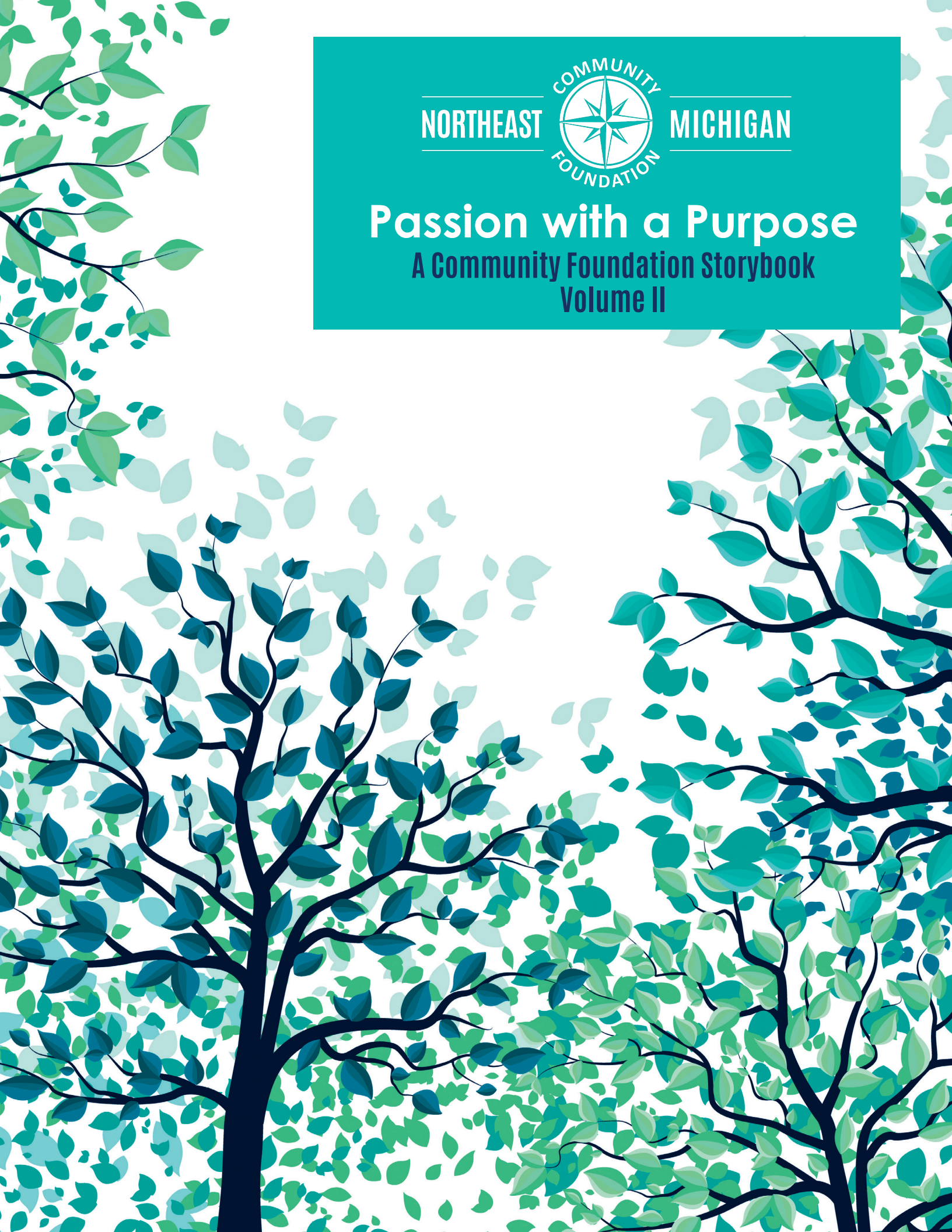




Passion with a Purpose

A Community Foundation Storybook
Volume II



Passion with a Purpose

A Community Foundation Storybook, Volume II

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Serving Crawford, Ogemaw and Oscoda Counties



**We all have passion.
We all have purpose.
We will all leave a legacy.
We all have a story.
And stories are meant
to be shared.**

Passion with a Purpose, Volume II





August and Peggy Matuzak A Living Legacy for Public Art

A thriving art culture. Galleries. Murals. Sculptures. Live theatre. Music festivals. Film festivals. We tend to think these assets are mostly available to those who live in or visit big cities. But on the beautiful shores of Lake Huron, right here in northeast Michigan, that colorful, vibrant arts culture is exactly what we find.

August and Peggy Matuzak are both artists, avid supporters of the entire arts community, and lifelong residents of Alpena. They have turned their love of the arts into a legacy and feast for the eyes from which our communities will benefit forever.

When a project to create large art sculptures around Alpena kicked off in the 1970s, there was plenty of excitement, but very little funding. In fact, the project petered out after the first sculpture, the fountain in front of Besser Museum for Northeast Michigan, was installed in 1978. The project recently regained momentum with the help of Timothy Kuehnlein, the Matuzaks, and others who worked to revive it.

The Matuzaks, who owned an art gallery in downtown Alpena for three years after retirement, say Alpena's natural beauty makes the area the perfect canvas for large-scale public art.

"The sculptures provide us with something unexpected in a small town. They are there for everyone:



residents, visitors, young and old; everyone can enjoy them, even if they're not into art," said August Matuzak.

So, August and Peggy decided to do two things. The first was to establish the endowed Art Vision Alpena Fund at the Community Foundation for Northeast Michigan. The second was to ensure the fund would be large enough to sustain the sculptures' care in perpetuity by including the new fund in their will. By doing both, the Matuzaks can do something a bit unconventional: witness their legacy in action!

