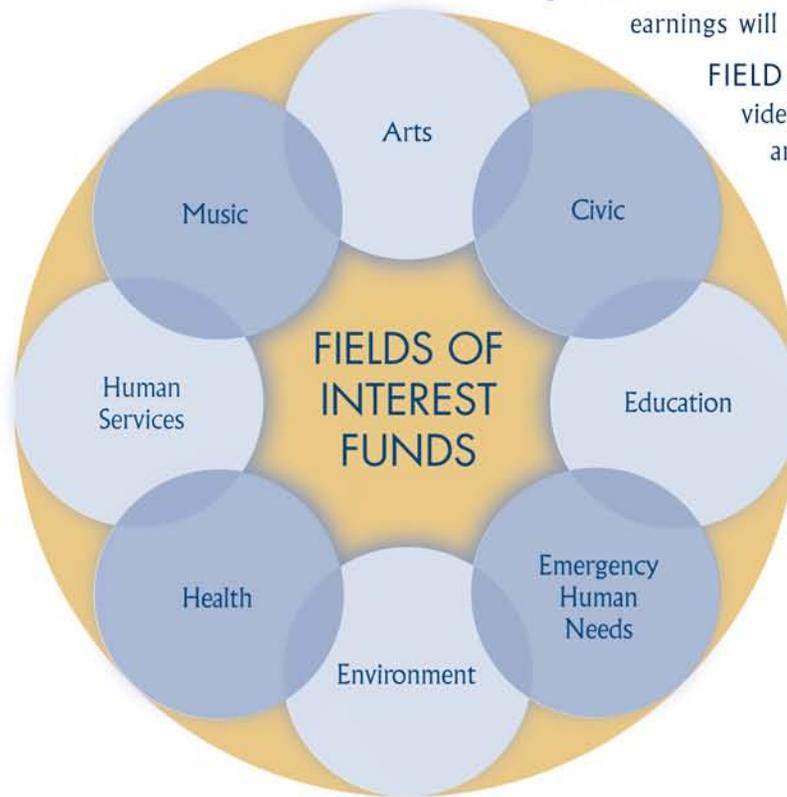
ADMINISTRATIVE ENDOWMENT FUND Earnings from this fund support Foundation operations, the professional staff and programs. As the Foundation's ongoing source of operating capital, a strong administrative endowment keeps fees low while providing perpetual support for operations.

BOARD FUND Enables the Board of Directors to respond to current community needs with modest grants.

GENERAL OPERATING FUND Contributions to this fund represent the single largest source of annual operating support, along with fees and earnings from the Administrative Endowment. With the growth of the Foundation's assets over time, fees and endowment earnings will cover most of the basic annual operations.

FIELD OF INTEREST FUNDS These funds provide donors an opportunity to contribute to an area of interest without specifying a particular charity or organization. The Foundation's directors award grants from these funds to support appropriate projects within that prescribed field of interest.

Please consider giving to any of these funds.



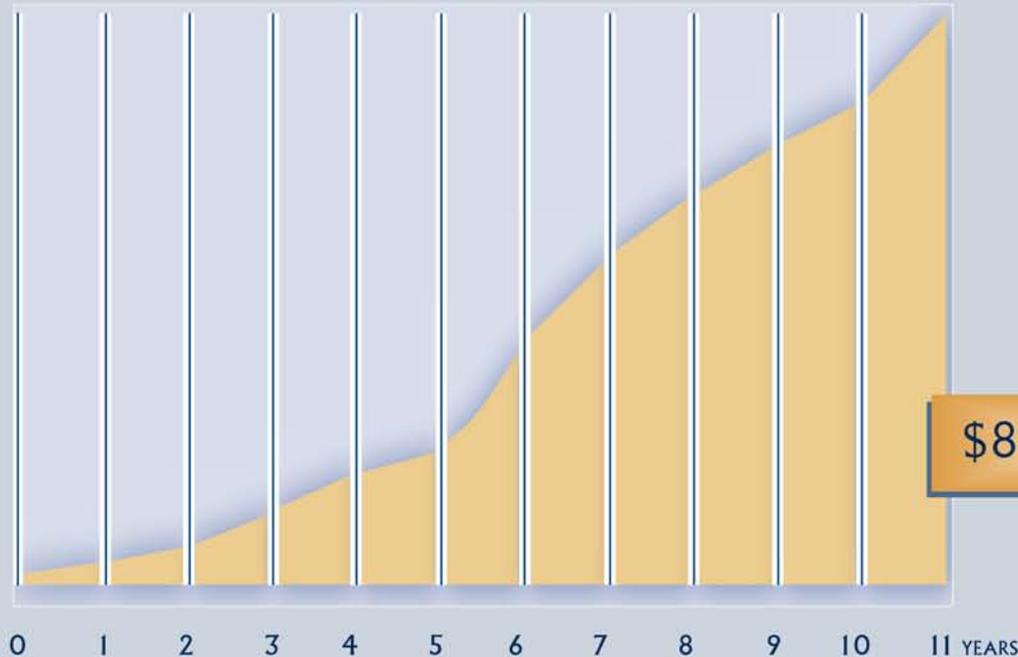
Leave a Legacy

A convenient and lasting way to perpetuate your support of the St. Croix Valley region is to include a bequest to the Foundation in your will. The options are many, from an outright gift, to the establishment of a designated fund that would provide permanent support for the named organizations or their successors.

SCVCF Governance

The Foundation is governed by a Board of Directors who live and work or have their roots in the region where the Foundation focuses its efforts — the counties of Polk, St. Croix and Pierce in Wisconsin and Washington and Chisago in Minnesota. Its assets are managed by the Foundation’s Investment Committee, composed of Board members and other professionals with expertise in the legal, financial and public accounting fields, along with the investment advisor from First State Bank and Trust of Bayport, MN.

