Today’s Special
GIVING BACK WITH A SCOOP OF THANKS!

BLACK RIVER FALLS AREA FOUNDATION

SERVING OUR COMMUNITIES SINCE 1986

2017 ANNUAL REPORT

Black River Falls Area Foundation
Thanks to everyone who has supported the Black River Falls Area Foundation over the years, and special thanks for your help to our community, through the Foundation, in 2017. We have many generous people and here are some of the things your donations accomplished.

**FRIENDS of the Foundation**

Donate each year and 100% of these donations are awarded in grants the following year. The $27,725 donated in 2017 will be used toward the funding of grants shown on pages 10 and 11 of this Annual Report.

The Education Enrichment Fund had a wonderful year in 2017. BRF-EEF is dedicated to enhancing the educational experiences of BRF School District students. It does so by funding purchases of equipment and supplies, requested by teachers and staff, which are not available through the school budget. In 2017, $17,000 of assistance was given and this year that amount increased to $20,000.

The big event which made 2017 a wonderful year for the BRF-EEF was the challenge issued by Al and Jeanette Lahmayer. They donated $25,000 to EEF and an additional $25,000 if BRF-EEF could match that amount in donations from the community. Donors doubled the challenge amount, raising $52,771! The BRF-EEF balance now stands just short of $500,000! Thanks to Al and Jeanette, BRF-EEF fund drive organizers, Mary Jo Radcliffe, Lori Chown, Marilyn Hagen, and all the BRF-EEF donors.

**Worker Retraining:** In January, 2018, the chief of BlackRock, the largest investment company in the world, with six trillion dollars of assets, announced they will be closely watching how well managers of companies, whose stocks BlackRock owns, are doing to address society’s future critical issues that governments are failing to address. One of the four crucial issues is worker retraining. This is a major issue your Foundation has worked on, together with Western Technical College (WTC), for two years. It will continue to be a major focus for us in coming years as well.

In 2017, the Foundation provided 18 Technical College IMPACT Scholarships to county applicants. The majority were awarded to former high school graduates currently in the workforce, who recognized they needed technical education to earn good paying jobs. (See page 3.)

**Scholarships:** In 2017, we awarded $44,750 to 32 recipients attending four year colleges, and $7,000 to 5 students attending technical college, for a total of $51,750 invested in the education of 37 area students. However, over the last decade or more, both tuition costs and student debt have increased significantly. Foundation Trustees and existing scholarship donors discussed these increases, and most donors agreed to increase their annual scholarship awards to $2,000 or more. We very much appreciate the generosity of these donors, as will the future recipients. Thank you scholarship donors!

**A New Animal Shelter** was another 2017 Foundation focus. The Humane Society requested the Foundation’s assistance with the project. More information on the animal shelter is contained on page 3. Watch our website for updates as this exciting project progresses.

**Operational Changes** are needed as the Foundation grows. A number were made in 2017.

- A new laptop was purchased. In addition, backup procedures and disaster recovery protection processes are being improved to keep Foundation records safe and secure.
- The Foundation reached out to WTC for help with the Foundation Website. Jacob McAllister, a student in WTC’s web design program, used the Foundation website as his class project. He has done a phenomenal job! Our new website was operational June 1, 2018. We continue to review, modify and add information. We plan to have the project completed by August 1st. Please remember to check it out! A huge “Thank You” to Jacob, and to Mike Swenson of WTC for coordinating the project.
- Improving our scholarship application, review, approval and notification processes has been a Foundation focus for the past several years. This year, with a great deal of help from BRF School District Superintendent and Foundation Trustee Shelly Severson, we were able to automate the majority of the process for the first time. Students applied and submitted their applications directly on line. Members of the BRF Scholarship Selection Committee reviewed applications in a digital format, saving much paper and time for school district counseling staff. Feedback from students, school staff, and parents has been very positive. Our thanks to Shelly and staff members of the High School guidance department, Sue Leadholm and Karen Kutzer, for your dedication to this project.

Finances to support the activities discussed in this Annual Report are provided by earnings from our assets and donations from our supporters. Both were exceptionally good in 2017. Earnings on assets for the year were $633,000, a new record! Donations from Foundation supporters totaled over $500,000! Major donors who contributed to this total were Tim & Kay Finch, the Hoffman Family, Al & Jeanette Lahmayer, Leon & Betsy Janssen, Jackson County Bank and Gil Homstad. A complete list of all donations made to the Foundation, and the funds to which they were directed, can be found on page 8. Total assets at year end, 12/31/2017, were $5,913,000, a record high!