"Whether we know it or not, we all want to make our world a better place. We feel that by doing something during our lifetime, we can enjoy the results along with everyone else while we are still alive," says August. "It provides us with a great sense of joy to do something now and see the tangible results instead of waiting and hoping something happens with our money when we are no longer here."

"The Matuzaks attended the unveiling of the first set of sculptures by Thunder Bay Arts back in 2017 – Global Collaboration Awareness and Departure of the Great Blue Heron. They could see the value of resuscitating the sculpture component of the original Alpena Bi-Path plan, and they translated inspiration into action and deeds," says Timothy Kuehnlein. "I'll never forget their request to get involved in this special way. It demonstrated a long-range perspective on immediate progress being made, and in the promotion of this unique opportunity to promote the arts through large-scale public sculpture. "

As the project moves forward once again, Peggy says the effort is truly one of the community. She notes that Art Vision Alpena has received help from individuals, foundations, businesses and municipalities to get the sculptures in place.

“When we have asked for support, everyone has been more than willing to help, and that is what makes this so special,” says Peggy. “It is why Alpena was an ideal place for this to happen.”

Peggy has been doing stained and fused glass work for 40 years, while August took on fused glass about ten years ago. They have been involved with Art in the Loft, local art shows, concerts and museums, immersing themselves in local art. They truly feel artists are part of the same community and need to strive to support each other.

“We have always loved many different forms of art, and we know that many more people feel the same way. Sometimes, you just need to get the ball rolling, and the rest takes care of itself,” says August. “As shown by the community support of our projects, we feel we have provided the impetus to do just that for these sculptures.”

When it comes to the Art Vision Alpena Fund, August and Peggy say they believe in the long-term stability of the fund and have confidence in its management at CFNEM. It gives them comfort knowing how the fund is managed, and that it will have the fiscal strength it needs for many years to come.

“The Matuzaks are not just donating money; they are actively helping realize a long-term plan for community development with their literal “living” trust,” says Kuehnlein who is also a former CFNEM Board President. “Their engagement will last for their lifetime and generations to come. What an amazing and rewarding thing to witness for yourself and for a beloved community.”

“We like knowing that our gift will do what it should long after we are gone,” says August. “That gives us security knowing the funds will be doing good things well into the future. This is something our town can be proud of, and provide us with a real sense of place to share with everyone.” ✦




Raymond Plaunt Maritime Memorial Scholarship Honoring the Past and Looking to the Future

A love of water, pride in challenging and rewarding work, and a close-knit family has helped create a legacy four generations in the making for the Plaunt family. Some of the most sincere and kindest people you may encounter, the family and their business have been a lifeline for residents of Bois Blanc Island in Lake Huron, and the visitors who travel there for over 85 years. It is through this legacy, and that of a beloved ferry captain, that the Plaunts are now helping others to discover the joys of a maritime industry career.

Curt Plaunt is the current owner of Plaunt Transportation, which carries people, goods, mail and even vehicles across Lake Huron from Cheboygan to Bois Blanc Island and back. He is the third generation to run the business, and the boat. His grandfather, Charles, started the business in 1932, with Raymond Plaunt (Curt's father), taking over in 1948.

Curt took over the business in 1987, and his son Jason and nephew Ryan McLaren have both joined the family tradition by becoming ferry boat captains. Perhaps you have driven through Cheboygan and noticed the Plaunt Transportation boat docked in the Cheboygan River waiting to load for the next trip. The boat's name? Kristen D - named after Curt's daughter Kristen. In fact, most of the boats used by the company are named after women in the family.

"Our family shares a rich history in the maritime field," says Curt. "Living on Bois Blanc Island, we grew up on and around



*Left to right: Jason Plaunt, Curt Plaunt,
Raymond Plaunt and Ryan McLaren*



the water, which became part of our everyday life. Our family learned a great deal of respect for the water, wind, and ice, which has a direct connection to all of us. Mother Nature can be very unforgiving, as she has been to many sailors, but I love the ways that our ferry business challenges us to continually adapt and grow.”

Curt says it has truly been a family endeavor since the beginning with many family members serving in various ways from deckhands to bookkeeping and everything in between. One of his favorite parts of the job is getting to witness incredible sunrises and sunsets on the water.

Curt’s father Raymond ran the business and was boat captain for 39 years. When Raymond passed away in February of 2016, his love and passion for the family’s maritime work continued. Right away, the Plaunts knew they wanted to find a way to honor Raymond and inspire and help others on their path to a maritime career. They wanted a permanent way to memorialize the larger-than-life legacy of this man who had given safe passage across the Lake to so many passengers; and had been a loving and supportive patriarch for his family.

The Plaunts connected with the Straits Area Community Foundation (SACF) and quickly established the Raymond A. Plaunt Maritime Memorial Scholarship. The fund specifically supports students who are studying and pursuing a career in the maritime industry.

“The driving force behind this scholarship is keeping Raymond’s legacy alive,” says Curt. He and his sisters, Char and Leanna, make annual contributions and work on ways to build the fund. “Sustaining the scholarship and helping as many people as possible allows us to continue to share his story and honor him and his maritime career.”

Curt adds that the family has thoroughly enjoyed collaborating with the Community Foundation and they love getting to know some of the scholarship recipients, being involved in their educational experiences, and staying updated on their progress. He says it is another way they honor their family tradition.

While funds established at the Community Foundation grow through investment income, the Plaunt Family is committed to ensuring that the scholarship in Raymond’s name not only grows, but thrives. They hold fundraisers at significant times like Raymond’s 100th birthday or milestones for Plaunt Transportation. As a family and business, they have also committed to annual contributions in Raymond’s memory to help build the fund. All of these efforts have led to the fund growing to over \$133,000 in assets at the time of this publication. So far, the scholarship has awarded over \$13,000 to three students studying in the maritime academy.