ELEVEN YEARS OF NET ASSET GROWTH



Asset Comparison Chart

2006	ASSET GROWTH	2005
\$8,937,191	NET ASSETS	\$7,434,966
Revenue & Support		
2,486,408	Contributions*	2,016,051
Earnings		
265,236	Realized Gains	185,341
218,662	Unrealized	262,205
1,748	Other	11,829
134,173	Fees	107,567
3,106,226	Total Revenue	2,582,993
1,110,513	Grants*	934,631
134,955	Fund Expense	107,602
358,532	Operating Expense	327,440
1,604,000	Total Expenses	1,369,673
\$8,937,191	Net Assets	7,434,966
8,927,493	Investments	7,426,374
128,425	Cash & other	133,835
-118,727	Liabilities	-125,243

*Does not include Intra Fund gifts and grants of \$210,768 and \$177,404 respectively from SCVCF funds transferred to other funds at the Foundation.

An Audit Report and our 990 tax returns are available upon request.

The Belisle's have some Advice they want to Share with You

In actuality, these are insights and ideas that are the result of thoughtful reflection and research over the years. Jon and Metta Belisle have done more estate planning than most people their age and they are eager to share what they have learned with anyone who is confused by the issue or inclined to put the whole thing off.

Jon Belisle worked for 30 years at 3M as a research chemist. Metta was a 3rd grade teacher at Battle Creek Elementary School in St. Paul. Together they have made wise decisions through the years about how to spend their money, manage their assets, and share their wealth through charitable giving. But they have done more than most to figure out what will happen to those assets after they are gone.

"It has been a pleasure to try to accumulate wealth but the joy is not just in the accumulation, but in deciding how to distribute it as an extension of your life," says Jon. However, he points out, in order to make that happen you need to have a plan.

"The initial and most important decision will involve the choice between a Will and a Living Trust," says Jon. "We found that a will would involve time-consuming probate and the court system, while a living trust is strictly private and is outside of any court."

Next you have to decide how to divide the estate. "In discussions with family members and with financial and legal specialists, you will decide what percentage of your estate is to be distributed to family and friends and what percentage is to go to charities and organizations that fit your interests and lifestyle."

Third, you will have to determine who will administer the distribution of the estate. "With a Will it's the executor — usually a family member — who fulfills that role with the oversight of the court," Jon explains. "With a Living Trust the executor — or Successor Trustee — operates privately without court oversight. Therefore, it should be someone you trust. But in choosing this trustee," he asks, "how can you be sure they will function as directed? The problem in choosing individuals is that their situations are ever-changing, and therefore they could be unreliable in carrying out your wishes. Banks or trust officers are often impersonal and have high, fixed fees. It left us with the question, "What is one to do?"

The answer to that question came when the Belisles met with David Griffith, President of the St. Croix Valley Community Foundation. They were pleasantly surprised to find the Foundation would be so cooperative. "Not only is the Foundation intimate and personal, it's local," said Jon. "We hate to see people send money off to New York or Boston to be managed when the Foundation is right here in our own backyard.

"We have chosen the Foundation to serve as the Successor Trustee to our estate," say Jon and Metta. "We have found that the continuing nature and perpetuity of the Foundation, unlike an individual, would meet our needs."

The primary area of interest for the Belisles in their charitable giving is to organizations addressing the environment and the humane treatment of animals. Jon's parents and grandparents were all very animal oriented. Not only were his parents raised on farms in Wisconsin, his father



later became a veterinary salesman. And the tender love and compassion his mother showed toward animals had a considerable influence on him. "In addition," say Jon and Metta, "our companion animals have given us great joy through happy and difficult times. We have experienced the love these animals have given to us and we've seen the many ways animals touch people's lives."

While Jon and Metta are still living, their Donor Advised Fund will distribute money based on their particular interests and passions. Those donations will help establish a track record that the Foundation can follow in the future to help determine how to distribute grants from their fund. In addition, they submitted a "letter of understanding" to the Foundation to clearly document their future funding expectations.

"The most important thing we wanted to convey to people is how the St. Croix Valley Community Foundation can help you further your goals," say the Belisles, as well as assist in the distribution of your estate.

DONOR ADVISED FUNDS benefit the charitable interests of the donors.

Blake and Beth Abdella Fund
Don Anderson Family Fund
Paul L. Anderson Fund
Paul L. Anderson Short Term Fund
Charles and Peggy Arnason Fund
Baird Family Fund
Jon and Metta Belisle Donor Advised Endowment Fund
*Marie and Harry Blakeman Memorial Fund ****
Bradshaw Celebration of Life Endowed Fund
Bradshaw Celebration of Life Fund
Jim and Jayne Bradshaw Family Fund
David and Sandy Brandt Short-term Fund
David and Sandy Brandt Family Fund
*Brookman Family Fund ****
John and Mary Cameron Fund
Loren and Ruby Croone Fund
Ezekiel Lutheran Church LACE Fund
Forest Lake Rotary Schumacher Field Fund
Mark and Maeta Gherty Family Fund
*Griswold Fund ****
C.R Hackworthy II Family Fund
Janet M. Hansen Fund
Karen Ciegler Hansen and Craig J. Hansen Family Fund
Heiser Family Fund
Glen O. and Elizabeth I. Helmen Mem. Fund
Allison Helmen Memorial Fund
Gerald and Yvonne Hoel Fund
Gerald and Yvonne Hoel Family Fund
HomeShare St. Croix Fund
Hudson Physicians Fund
Jack and Joyce Hooley Endowment Fund
Jack and Joyce Hooley Fund
Hudson Daybreak Rotary Long Term Fund
Nate and Linda Jackson Future Fund
Nate and Linda Jackson Fund