A sincere THANK YOU to each and every one of our donors. We truly appreciate your support and the faith you place in the Foundation to use your donations wisely. (On page 9, see how the Foundation compares with other Non-Profit Organizations.) In 2018, the focus of the Foundation will remain on scholarships, both technical and four-year, as well as construction of the new animal shelter. These are much needed, but also expensive, projects. Can you help? Consider donating your time, talents, or money!
The Jackson County Humane Society (JCHS) Animal Shelter Project is in its final push toward approval and funding. With the help of Matthew and Lindsey (Ahl) Wilkus, of Wilkus Architects in Hopkins, MN, the project has taken on a new life. The new location for the shelter is on County K, behind the Veterans Park and across from Jackson County’s Health & Human Services building. The location, building features and sensible design plan, allow for future expansion to the south end of the property if needed. In addition, this location is closer to schools and will have better visibility from Hwy 54.

The estimated cost of the building is still just that – an estimate but the formal bid process should commence by summer’s end. Civil engineering started June 4th. The goal is to break ground Spring 2019.

Trustee Ashley Ahl is leading the Foundation’s collaboration with JCHS to assist in their final stretch of fundraising efforts. To date, JCHS has raised $471,000. By our best approximations, that leaves the group with $100,000-$200,000 left to raise. The full support of the County has been a promising turn of events and we’re excited to see this project come to fruition.

Please watch the Foundation’s new website for updates as this wonderful project progresses.

2018 Focus

There is a definite shortage of skilled workers in Wisconsin. This shortage is projected to continue and it seems that in the coming years it will continue to be difficult to meet the needs of employers. In 2016, the Foundation worked with WTC Foundation to provide Impact Scholarships to working age adults and high school students from Jackson County seeking to further their education at a technical college in Wisconsin.

- **2016** – Foundation Donors contributed $140,000 to create 35 two-year scholarships, providing each student with $2,000 a year for two years. We are very grateful to the generous donors that made this possible.
- **2017** – Eighteen of these scholarships were awarded, 16 to working age adults and two to graduating seniors.
- **2018** – So far in 2018, 16 of the remaining 17 scholarships have been awarded. Fifteen were awarded to working age adults and one to a graduating senior. There is one scholarship still available for any student applying for admission in the Fall Semester of 2018, or Spring Semester of 2019.
- **2019** – Several Foundation Donors have expressed an interest in continuing to support this project and have given funds to create future scholarships. Thanks to their generosity we have a good start on raising approximately the same number of scholarships (17-20) for students in 2019. If this is something you are interested in helping with, please contact the Foundation office!

The Impact Scholarships are accomplishing two primary goals. First, meeting the demand of businesses for skilled workers helps to ensure that quality jobs and careers can remain available in our region. This both provides attractive employment opportunities for area residents, and helps attract new people to our communities, but also helps local employers find and retain skilled workers. Second, the Impact Scholarships are helping local people to acquire the skills that they need to secure a good job, build a career, and improve their lives.

If you know a working age adult, or high school senior who would benefit from an Impact Scholarship, please invite them to contact the Foundation office. We will be happy to assist them with the application process.
Financial Statement
(For the years ending December 31, 2016 and 2017)

REVENUE
Contributions $542,184 $381,285
Investment Return $633,246 $278,718
TOTAL REVENUE $1,175,430 $660,003

EXPENDITURES
Grants $224,022 $236,350
Scholarships $127,750 $105,250
Support Services $41,573 $37,847
TOTAL EXPENDITURES $393,345 $379,447

Change in Net Assets
Net Assets at Beginning $280,556* $4,850,870*
Net Assets at Year End $782,085 $5,131,426

*Modified by Accountants

Donor Advised, Specified Term & Scholarship Funds

Donor Advised Funds
FAMILY FUNDS
- James & Carol Dougherty Family Fund
- Tim & Kay Finch Family Fund
- Peter & Jone Hoffman Fund
- Gil & Alice Homstad Fund
- Mary Van Gorden Charitable/Library History Room Funds