Background: The sun sets in Cheboygan, taken from the helm of the Kristen D; Top right: Raymond, Curt and Jason Plaunt; Bottom right: Raymond Plaunt and his children (l to r) Char, Curt and Leanna.



"Most of the people who would go into the maritime field have to have a love for the water. It is a rewarding field which can provide a comfortable living and offers many different areas in which to work," says Curt. "For our ferry service, some of the rewards come in the form of breath-taking sunsets and sunrises, as well as serving an island community that means so much to us."

Andrew Bennett is a three-time recipient of the Raymond Plaunt Maritime Memorial Scholarship. He graduated in January 2021 from Great Lakes Maritime Academy in Traverse City, Michigan, with a bachelor's degree in Maritime Technology and a Third Mates Unlimited License.

"I got to meet Curt during my sophomore year while he was in town for a Captain's Association event. He and his friends were so welcoming," says Andrew. "Each year, I would get a chance to catch up with Curt on the ferry to Bois Blanc Island to visit my aunt. It was really encouraging to have so many people interested in my success and checking in."

Andrew says he was working 60 to 80 hours per week as a lifeguard to help pay for his housing and tuition, but after receiving this scholarship, he was able to cut back on hours and focus more on his education.

"This scholarship allowed me the time to actually focus on and understand the material, instead of just short-term learning for a grade, which was an immense help, and will continue to help me throughout my career," says Andrew.

Curt notes that education can be expensive, and the Plaunts strive to ease that burden for students who choose the water as a way of life.

"This scholarship fund is one way we can honor Raymond's legacy, celebrate our family tradition, and share our passion for the water," says Curt. "Sharing that with the community and knowing this legacy will last forever through this fund is incredibly rewarding." ✦

*Carl Basel and three-time (2011-2013)
scholarship recipient Jordan Max*



Carl and Helen Basel MSU Scholarship A Legacy 100 Years in the Making

“Helen, we have to figure out what to do with our money.”

Those are the words Carl Basel said to his wife Helen that started a tradition of giving; one that reflected a love of trees and forestry, and a great passion for northeast Michigan’s people.

Born in Presque Isle County, Carl held northeast Michigan close to his heart, as did Helen. Carl was a U.S. Coast Guard veteran, an avid outdoorsman, and an excellent forester. Helen, whom Carl called “one tough, dear woman”, met her husband while he was stationed in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Carl earned a Master of Science degree from Michigan State University’s Forestry program, and worked as head forester for Alpena’s Abitibi Co. He eventually brought his love of trees and the outdoors back to Alpena County where he and Helen ran a hobby tree farm in Wellington Township, as well as an additional farm in Missaukee County. Together, they planted over 60,000 trees!

Foundation staff had the opportunity to chat with Carl in spring of 2019 as he was approaching his 100th birthday. He spoke often about his father, and the influence he had on so much of Carl’s life.

“The best things he taught me were the importance of two things: honesty and integrity,” he said. “Stick to what you believe in. Learn what you can about something, decide how you feel about it, then when you know you’re right, stand behind what you believe in.”

It was through these lessons, and hard work, that he and Helen found financial success and made incredible memories traveling the globe until Helen developed lung cancer.

“My dear Helen. I tried to get her to stop smoking, but I just couldn’t. You know, lung cancer moves pretty quickly to your brain,” Carl said. “When we found out about it I said, ‘Helen, we have to figure out what to do with our money.’ We had a lot of fun; we got to do a lot of things together. We never had children, and we didn’t want to just give it all to our nieces and nephews. We love them; and we wanted them to make it on their own the way we did.”

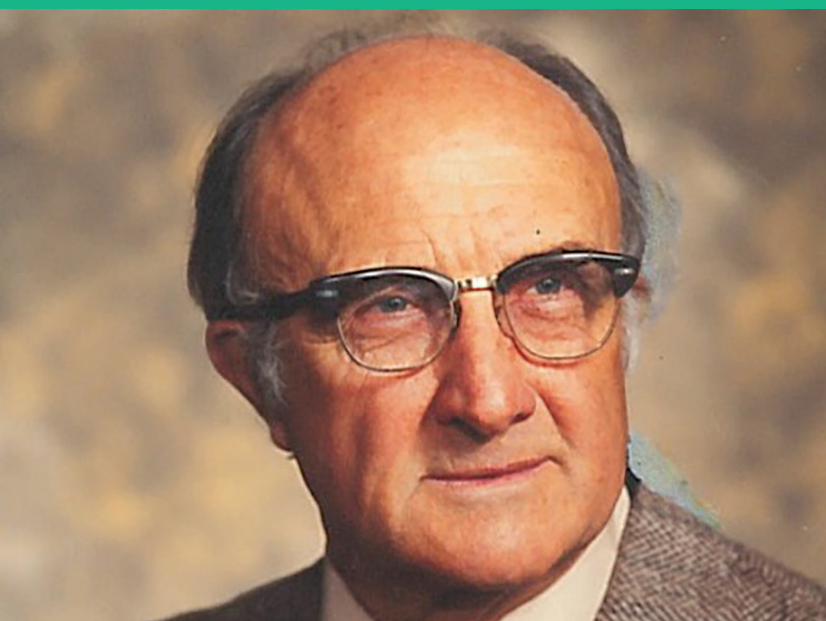
Ultimately, Carl said they wanted to do something good with their money. When they decided to sell their tree farm, they took the proceeds to start a fund at the Community Foundation for Northeast Michigan, the Carl and Helen Basel MSU Scholarship Fund; and another through Alpena Community College. At CFNEM’s annual scholarship luncheons, Carl rarely missed the opportunity to attend and mingle with the students whose educations and futures would benefit from his and Helen’s philanthropic legacy. He embraced the opportunity to witness that philanthropy in action and meet his scholarship’s recipients.