*Richard and Carolyn Jackson Charitable Fund ****
Michael O. Johnson Short Term Fund
Orville and Kathleen Johnson Family Fund
Orville and Kathy Johnson Short-Term Fund
Ingrid and Marie Kilde Fund
The Kren Fund
Krueger Family Fund
*Lawson Family Fund****
*Charles and Deborah LeRoux Family Fund ****
Kathleen Lindahl Fund
Tim Linehan Memorial Fund
Margaret B. Mattlin Fund
Allen and Corinne Metcalf Fund
G. and J. Museus Family Fund
George and Dorothy Nelson Fund
*Nicholas and Kathryn Nelson Charitable Fund ****
*Dan O'Connell Leadership Fund ****
O'Connell/Ellison Crime Reward Fund
*Nancy Orgeman Donor Advised Fund ****
Physicians' Fund
Keith and Jody Radtke Fund
*Don and Ellie Richards Donor-Advised Fund ****
Rotary District 5960 Foundation-Cambridge
Rotary District 5960 Foundation-Hudson
Sandy Hills Fund
Thomas J. Scheuerman Youth Fund
Thomas J. Scheuerman Memorial Fund
Dean and Lynn Shafer Fund
Simonet Family Fund
Stine Donor Advised Fund
Stillwater Sunrise Rotary Charity Fund
*Kermit Sommers Donor Advised Fund ****
Tom and Suki Thomsen Donor Advised Fund
Kevin and Rita Vance Current Fund
Kevin and Rita Vance Family Fund
Ronald and Susan Weiler Family Fund
White Pine Fund

***New funds established this fiscal year

DONOR DESIGNATED FUNDS benefit specific charitable organizations or named projects.

Jonathan Patrick Erspamer Fund benefits children in the region with special needs
Friends of Perch Lake Fund is for the development of Homestead Parklands on Perch Lake in St. Croix County
Charlotte K. Kirby Fund supports the Humane Society for Companion Animals in Woodbury, MN
*Hudson Community Built Playground **** provides a safe and enjoyable place for children to play and learn
*John Paul II Sacred Arts Center Fund **** established to purchase property in Hudson
LADDA Long Term Activities Fund supports bowling, dances and other activities for special needs adults
LADDA Endowed Fund supports the long term care of special needs adults
Lake St Croix Beach Community Playground Fund supports the design and construction of playground equipment
*Leadership Hudson Fund **** helps develop area program leaders and emerging leaders
Lifeline Fund supports emergency human needs in the region
Memorial to Veterans of Stillwater Area High School Fund supports design and construction of the memorial
Dan O'Connell Peace Garden Fund supports design, construction and maintenance of the memorial garden
Peace House Fund supports the renovation of a house in Stillwater to be used for transitional housing
Nelle Johnson Potts Fund benefits Young Life in Stillwater and White Bear Lake, MN
Riverway Park Partnership Fund supports the renovation of Veterans Park in River Falls, WI
SAHS On Campus Stadium Fund supports the construction of the stadium on the campus of the Stillwater Area High School
*Stillwater Area Health and Education Fund **** supports Lakeview Hospital and The Partnership Plan for SAHS



Fourth graders learn local history through lumberjack dolls and folk music.

Barbara Klemme: *her legacies reflect a life of People & Purpose*



Barbara Klemme, a member of the St. Croix Valley Community Foundation board of directors, led an exemplary life of community engagement. She died at her home on the St. Croix River on September 22, leaving legacies that will benefit several organizations far into the future.

A person of great curiosity and many talents, Barbara was engaged in many communities – the Episcopal Church; schools, colleges and universities; start-up businesses; international affairs; politics; the arts of all forms and above all her family and home town of Stillwater. Throughout her full and rich life, a common thread was her genuine interest in people. Nearly every conversation you had with Barbara would lead her to say “I must introduce you to . . . She will be interested in the vision you have for your organization.” Every activity also had a purpose whether it was the transition from trustee to the President’s staff at Macalester College or offering a job at Grand Games to a young person. And she carried this purposeful approach to the decisions she made at the end of her life, establishing through bequests funds at the community foundation to benefit some of her favorite organizations and causes.

A person who read both widely and deeply, she has left a bequest to the Athena Endowment Fund for the Stillwater Public Library. A second bequest speaks to her desire to help preserve the special character of communities in the St. Croix Valley. Her bequest establishes the Robert Uppgren Fund for Sustainable Communities. Much of her volunteer work was dedicated to the affairs of her church and led her to create the Endowment for Ascension Episcopal Church. And her love of the vitality arts brings to our lives led her and her companion, Norm Steere, to establish the Stillwater Fund for a Performing and Visual Arts Center. Each of these funds is held by the St. Croix Valley Community Foundation. It was Barbara’s hope and expectation that others would share her interests in these organizations by contributing to them as well. Hers was indeed a life well led.

AGENCY FUNDS enable an organization to establish its own long-term endowment fund at the Foundation.

The Foundation handles the investment and management of the assets, distributing the earnings to the agency.

Community Volunteer Services Fund

Courage St. Croix Fund

Croixdale Mission Benevolence Fund

Ezekiel Lutheran Church Fund

FamilyMeans Facilities Fund

FamilyMeans Fund

HSI Endowment Fund

Land Stewardship Project Fund

Lucy Winton Bell Athletic Fields

Northern Star Boy Scout Fund

Partnership Plan Endowment for Excellence

Partnership Plan Futures Fund

*Partnership Plan Operations Fund****

Ruth Geary Arts Fund

Dr. Tom F. Linde Fund

*Lundquist Endowment for the Sciences ****

Orchestra Legacy Fund

Weingarten “What’s Best For Kids” Fund

Pierce County Historical Association Fund

Somerset Public Library Endowment Fund

St. Croix Area United Way Endowment Fund

*St. Paul Episcopal Church–Douglas Beauchamp Memorial Fund****

Standing Cedars Endowment Fund

Stillwater Public Library Athena Fund

United Way St. Croix Valley

Long–Term Fund

Valley Senior Services Alliance Fund

Washington County Historical Society’s Fund

West CAP Endowment Fund

Youth Service Bureau

***New funds established this fiscal year

AFFILIATED COMMUNITY FUNDS help benefit their communities for generations to come.

These communities use their funds to make grants for local recreation, beautification projects or human service needs. On June 30, 2006, seven Affiliated Community Funds and their related Scholarship, Donor Advised, and Donor Designated Funds totaled \$1,292,725. Please contact the Board Chair of your community fund for more information.

Amery Community Foundation Fund

Baldwin Area Community Foundation Fund

Dresser Area Community Fund

Hudson Community Fund

New Richmond Area Community Fund

Prescott Foundation Fund

River Falls Community Fund

Stillwater and Other Communities

Lou Williamson

Claire Stein

David Griffith

Susan Gilbert

James Counter

Franz Alpeter

Sandy Wurm

Bernard Abrahamson

David Griffith

715-268-9149

715-684-3290

715-386-9490

715-386-5511

715-246-3811

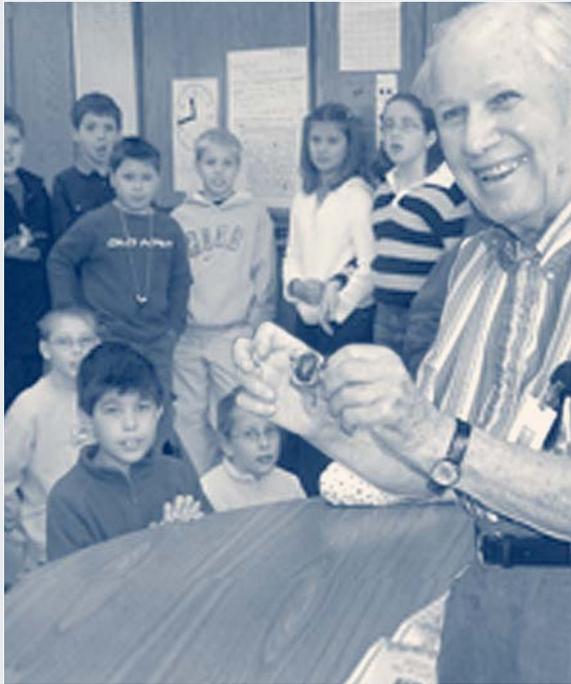
715-262-5407

715-426-3172

715-425-6305

715-386-9490

A Partnership to ensure Quality Education for Years to come.



For nearly fifteen years, Bill Lundquist was known as “Mr. Wizard.” During that time Bill, a retired 3M chemical engineer, shared the wonders of science with 42,000 children in 1,700 elementary classrooms. Kids and teachers alike loved him and his ability to make science lessons fun and engaging. And he loved them. So much so that Bill decided to leave a legacy for them by including a bequest to The Partnership Plan in his will. Following his death in January 2005, his daughter Betsy and grandson Kyle presented The Partnership Plan with a gift of \$250,000 from the Lundquist family estate to establish The William Lundquist Fund for Elementary Sciences.

The purpose of the Lundquist Fund is to

encourage science related learning in the elementary schools in the Stillwater Area School District. Ninety-thousand dollars of the initial gift was used to purchase a laptop computer, data projector, and digital microscopes for each elementary school. The gift also went to purchase two STARLABS that will be rotated throughout the district. The remaining funds will be used for an endowment that will fund an annual “Wizard’s Wish” classroom grant.

The Lundquist Fund is just one of a series of funds established by The Partnership Plan for Stillwater Area Public Schools at the St. Croix Valley Community Foundation to ensure quality education for years to come. Established in 1989, The Partnership Plan was a pioneer in the area of private philanthropy benefiting pre-K through grade 12 public schools. Its mission was to provide special funding and human resources for students and staff to enhance the quality of education in Stillwater Area Schools. According to former executive director Lynda Halbert, almost \$2,000,000 was raised in the first decade of The Partnership Plan’s existence and channeled directly into programs for classroom enrichment. “Thanks to several Partnership board members who had long-term goals in mind,” says Lynda, “some of those funds became seed money for endowment funds that could enhance education for future generations as well.”

As the director of the Partnership Plan at that time, Lynda researched and met with several Twin City Area foundations to determine which one would best fit the organization’s needs and goals. In the end, she and Partnership board members chose the St. Croix Valley Community

Foundation. “We felt the Foundation shared our interests and was connected to issues we cared about, especially education,” she said. “And most importantly, the Foundation knew the Valley.”

Thus, in the summer of 2001, The Partnership Plan established three agency funds. The primary fund was, and still is, The Partnership Plan Endowment for Excellence. A second fund, the The Weingarten “What’s Best for Kids” Endowment Fund, was established in memory of Mary Jo Weingarten, a much loved deputy school superintendent for Stillwater Area Schools. The third was a rainy day account called The Futures Fund.

Since then, several additional funds have been established: the Harcey-Walmar Scholarship Fund, to support annual scholarships for teachers in Early Childhood Family Education and grades 1–2; the Orchestra Legacy Fund, to benefit future young musicians; the Dr. Tom F. Linde Fund, which benefits music programs at Stillwater Area High School; the Ruth Geary Arts Fund supporting arts education in the elementary schools; and the Lundquist Fund described above.

These funds are unique in that they combine the donor’s interests with specific needs in the schools and provide The Partnership Plan with the ability to offer ongoing support to these programs. “In the past,” says Christine Tubbs, The Partnership Plan’s current executive director, “we have given out modest sized grants with a one-time impact. With the ability to provide multi-year grants we will be able to measure the impact on educational programs over the long-term and to honor the donors year after year.”

A Visitor's Center in Prescott's Freedom Park



Twenty six years ago, 41 Americans were taken hostage in the United States Embassy in Teheran. Their prolonged captivity in Iran kept the country focused on the hostages and their ordeal for over a year. During those months of agonized waiting, an American Eagle was shot in the area of Guttenberg, Iowa. Arrangements were made to transfer the injured eagle to the University of Minnesota Raptor Center for rehabilitation. The Eagle, called "Freedom" by those who cared for her, was later flown to Washington, D.C. to take part in a ceremony honoring the Iranian hostages and other prisoners of war.

In January 1981, after 445 days in captivity, the hostages were set free. In recognition of that event, the now recovered Eagle who had symbolized the Americans held captive, was taken to a bluff overlooking the confluence of the Mississippi and St. Croix Rivers and released. The expansive wings lifted the Eagle from the bluff and carried her to freedom.

The site from which the eagle took flight, just outside of Prescott, Wisconsin, became known as Freedom Park. It was a milestone event for the City of Prescott. And those who participated in the ceremony a quarter of century ago, including one of the former hostages, gathered again to

celebrate the 25-year anniversary of the release on Labor Day 2006.