Moved to continue their tradition of philanthropy and help next generations to be successful in the fields that shaped their adult lives, Carl and Helen also established a scholarship for students at MSU’s College of Natural Science in 1995, becoming members of MSU’s Beaumont Tower Society before Helen’s death in 1998. Carl took many opportunities to remember Helen through philanthropy, including in 2007 when he became a Founding Member of CFNEM’s Northeast Michigan Women’s Giving Circle in her honor. In 2013, Carl decided to start an annual Outstanding Service Award in Forestry at MSU, and the Carl O. Basel Endowed Scholarship Fund at the University specifically to support students from northeast Michigan.

When asked about his legacy of giving and hopes for the next generation, Carl (who firmly believed he would not see his 100th birthday), said he hoped they would show the integrity and work ethic he feels is so needed in the world and our communities. Those qualities are what allowed him a successful career, and a tradition of philanthropy for our region, and he was thankful to be able to witness some of its effects during his lifetime.

“I’m 99 years old. I’ve lived a pretty good life. I’m ready,” he said.

Carl passed away in May of 2020, eight and half months after his 100th birthday, leaving a legacy for himself and Helen that will last for generations to come. ✦



Whittemore-Prescott Education Foundation

Three Alumni Band Together to Help the Next in Line

What do a cruise line communications director, a Barron's Top 100 financial advisor, and a conservationist/successful restaurateur have in common? For one, they are all graduates of Whittemore-Prescott High School – a small school system on the border of Iosco and Ogemaw counties. All incredibly successful in their respective careers, and now retired, there is a soft spot for the school that started them along a successful path in life. Now they are giving back to help kids at their alma mater have success as well.

Dennis (Denny) Fuerst, John Kulhavi and Keith Charters have stayed in touch since their high school days, and each credit their small-town upbringing and education as a significant part of their path to success. Until they joined forces, there was no education foundation resource for the school that started it all. The first opportunity to start one slipped away in 2010, and when it presented itself again in 2016, the three men concurred, if not us, then who?

Denny says it was at that point they derived a plan to support their alma mater, but in a different way than many of the surrounding districts had done. They had the strong support of the schools' superintendent, Joe Perrera, and the backing of Gary Gillings, an alumnus living in the Whittemore area who could serve as a strong local connection and help pull together an effective board. They set up a meeting with the Community Foundation to get started, and did so in a slightly unconventional way.

They were aware that many schools start education foundations to support their students through scholarships, but they did not want to see their funds leave the community and the school.

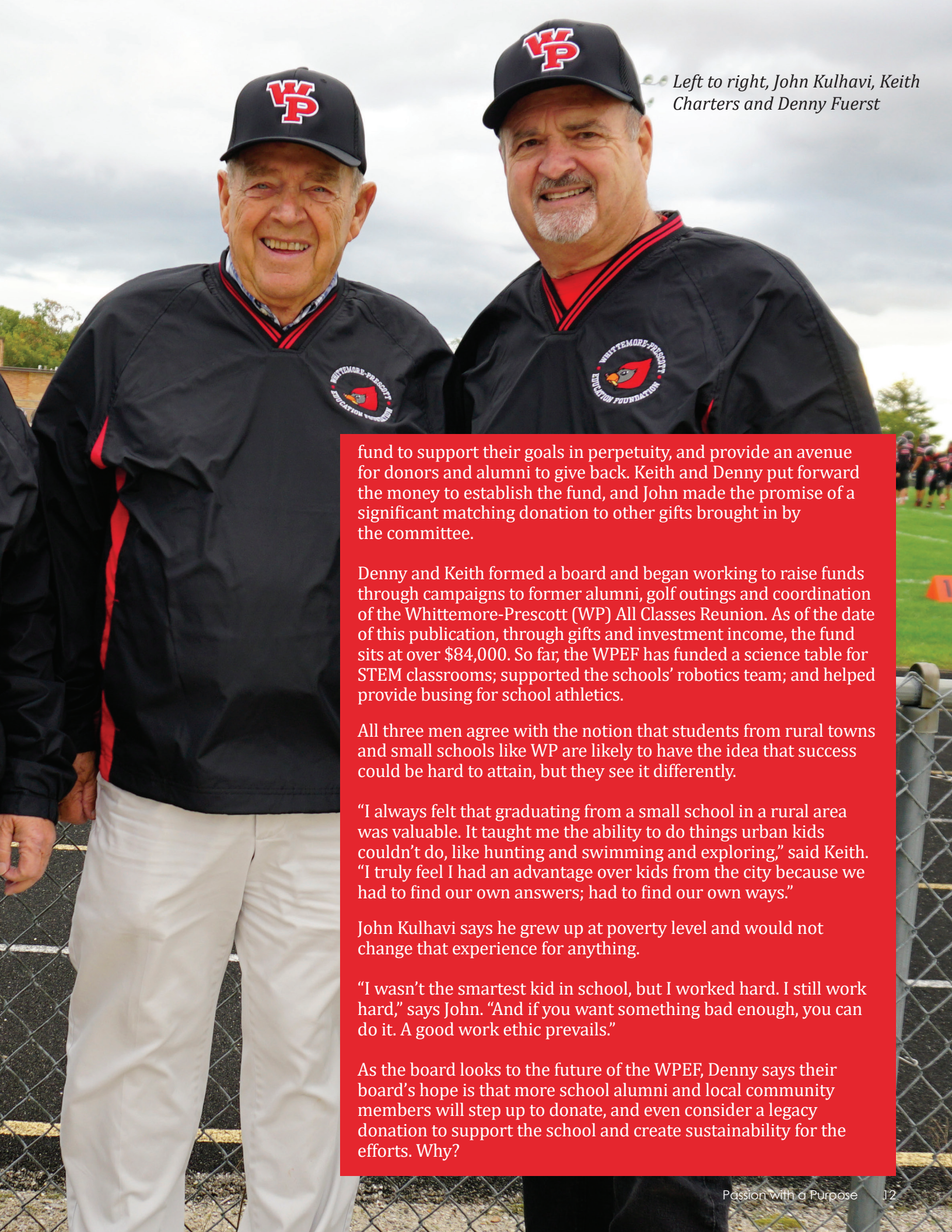
"We knew that while it would certainly help a student with college expenses, a scholarship through a local foundation wouldn't be the deciding factor on whether or not a kid went to college," said Denny. "We wanted to make sure the funds we raised could support every student at WP, so that's what we set out to do."

Keith Charters added that the hope for their Foundation is to give Whittemore-Prescott students the same opportunities as those from wealthier areas, with a goal of enriching and enhancing the experience of all students at the school. They would do this through grants directly to the classrooms, programs and needs of the school.

"Growing up the way I did, if it weren't for busing, I never would have been able to play sports," said John Kulhavi. "These are the types of things we aim to support so budget shortfalls don't have to impact what a student can or cannot do."

Once the decision was made to establish the Whittemore-Prescott Education Foundation (WPEF), they partnered with the Iosco County Community Foundation in late 2016 to create an endowed





Left to right, John Kulhavi, Keith Charters and Denny Fuerst

fund to support their goals in perpetuity, and provide an avenue for donors and alumni to give back. Keith and Denny put forward the money to establish the fund, and John made the promise of a significant matching donation to other gifts brought in by the committee.

Denny and Keith formed a board and began working to raise funds through campaigns to former alumni, golf outings and coordination of the Whittemore-Prescott (WP) All Classes Reunion. As of the date of this publication, through gifts and investment income, the fund sits at over \$84,000. So far, the WPEF has funded a science table for STEM classrooms; supported the schools' robotics team; and helped provide busing for school athletics.

All three men agree with the notion that students from rural towns and small schools like WP are likely to have the idea that success could be hard to attain, but they see it differently.

"I always felt that graduating from a small school in a rural area was valuable. It taught me the ability to do things urban kids couldn't do, like hunting and swimming and exploring," said Keith. "I truly feel I had an advantage over kids from the city because we had to find our own answers; had to find our own ways."

John Kulhavi says he grew up at poverty level and would not change that experience for anything.

"I wasn't the smartest kid in school, but I worked hard. I still work hard," says John. "And if you want something bad enough, you can do it. A good work ethic prevails."

As the board looks to the future of the WPEF, Denny says their board's hope is that more school alumni and local community members will step up to donate, and even consider a legacy donation to support the school and create sustainability for the efforts. Why?

"We owe it to them," says Keith. "I feel we owe some of our success to the school we began with. Why not help the next generations? It's the only way we can pay back the education we received."

When it comes to the work of promoting WPEF and building the fund's assets, Denny (who now lives in Santa Clarita, Calif.) and Keith (who lives in Traverse City most of the year) often make the effort to join board meetings in person when they can. Denny works diligently to promote the WPEF through social media, newspapers, and sharing updates and features on fellow alumni who support their mission. They rely on John's connections and business interests to hold fundraisers like no others in northern Michigan, drawing former Detroit Lions' players, pro golfers, and having the complete use of Michigan's second largest amusement park, Cedar Valley Wild Frontier Fun Park, which John happens to own.

Moving forward, Denny points out that a next generation of alumni will need to step up to continue the work, and hopes that other graduates of the school will see the value and importance of helping the next ones in line at their alma mater.

With the shared history of their days at Whittemore-Prescott, and connections that have lasted through the years, these three men are quick to point the finger at one another, and others, for who has helped this endeavor the most, never taking the credit for themselves. It is clear from the outside looking in that all three, and those on the ground level of the WPEF, have had an equal share in its success.

In the end, what is obvious is the heart these men have for the experiences that shaped their own lives, and the drive to lift up those who follow them. And there will be generations of students who can thank a small group of people for that vision.

Keith Charters graduated from Whittemore-Prescott Schools in 1959. He spent the majority of his career as co-owner of The Embers on the Bay in Traverse City. He also ran a successful consulting company centered on growth management and land use. Having been appointed by Governor John Engler to the Natural Resources Commission, Keith was its longest serving chairman. His proudest claim to fame is being the only living person in Michigan for whom a State park is named: the Keith J. Charters Traverse City State Park.

Denny Fuerst is a 1960 graduate and avid athlete from WP. Denny spent most of his career as a travel industry executive. He was vice president for Princess Cruise Lines for 19 years, eventually retiring as vice president of Uniworld, a river cruise line for Russia, China and Europe. His career has allowed him to travel to 45 countries and five continents.

John Kulhavi also graduated in 1960 from WP. An Army and Army Reserves veteran, John served as a helicopter pilot and flight leader in Vietnam, and was in charge of mobilizing Reserve units during Operation Desert Storm. During his time in the Reserves (from which he retired with a rank of Brigadier General), he began a successful career with Merrill Lynch as a financial advisor. Aside from his involvement with WPEF, John owns multiple businesses and has many philanthropic efforts. He is proud to be CMU's largest living benefactor supporting its neuroscience program, business school, athletics, and other programs. ✦

Below: Left: WP Superintendent Joe Perrera (front right) and his family pose with former Detroit Lions at a WPEF fundraiser; Right: WP Alumni and WPEF members (left to right) Barbara and Gary Gillings and Carol Long.



Bob and Nancy Griffin A Story of Hometown Roots and Generosity

Family, faith, and a love of their hometown, are at the root of generosity and community involvement that will leave a legacy for Nancy Griffin and her late husband, Robert (Bob).