Yet another milestone was celebrated that day. The culmination of several years of work by the Prescott Foundation to establish a visitors center in Freedom Park and the renovation of the park itself. What had once been a neglected and underutilized site was transformed by the attractive visitors center, a new picnic shelter, three scenic overlooks, an amphitheater, and exhibits explaining the importance of the Mississippi River and its significance to the area.

In 2001, board members of the Prescott Foundation, along with city officials and other visionaries in the community, had proposed the idea of a visitors center to explain the rich cultural and historic heritage of that site. The initial organizers applied for and received three federal grants totaling one and a half million dollars to get the project started. Over the course of the next four years, another \$500,000 was raised from local businesses and individuals to complete the project.

In addition to fundraising, Foundation board members and others worked with local engineers to define and design the project. They also drew on the expertise of a nationally known designer of visitor centers and

national parks at the University of Wisconsin Steven Point to develop the exhibits. "Content is so important to the success of a project like this," said Grant Nelson, a board member of the Prescott Foundation. "Anybody can put up a building, but it's the content that's important." Display areas inside and out highlight the river and the historical significance of the area, including Native American heritage, fishing, logging, the button industry (which utilized clam shells from the river), the steam ships that traveled up and down the Mississippi River, and the Great River Road.

The Prescott Foundation also helped establish a 501 (c) (3) organization called The Friends of Freedom Park to help the city operate and fund the park on an ongoing basis. In addition, the park is staffed with volunteers and a paid director who provide year-round programming.

According to Nelson, Freedom Park was a defining project for the Prescott Foundation, which is less than 15 years old. In the past, the Foundation has supported other worthy causes, such as Carpenter Nature Center, the Destination Imagination program, school athletic facilities, local food shelves and a battered women's facility. But until now there hasn't been anything quite the magnitude of The Freedom Park project. "It has been very beneficial in that it has provided great visibility for the Foundation...and great credibility," says Nelson.

When asked, what the Foundation is planning next, he laughed and said, "Catching our breath, to be honest." "But," he continued, "after an undertaking such as this, anything seems possible."

The Prescott Foundation is one of seven community funds affiliated with the St. Croix Valley Community Foundation.



SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS

*Chuck Anderson Scholarship Fund***** was established April, 2006, to award a scholarship in honor of Coach Chuck Anderson to a Senior tennis player who participated on the SAHS Tennis Team.

Paul L. Anderson Scholarship Fund was established December, 2003 and awards two scholarships to graduates of Hudson High School entering post secondary education who have participated on the tennis team.

Anne Cernohous Borchardt Music Scholarship Fund was established June 2000 to provide scholarships for the study of voice and/or piano for students from the St. Croix River Valley or East Metro area of St. Paul.

"Coach" Wes Windmiller Memorial Scholarship Fund was established in April, 2004. The fund awards a scholarship to a senior boy basketball player who is a member of the Stillwater Area High School basketball team.

Doris Fuka Scholarship Fund was established July, 1999 to provide scholarships to River Falls High School graduates entering college who have excelled in speech activities.

Janet Hansen Scholarship Fund was established June, 2000 to provide college scholarships to River Falls High School graduates entering the field of elementary education.

Dr. Val Kremser Medical Scholarship Fund was established December, 1999 to provide a scholarship annually to an Amery High School graduate entering study in a medical field.

Karl D. Ludvigson Memorial Scholarship Fund was established December, 1999 to provide scholarships for students graduating from Osceola High School and attending post-secondary education programs.

James McLaughlin Scholarship Fund was established in December, 2002, to provide scholarships to students at Stillwater Area High School who have been selected by other students as Most Valuable Players in a sport.

Bradley W. Nordstrand Scholarship Fund was established June, 2001 to provide scholarships for graduating seniors who participated in the Phipps Center for the Arts Children's Theater Program.

*Ern Peaslee Memorial Scholarship Fund***** was established July, 2005, to award a scholarship to honor the memory of Ern Peaslee, to a senior boy track and field player who participated on the SAHS track and field team.

SCVCF Young Life/Realife Scholarship Fund is awarded to a Stillwater Area High School graduate attending post-secondary education who has participated in faith-based opportunities.

St. Croix Valley Harley Owner's Group Scholarship Fund was established December, 1999 to provide scholarships to high school graduates from Polk, St. Croix and Pierce counties in Wisconsin and Chisago and Washington counties in Minnesota for post secondary education.

****New funds established this fiscal year

Grants to the Community



NONPROFIT MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE supporting strong and effective nonprofits.

In 2006 SCVCF gave \$20,000 to help nonprofit organizations develop their leadership, expand their fundraising abilities or take on new organizational challenges. The Otto Bremer Foundation is a key supporter of this program.

MUSIC EDUCATION FUND a lasting resource in St Croix Valley schools.

This year several third graders learned about local history by creating dulcimers to understand immigration and folk music traditions in our region. Other students used computers to learn composition or had use of musical instruments their families could not afford. These are the types of grants awarded each year through our Music Education Fund, an endowed field of interest fund created by an anonymous donor to sustain and enhance music education programs in local schools. This year grants totaled \$25,713.

VALLEY ARTS INITIATIVE exploring the relationship between community and the arts.

How do the arts connect people, encourage dialogue or stimulate community action? This year SCVCF broadened the Valley Arts Initiative guidelines to encourage arts organizations to explore the relationship between community building in the arts. As in the past, grants were also given to organizations that aimed to bring a wide audience to local arts programs. The total of \$15,000 was awarded through this joint program funded, in part, by the Wisconsin Arts Board.