“Our roots are very deep with our community. Our grandchildren are the sixth generation to live in Ogemaw County,” says Nancy. “I have always been very proud of our community and how so many are always willing to step forward for projects.”



Giving is very personal, and when we give, we give to what matters most to us. This is true for Nancy and Bob as well, who decided to use the North Central Michigan Community Foundation as an avenue for charitable giving and community involvement. What is unique in this story is how Nancy gets involved in that giving by actively encouraging others to give, and championing local projects. She believes people are always willing to help their communities if they are just asked. So she asks, and she steps up herself.

When asked what motivates her generosity and willingness to get involved in local projects, Nancy recalls her family. Her dad, a U.S. Veteran, was the Chief of the Fire Department for 40 years and also served as Mayor. Her grandmother, mother and Nancy have all volunteered for the Girl Scouts. She also says her husband Bob, who passed away in 2019, was an incredibly generous person, always willing to help and grateful for all the community has given to them. That mindset and giving spirit are making a difference in their hometown of West Branch, Michigan, particularly for Ogemaw students, a local museum, and her church.

Nancy and Bob both grew up in the West Branch area and began dating when Nancy was in 10th grade and were married seven years later, right after Nancy's graduation from Michigan State University. While she taught at a few different area schools, including her own alma mater, West Branch High School, Bob was offered the opportunity to buy into the beer business where he was working. The business grew, expanded, and eventually divided by mutual agreement in 1978. The Griffins now owned the newly named Griffin Beverage Company, and by this time Nancy had left her teaching position to help run and grow the business. Their son, Robert Jr., now runs the company after working closely with his father for several years. Headquartered in West Branch, the distributor has grown successfully with five locations.

“I remember holding a Christmas party at our home with about 14 other people, including spouses. As we grew the business over the years, we needed to add warehouses, more trucks, and of course, more employees,” says Nancy. “Bob and I always had the desire to share our blessings with our community, and worked hard together for many years to build what enabled us to give back. Every gift is still a joint effort.”

Nancy became involved with the North Central Michigan Community Foundation (NCMCF) nearly 15 years ago as a board and committee member, acting as an avid ambassador and encouraging others to use the Foundation to support their communities in perpetuity. Now, several funds bear the generosity and involvement of Nancy and Bob, shaped by their passion for family, community and faith.

At the heart of Nancy's favorite causes is family. As it is for many, church is an extension of family, and St. Joseph Catholic Church in West Branch was the religious base for the Griffins. It was where Nancy and Bob have been lifelong members; where they received all their Holy Sacraments, including marriage; and is the



church in which their children (Lori and Robert Jr.) were raised.

In 2020, Nancy followed through with her and her husband's plan to open the Bob and Nancy Griffin Fund for St. Joseph Catholic Church to support the place and religious community that has been such an integral part of their lives.

"Through my involvement with NCMCF, Bob and I came to understand the ongoing value of endowed funds and were comfortable with the organization, and we decided we wanted to give back to our parish," says Nancy. "We believe the Community Foundation has high standards, and that made us feel it is a safe place to put donations. We liked that we could tailor how it would be used, and we loved the idea that the fund will go on 'forever', even after we are gone."

Nancy and her husband have also established the Bob and Nancy Griffin Donor Advised Fund, the Griffin Beverage Scholarship Fund, and the Esther and F.A. Diebold Memorial Endowment Fund in honor of Nancy's grandparents, which supports the West Branch Girl Scouts.

And Nancy is thankful to others who have established funds at the Community Foundation because, as often is the case, what is close to our own heart is also important to others. Once a fund has been established at the Community Foundation, anyone can give to it at any time, and in any amount.

"These funds help all of us to support a cause without any one person needing to give a large amount," says Nancy.

The Orioles Forever West Branch High School (WBHS) Alumni Scholarship Fund is one of which Nancy is particularly proud to be involved. WBHS was closed when Rose City and West Branch schools consolidated in the 1960s. She and other alumni wanted to commemorate their alma mater and support local students in the process. In 2006, Nancy and Ronald Schneider, a fellow alumnus, approached the WBHS Alumni Board with the idea of creating an endowed scholarship fund; but when the board was not in favor of pursuing the idea, Ronald and Nancy joined forces to make it happen on their own.

"We felt many of the WBHS alumni were in a position to give back to their 'starter community', and by the end of that year, by word of mouth, e-mail and mailing, about \$10,000 was donated by many alumni, and they have continued to support the fund over the years," says Nancy.

It took two years for the scholarship fund to generate enough for the newly-formed Orioles Forever Advisory Committee to award one \$500 award. Today, that fund has grown to over \$250,000 and has awarded nearly \$46,000 in scholarships to 72 students from Ogemaw County.

While helping the next generation with their futures, Nancy also believes strongly in the importance of preserving the past. She and Bob were very involved in the Ogemaw County Historical Museum's move to its current location, helping with renovations and fundraising. She says they also actively encouraged the board to use money from the sale of their former building to start an endowment fund for the Museum's needs, and ensure that current and future generations have the opportunity to embrace local history.

"I think people need to know what earlier generations have done to make possible what is here today," says Nancy. "Perhaps there were some mistakes made, (proving that we are all human), but most people were just trying to do their best to make conditions better for themselves, their families and their communities. Those things directly affected what is here and happening today, and what is happening today will affect future generations."

The Ogemaw County Historical Museum board decided to start a fund in 2015. Through community donations and fundraising efforts, the fund has grown to over \$80,000 in assets. Nancy has supported the fund through personal donations, and has voluntarily managed the organization's Giving Tuesday Northeast Michigan campaign for the last three years, encouraging more community donations. Though the Griffins did not establish this fund, Nancy continues to be a champion for it because she believes in its importance.