Grant Recipients

ARTS

ArtReach Alliance
 Big Woods / Big Plains
 Family of Christ Lutheran Church
 Lake Pepin Art and Design Center
 Minnesota Orchestral Association
 Music St. Croix
 Osceola Main Street Promotions Committee
 River Falls Community Arts Base, Inc.
 Skits Outreach Services, Inc.
 St. Croix ArtBarn
 St. Croix Falls Parks and Recreation
 St. Croix Valley Boys Choir
 St. Croix Valley Chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society
 The Phipps Center for the Arts
 UW River Falls Theater Dept.
 Valley Arts Initiative Fund of SCVCF

Valley Chamber Chorale
 Woodbury Youth Orchestra

CIVIC

Arcola Mills Retreat Center
 Association Retreat Center
 B. P. O. Elks Lodge #179
 Baldwin Public Library
 Camp Odayin
 Friends at Stillwater Public Library
 Hope Adoption and Family Services Int'l Inc.
 Hudson Area Chamber of Commerce
 Hudson Community Built Playground Fund
 Hudson Community Fund
 Hudson Hockey Association
 Human Services, Inc.
 Lake St. Croix Beach Fund
 Leadership Hudson Fund

Minnesota Historical Society
 Dan O'Connell Leadership Fund
 Parks and Trails Council of MN
 Pierce County Historical Association
 River Falls Community Fund
 St. Croix Valley Community Foundation
 School District #834
 Stillwater Public Library
 The Friends of the Minneapolis Public Library
 Washington County Historical Society

EDUCATION

Augsburg College
 Bethel College and Christina Coulter
 College of St. Scholastica and Addie Seaman
 Concordia College
 Cottey College

Durand Public Schools
 Education Foundation of Hudson
 Hill Murray School
 Hudson High School
 Huntington University
 Inver Hills Community College and Ryan Becker
 Luther College and Katherine Klacan
 Macalester College
 Partnership Plan for Stillwater Area Schools
 Partnership Plan Lundquist Fund for Sciences
 Partnership Plan Orchestra Fund
 Partnership Plan Weingarten "What's Best For Kids" Fund
 Regency Beauty Institute and Ashley Thron
 School District of Hudson
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 St. Olaf College and Scholarship for Andrew Schmeising
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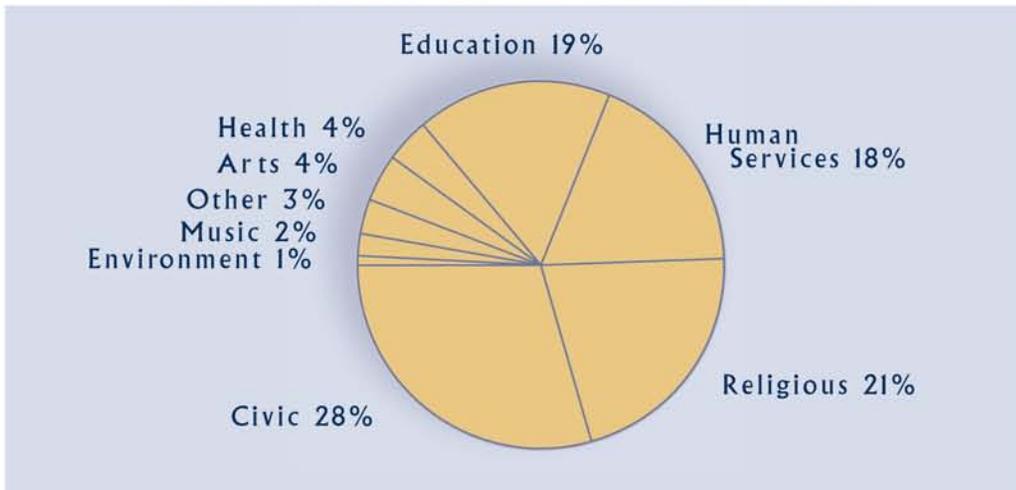
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 Kinnickinnic River Land Trust
 Minnesota Land Trust
 Standing Cedars Community Land Conservancy
 The Nature Conservancy of MN
 West Wisconsin Land Trust
 Willow River Organization for Wildlife Learning Inc.

HEALTH

American Cancer Society
 Courage St. Croix
 Epilepsy Foundation of Minnesota
 Hudson Health Foundation
 Kilimanjaro Children's Hospital
 Lakeview Hospital
 March of Dimes
 Mayo Foundation
 National Multiple Sclerosis Society MN Chapter
 Philippine Minnesotan Medical Association
 St. Andrew's Lutheran Church
 The Smile Train
 United Hospital Foundation
 United Servants Abroad

Total FY 2006 Grants \$1,287,917.00



HUMAN SERVICES

American Red Cross
American Refugee Committee
Autism Society of Minnesota
Avanti Challenge Camp St. Croix
Bridge for Hudson Youth, Inc.
Camp Courage and Angela McAndrew
Catholic Youth Camp
CCP Community Services and Ann Olson
Center for Victims of Torture
Community Action Inc.
Community Homestead
Courage Center
Crystal Ball Farms
Ezekiel Food Shelf
Family Resource Center St. Croix Valley, Inc.
Ann Flynn
Food for The Poor, Inc.
Friendship Ventures and Joshua Ous
Friendship Ventures and Mary Kay MacDonald
Friendship Ventures and Heidi Gruber
Friendship Ventures and Emily Myhr
Friendship Ventures and Aaron Johnson
Friendship Ventures and Bill Hunter
Friendship Ventures and Mason
Campbell-Burke
Junior Achievement of Hudson
Knights of Columbus
Lakeview Hospice
Lutheran Braille Evangelism Assoc.
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Northern Star Council/BSA
Off the Beaten Path and Jane Parent
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Shelley Chandler
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Operation Help

PATH

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St. Croix Area United Way
St. Croix Valley Habitat for Humanity, Inc.
St. Croix Valley Restorative Justice Program
St. Croix Valley YMCA
St. Patrick School
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Turning Point
Twin Cities Urban Young Life
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Wilderness Inquiry
Women for Women
World Vision
YMCA Camp St. Croix .
Young Life St. Croix Valley
Young Life White Bear Lake/Mahtomedi
Youth Service Bureau, Inc.

MUSIC

Crestview Elementary School
Crosswinds Middle School
Lakes International Language Academy

Marine Elementary School
Math and Science Academy
New Heights School
River Falls Public Montessori Academy
Charter School
Rutherford Elementary School
School District #834
Somerset Middle and High Schools
St. Francis Elementary School
Stillwater Junior High School
Valley Crossing Community School
Willow River Elementary School

RELIGIOUS

Annual Catholic Appeal
Ascension Episcopal Church
Bethlehem Lutheran Church
Christian Community Campus Foundation
Church of St. Joan of Arc
Church of St. Michael
Como Park Lutheran Church
Ezekiel Lutheran Church
First Congregational Church United
Church of Christ
First Baptist Church
Hope Lutheran Church
Lakeview Lutheran Church
National Office Race Track Chaplaincy
of America, Inc.
Retirement Fund for Religious
Sacred Heart Catholic Church
Salem Lutheran Church
Shepherd of the Valley Church
Sojourners Development Department
St. Francis of Assisi Parish
St. Mary's Episcopal Church of
Basswood Grove
St. Patrick Catholic Parish
St. Peter's Lutheran Church
Wyoming United Methodist Church

OTHER

Brown County Humane Society
Donors Forum of Wisconsin
Humane Society for Companion Animals
Humane Society of Goodhue County, Inc
Humane Society of Kandiyohi County
Minnesota Public Radio
Morrison County Animal Humane Society
Rice County Humane Society, Inc.
Tri-County Humane Society
Twin Cities Public Television
Watonwan County Humane Society

Grant Awards

Competitive grants are awarded by the Foundation's board of directors for the Music Education Program, the Valley Arts Initiative and other special projects.

Grants are limited to organizations located in Washington and Chisago counties in Minnesota and Polk, Pierce and St. Croix counties in Wisconsin. Unless otherwise specified, organizations must have 501 (c) (3) status from the IRS. Other limitations may apply.

Details regarding grant guidelines and application processes can be found on the foundation's website at www.scvcf.org or by contacting the St. Croix Valley Community Foundation offices at 715-386-9490. We welcome questions from interested applicants.

Creating a Quality Place

~Community Partnership Initiative~

In our dynamic and growing landscape the St. Croix Valley Community Foundation helps make our communities vital and livable spaces through our Community Partnership Initiative. To do so we focus on building community through the arts and strengthening our local nonprofits and charitable organizations.

We thank our community partners for joining us in this endeavor and we are proud of our collective accomplishments in the St. Croix Valley.

COMMUNITY BUILDING THROUGH THE ARTS

Along with public and community organizations, artists and arts organizations are a force for creating community character in the face of rapid growth. Last year SCVCF addressed this theme in three ways.

Cultivating Community: Art and civic responsibility. Building relationships. Expressing creativity. These are the ideas that speaker Mary Gard Ewell addressed at Cultivating Community, a community forum co-sponsored by SCVCF, The Phipps Center for the Arts and University of Wisconsin, River Falls. Discussing historical and current examples of art in community development, Ewell discussed how we can use the arts to create a sense of place in local towns and river communities.

The Bench Project. Art made by a group of lay artists and placed in public spaces gives evidence of a community's investment in place. In 2005 SCVCF and The Phipps launched The Bench Project, a community art project designed to create unique works of art, each envisioned and created by local groups to interpret the communities in which they live. The project was launched in Hudson, Bayport and St. Croix Falls, although we envision a string of benches along the river to attract local residents and visitors to the rich natural and cultural offerings in the St. Croix Valley.

Art and Economic Prosperity Study. In January SCVCF, along with other arts organizations, the St. Croix Valley Regional Tourism

Alliance, University of Wisconsin, River Falls and the St. Croix Economic Development Corporation, embarked on a year long research project designed to measure the economic impact of nonprofit arts organizations in the area. The study, conducted by Americans for the Arts in Washington, DC, is part of a national study involving more than 100 different communities. The results will be published in April 2007.

PROMOTING NONPROFIT PERFORMANCE

Important dimensions of vital and livable communities are strong nonprofits and charitable organizations. For the last three years SCVCF has provided workshops, grants, coaching and referrals to help develop nonprofit leadership. This year our workshops focused on board development, nonprofit legal issues, fundraising basics, proposal writing and endowment building and exceeded capacity each time!

And, to help organizations take their ideas and put them into action, we joined Hugh J. Andersen Foundation as a funding partner to give 18 organizations a total of \$40,000 in grants to enhance their internal management or respond to change. The organizations that apply for these grants aim to make their organizations more effective, knowing their enhancements will ultimately improve the programs they provide. This type of funding partnership is just one way we can help create a vital nonprofit sector in the St. Croix region.

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When *is* a Bench *not* Just a Bench?



When it's a bridge. A bridge between artists and non-artists, that is. Or a bridge connecting the community through collaborative work and a common goal. Or a link between the past and the future. Making those connections happen was the hope behind The Bench Project, according to Anastasia Shartin, Visual Arts Director at The Phipps Center for the Arts in Hudson and coordinator of the project. The delightful and whimsical idea of building benches in communities along the St. Croix River, Shartin explains, was the outgrowth of a unique series of conversations held in partnership with the St. Croix Valley Community Foundation about cultivating community, art in public spaces, and preserving what's most valuable in the St. Croix River Valley.

The bench in St. Croix Falls is one of the first tangible results of the community art project. It is located next to the National Park Service's new Visitors Center in the recently dedicated park honoring Wisconsin statesman and environmentalist Gaylord Nelson. The bench is designed to capture both the greatness and permanence of the river as well as the minute details of life within and along its banks.

The bench consists of three huge pieces of granite — two large horizontal slabs representing Minnesota and Wisconsin and an upright slab between symbolizing the river. Etched and embedded in the granite slabs are images and words created by children from St. Croix Falls. Visitors to the park who stop to explore the bench will find phrases like "Rocks Balance," "Fish Jump" or "Slugs Cling." They will discover playful etchings of a mastodon, a strawberry, a delicate wildflower, and a child's hand carrying a mayfly. Tucked into nooks and crevices in the granite are bronze sculptures of a bird's nest, an eagle about to take flight, a trio of fish, and a fawn.