Nancy is a fine example of a philanthropist who gives not only of resources, but of her time, her energy, and her talents. Her drive to make things happen for her community through the power of collective giving is certainly leaving its mark. ✦



Beach and Kellie Hall

True Hearts for “Home”

When giving back comes from the heart, we find stories like that of Beach and Marianne (better known as Kellie) Hall. Rogers City has been their adopted hometown for almost 30 years, and they are deeply supportive of their community. With hearts for education, the environment, history, and health care, they have partnered with the Community Foundation to set the stage for preserving some of Rogers City’s best assets, as well as recognizing what the community and region lacks, and laying the foundation to address some of those needs.

“We think it’s important to give back,” says Beach. “We are all responsible for doing what we can to make our communities a better place.”

Beach and Kellie met at Carleton College in 1949 and were married five years later. They had three children, Ken, David and Veronica. While on a sailing excursion to the North Channel, Beach and Kellie discovered the lovely port town of Rogers City. They always knew they wanted to retire to “a real town” rather than a retirement community, and Rogers City fit the bill perfectly. They loved the marina that first welcomed them to Rogers City; they enjoyed the local theater for its movies and cultural events; and appreciated that there was an active Presbyterian church there. They also sought a place where they could find an affordable home on the lake. In 1982, they bought that perfect home and rented it out until they officially retired to Rogers City ten years later.

“It’s a nice, small town – our adopted community. We’ve lived here longer than we’ve lived anywhere,” says Beach. “I think it’s even better now than when we first moved here.”





As new Rogers City residents, Beach and Kellie immersed themselves in the community. Beach ran for Rogers City Mayor and served for 12 years. Just a few years after moving to the area, he became involved with the Community Foundation for Northeast Michigan as a board member, serving as President in 2003. He is also involved on the boards of MidMichigan Health-Alpena, Alpena Community College Foundation, Thunder Bay Community Health Services, Presque Isle District Library, and Friends of Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary. Kellie says she is a “professional volunteer”, now giving time to the missions of Westminster Presbyterian Church and Carleton College.

Supporting the community they love, helping to sustain the best of it, and planning for its future has been the cornerstone of their philanthropic involvement with CFNEM. The couple has established several funds benefitting a range of needs in ways that make it a better place all-around.

The Rogers City Marina is the first place the Halls landed when they discovered Rogers City. They see the Marina, which is owned by the City, as an important community asset, greeting travelers by water, and providing a place for community members to enjoy the shoreline and Lake Huron. Another part of the community that added to their enjoyment over the years is the Rogers City Theater – a local landmark now owned by the Presque Isle District Library, and is a hub of community activities.

“You don’t have to have a million dollars to make your gift worthwhile,” says Kellie. “When you’re able to give back to your community, it’s a win-win.”

In 2019, as the Halls were working on the establishment of new funds to support the marina and theater, their son Ken passed away unexpectedly at the age of 60. Ken was a retired Navy officer, and then served as a civilian employee of the U.S. Strategic Command. Because the new funds the Halls were establishing coincided with their son’s interests, they decided to name them after Ken to memorialize and honor him. At the end of 2019, they officially established the Kenneth Hall Memorial Rogers City Marina Fund to enhance visitors’ experiences at the marina and maintain its adjacent Lakeside Park; and the Kenneth Hall Memorial Rogers City Theater Fund, to support the theater while it is under its present ownership.

The Halls say they choose to give through CFNEM because it is local, successful and easy to work with, and have chosen to be members of CFNEM’s Legacy Society, leaving a planned gift from their estate.

“Northeast Michigan needs its Community Foundation, and the community needs funds for grants,” says

Beach. "It's a good use of our funds; our heirs don't need it; and it provides continuous support for what matters most to us."

Along the lines of planning for the future, and through Beach's involvement with the health care system both in his career and retirement, the Halls recognized a desperate need for medical professionals in northeast Michigan. They witnessed promising individuals going away to school and not coming back. With a deep hope of inspiring medical students to return home to serve northeast Michigan, the Halls created the Hall Presque Isle/MidMichigan Medical Center Alpena Medical Scholarship Fund for students from their county studying in the field of human medicine. To date, this fund has awarded \$12,000 in scholarships.

Additionally, Beach's terms as mayor and the couple's community involvement led them to realize that Rogers City needed opportunities for arts and cultural events. As a result, they established the Hall Fund for Rogers City Arts and Education. They also started the Westminster Presbyterian Church Endowment Fund specifically to help the church fund its mission efforts; as well as the Beach and Marianne Hall Donor Advised Fund, which can provide funds for needs throughout the world.

"God has blessed our lives," says Kellie. "We wanted to bless as many others as we could." ✦

Community Foundation Legacy Society

Legacy Society members are those who have included the Community Foundation for Northeast Michigan or one of our affiliate foundations in their estate plan. Some of these gifts have been received, while others are planned gifts.

Michael Ableidinger and
Esther Hines Ableidinger
Anonymous
Carl O. Basel
Richard and Jeannine Boyce
Marion Briggs-Lilley
Judith Helen Burns
Robert Chater
Mary Jane Chevis
Jerry and Marge Cotter
William and Lillian Davis
Margot Dorn Dutcher
Wayne and Barbara Frantz
Dale E. Goupell
Robert and Jacquelyn Granum
George Gravert
Karen Habermehl
Mabel Hager
Beach and Marianne Hall
William P. Harris

Aleene Adams Helvey
Georgene Hildebrand
James and Loretta Howard
Carl and Christine Huebner
Ila C. Jones
Bernard Kanthack
Jennie V. Kerr
Betty Krueger
Ann M. Kuntz
Bernie and Nancy Lamp
Marion E. Lamy
Tom and Mary Lappan
Dorothy K. Leitch
Dr. Jack Leopard
August and Peggy Matuzak
Chris and Julie McCoy
Dorothy S. Miller
Ann Skillman Moore
Neva M. Nelson