Not only is the bench's appearance remarkable. So is the collaboration between community partners that made the bench a reality. When the city of St. Croix Falls was first approached about the idea of a functional public art work in August 2005, they quickly voted to approve the project. Amy Klein, teacher and city parks board chair, approached the School District of St. Croix Falls about offering the project as a summer school workshop to get kids involved in the process. She sent out a call to local artists seeking their input and ideas for the bench. Franconia Sculpture Park responded by donating the three large pieces of granite that would form the foundation of the bench and led the children through sculptural activities to get their creative juices flowing. Local artists Jim Shoop and Kim Murphy worked with the students to create cast bronze pieces reflecting themes from nature. National Park Service ranger Dale Cox gave the kids valuable insight into St. Croix Falls' pre-historic, geologic and environmental past, and introduced the concept of the watershed — how the impact of one person's actions extends far beyond his or her immediate circle. The kids took hikes, learned about Gaylord Nelson and responded to all they had experienced through art, poetic expression and pointed discussion led by Klein and Shartin.

The final product is a piece of public art and a symbol of community that will be there for years to come. "The wonderful thing about the bench," observed Klein, "is that it's located on a pathway right along the river where people stop to take a break. It's in an open area overlooking the water with beautiful outcroppings of rock. When adults approach the bench, they walk quietly around it at first, taking in the images and poetic phrases that were sandblasted into the rock. Kids on the other hand, will climb right up on it and try to scramble to the top. "What I hope the bench will represent for us,"

Conversations of the Valley

she said, “is all the things that are meaningful to us here in the St. Croix Valley.”

Three benches were created during the pilot year of this program. As in St. Croix Falls, the benches in Bayport and Hudson were designed and influenced by a collaboration of community partners resulting in a look and function unique to their respective communities.

The bench project was made possible through funding from the Hugh J. Andersen Foundation and by funds from local businesses and service clubs. Local partners contributed with financial gifts and in-kind donations of staff time and materials.



Conversations of the Valley completed a third year of public affairs programming in 2005-2006, offering attendees insight and information on a wide range of topics — from local issues impacting the St. Croix Valley, to state and national topics, to international affairs. In the spring of 2006, **PETER BELL, Chair of the Metropolitan Council**, addressed the economic and political factors local leaders must take into account when making development decisions affecting the Valley.

BRIAN ATWOOD, Dean of the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs explored the link between poverty and violent conflict, one that he believes has been largely under-estimated by national security analysts.

DIANNE NEUMARK-SZTAINER, professor and epidemiologist at the University of Minnesota’s School of Public Health, talked about the impact of obesity on our society, particularly as it pertains to young adults.

MIKE DAY, Senior Vice President for Museum Enterprises at the Science Museum of Minnesota discussed the “Body Worlds” exhibit.

COMCAST was the financial sponsor for the year.

THE LOWELL INN continued to serve as the venue for the programs, providing an inspiring setting and a bountiful buffet for the approximately 100 individuals who attended each month from both the East Metro area and Western Wisconsin.

Janna Haug served as Program Director and Advisory Committee Chair. Other advisory committee members were Pat Benson, Judy Duffy, Joanne Gustafson, Erv Neff, Peg Leutele, Lynn Shafer, Kevin Shields of the Lowell Inn, and David Griffith, president of the St. Croix Valley Community Foundation.

For information and reservations call 651-430-3830.

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Hudson Community Built Playground Project

On many a lazy summer afternoon you can find Cathy McDonald and her two pre-schoolers, along with dozens of other children, at the Hudson Community Built Playground. The kids might be on the swings and slides — the usual playground activity. But you might also find them unearthing dinosaur bones in the sandbox, scaling a climbing wall with a mural of the St. Croix River and hot air balloons floating overhead, or playing an imaginary game in the replica of Hudson's famous Octagon House.

In the summer of 2005, the concept was just an idea in Cathy's head. She had visited similar playgrounds in LaCrosse, Wisconsin and Rochester, Minnesota and was amazed at the design and workmanship that had gone into crafting playing areas that delighted children with unique fun and at the same time, represented the communities in which they were located.

Cathy took her idea to the Mom's Group she belongs to in Hudson. The response was immediate and positive. The Hudson Park Board was also very supportive and offered to help identify a site in which to locate the park. Cathy found several friends who were willing to help with project details and fundraising and by August 2005, a steering committee was formed.

Amidst the excitement and high energy, one possible obstacle loomed; the time consuming effort that would be required to set up a not-for-profit organization through which to channel the donations and disburse checks. Fortunately, an acquaintance directed Cathy to the St. Croix Valley Community Foundation. The Foundation agreed to serve as the fiscal agent, and a fund was established.

To get started, the committee contracted with Leathers and Associates, a NewYork-based company with more than 30 years of experience in community-built play structures. Committee members, together with Leathers and Associates, organized a Design Day to solicit ideas for the playground. Groups of 20–30 children created pictures, posters, and clay models of things they would like to see in the new playground. Parents talked about how to incorporate a Hudson theme and symbols of the river. Using the children's ideas and suggestions from parents, teachers and other community members, the designer created a playground unique to the area.

Meanwhile fundraising had begun in earnest. The cost to design and build the playground was estimated at \$150,000. Cathy and her committee





of 20 met with companies and organization in the area to present the project and request donations. Over 130 businesses and community organizations responded with donations. Several local foundations provided grants. And individuals in the community sponsored pickets in the fence surrounding the playground or brick pavers that were part of the court and path leading to the parking lot. Kids collected pennies and brought them to school. Others brought in aluminum cans for recycling dollars. In a very short time the committee, led by fundraising co-chair Heidi Young, raised an astounding \$120,000.

Construction of the playground took place over a six day period in June 2006. Once all the components had been delivered, dozens of enthusiastic volunteers gathered at the site to put the entire structure together.

David Griffith, president of the St. Croix Valley Community Foundation expressed his admiration for what Cathy and her committee members were able to accomplish in such a short time. "A group of young parents saw a need for their children and did a remarkable job of fundraising and building broad-based support that reached deep into the community," he said. "It's a fabulous example of two concepts we have been talking about a lot lately at the Foundation; building social capital and preserving community character."

Cathy is also amazed at how quickly the playground went from being an idea to a reality. "A year to 18 months is typical," she said. "But we did it in six months. It's incredible, and I thank my committee members for that."





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