Eugene Nemeth
Teddie and Zelma Odum
Herbert A. Palmer
Dee Brown Perry
Lucas and Janet Pfeiffenberger
Joseph P. Pinson
Glen and Sharon Reed
Philip L. Richards
Terri Rondeau
Helen Sanecki
Robert E. Smith
Charles L. Snyder
Alvin B. Somers
C. Fred and Olive Steele
Steven Wilson
Robert Wisener
Dr. Carl and Kathleen Woloszyk
James A. Zavislak
Dolly and William Zeller

5% for the Future

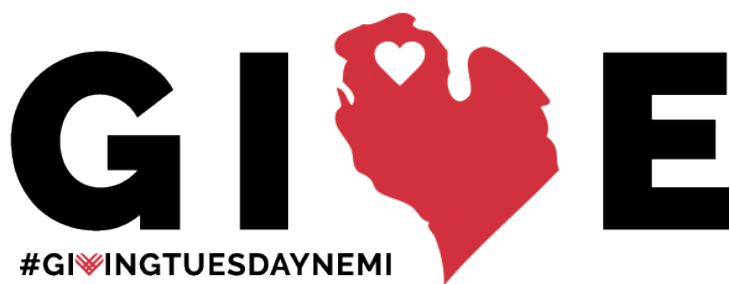
Over the next 30 years, northeast Michigan residents are estimated to transfer over \$16 billion to the next generation. Let's not let all of that leave our communities.

If every person who calls northeast Michigan "home" gave just 5% of their estate to the Community Foundation, the results could mean over \$42 million in annual grant funding for our communities by 2060. Wow! That's a huge number for a pretty small commitment. We can do it.

We believe that everyone can be a philanthropist; and that if we all give just a little bit of ourselves, it will mean big things for our region. And all for good.

Let us be your partner. We can help you give purpose to your passion, in the way that works best for you.





Giving Tuesday NE MI... Gifts that Mean a Whole Lot

The global giving movement of Giving Tuesday has become an exponentially growing phenomenon, bringing people together to give, do good, and rally around a community or cause.

Locally, that same growth is helping our nonprofits through the Community Foundation's Giving Tuesday Northeast Michigan campaign.

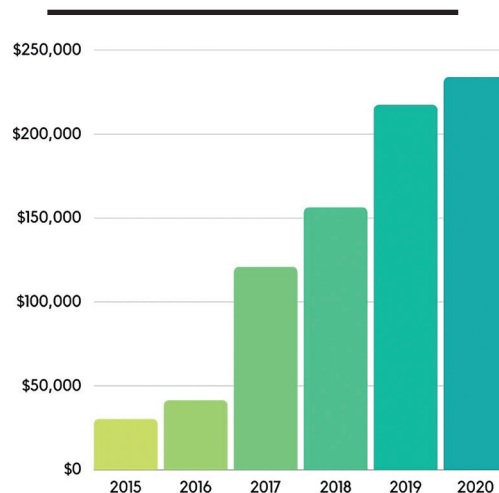
"Even in 2020, with all the challenges our community faced, we were astounded that so many generous people gave, increasing the day's total yet again," said CFNEM Executive Director Patrick Heraghty. "This is a testament to the movement itself, and to the passion behind the great nonprofits serving our communities."

Each year, on the Tuesday following Thanksgiving, Giving Tuesday follows the popular shopping days of Black Friday and Cyber Monday as an opportunity to give instead of spend. For a 24-hour period during the Giving Tuesday Northeast Michigan campaign, donors flock to the CFNEM website to make a gift to one or more of the nonprofits participating in the campaign.

Christine Hitch, CFNEM Marketing Communications Director, says that many local nonprofits have really upped their social media promotion of the online event with interesting posts, videos with stories



Local nonprofits have worked hard promoting their organization's participation in Giving Tuesday. From top to bottom, Thunder Bay Theatre raises over \$14,000 in 2018's campaign; Northeast Michigan Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative features outdoor education; and Huron Humane Society encourages donations to help furry friends.





Boys & Girls Club of Alpena

about their organization’s impact, and shared stories of people who benefit from the nonprofit’s mission.

Adding to the fun is Grant, the Giving Tuesday Golden Goose, which is awarded each year to the nonprofit raising the most funds in 24 hours. In 2020, that honor went to the Boys and Girls Club of Alpena, which raised just over \$24,000.

After seeing the Northeast Michigan Women’s Giving Circle, Thunder Bay Theatre, and the Alpena County Animal Facility win The Goose (pictured above), Boys and Girls Club Executive Director Brad Somers hoped 2020 would be their year.

“Each year the support has increased, and we have been close to the top spot and giving Grant the Goose a home at the Club. 2020 was a challenging year in many ways, but as a nonprofit you learn to adapt and find the silver lining to continue the community work that you strongly believe in,” says Somers. “The members put a lot of effort into helping us create videos and testimonials and made it their goal to give Grant the Goose a new home at the Club. It was so uplifting to see young people come together and be part of something bigger than themselves. This event helped instill confidence in our young people and allowed them to set a goal and see it come to fruition. I cannot thank everyone who supported enough for their donations, allowing a new generation to see how important our community is, and how we can come together to help those that need it.” ✦



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Since 1974, the Community Foundation for Northeast Michigan has helped those who care about our communities to turn their passion into purpose, and to create a story through their charitable giving. Through the generosity of our donors, and the carefully-guided investment strategy of CFNEM and its affiliate foundations, we are able to provide critical funding throughout our service area.

We look forward to telling generations-worth of stories from our communities, all in support of the places and people we love.

Stories are meant to be shared.

Visit cfnem.org to learn more.