MEMORIAL FUNDS
- Mike & Mona Anderson Memorial Fund
- Kay Brauner Memorial Fund
- Stanley Held Memorial Fund
- Erwin & Thelma Homstad Memorial Fund
- Grace Webb Memorial Fund
- Katherine Wold Memorial Fund

COMMUNITY FUNDS
- Alma Center Area Community Fund
- Black River Area Youth Fund
- City of BRF – Field of Honor Fund
- City of BRF – Public Library Fund
- Developmental Disabilities Fund
- Foundation Trail Maintenance Fund
- Hoffman Aquatic Park Maintenance Fund
- Incubator Economic Development Fund
- Lunda Community Park Maintenance Fund
- Mills Park Maintenance Fund
- Rotary Skate Park Maintenance Fund
- Skyline – Clubhouse/Golf Course/Legacy Funds

ORGANIZATION FUNDS
- Animal Shelter Project
- Boys & Girls Club Fund
- BRF Educational Enrichment General/Music/M.C. Schmallenberg Funds
- BRF Rotary Club Fund
- Jackson County Humane Society Fund

LOCAL BUSINESS COMMUNITY SERVICE FUNDS
- Black River Memorial Hospital Fund
- Hoffman Construction Fund
- Jackson County Bank Fund

Scholarship Funds
CREATED BY ORGANIZATIONS & BUSINESSES
- BRF Alumni Association Scholarship Fund
- BRF High School Store Scholarship Fund
- Jackson County Bank Scholarship Fund
- Krohn Clinic Physicians Scholarship Fund
- Lions/Rotary Scholarship Fund

CREATED BY INDIVIDUALS & FAMILIES
- David & Marilyn Hoffman Scholarship Fund
- Gerald & Nancy Laabs Scholarship Fund
- Mary Perry Fine Arts Scholarship Fund
- Elizabeth Janssen Nursing Scholarship Fund
- Gene & Judy Ransom Scholarship Fund

MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIPS
- Allan Brenengen Memorial Scholarship Fund
- Thomas R. Gilles Memorial Scholarship Fund
- Don Halverson Memorial Scholarship Fund
- Duane & Lavina Hoffman Memorial Scholarship Fund
- Alice Homstad Memorial Scholarship Fund
- Leland & Jeanette Larson Memorial Scholarship Fund
- Ralph & Alice Lund Memorial Scholarship Fund
- Kelly Mauck Memorial Scholarship Fund
- Philip & Aldena Meyer Memorial Scholarship Fund
- Rick Mills Memorial Scholarship Fund
- Dean Nortman Memorial Scholarship Fund
- Meghan Powell Memorial Scholarship Fund
- Lt. Terry Preston Memorial Scholarship Fund
- Dustin Rozmenoski Memorial Scholarship Fund
- Kristin Wood Fine Arts Memorial Scholarship Fund

Specified Term Scholarship Funds
- Richard Hilliker Scholarship Fund
- Robert (Knuckles) Johnson Memorial Scholarship Fund
- James Jr. & Anna Klir Memorial Scholarship Fund
- Pearl (Toddy) Porath Memorial Scholarship Fund
- WTC Impact Scholarship Pass Through Fund

Grant Applications
The Black River Falls Area Foundation welcomes grant applications from non-profit organizations serving the Black River Falls Area. The grant application period is from March 1 through April 15. The announcement of award recipients and the distribution of funds are done in June. For information about grants go to www.brfareafoundation.org or contact us at:
Black River Falls Area Foundation
PO Box 99
Black River Falls, WI 54615
Telephone: 715-284-3113
E-mail: brfareafoundation@centurylink.net
Or contact any member of the Foundation’s Board of Trustees.
The Board of Trustees is the governing body of the Black River Falls Area Foundation. It is responsible for overseeing the investment of donor funds and the distribution of grants in accordance with donors’ wishes. Trustees serve without compensation and are selected because of their judgment, integrity, community involvement and understanding of philanthropic needs. They serve a three-year term of office with a maximum of three consecutive three-year terms. The Chairman, Vice Chairman and Treasurer can serve additional terms.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Black River Falls Area Foundation is to enhance the quality of life in the Black River Falls Area. We work to realize that goal with the support of individuals, families, businesses and organizations that share this commitment. We achieve this by:

• Providing a vehicle for donors with diverse community interests;
• Protecting donations through prudent investing and stewardship;
• Serving as a resource and catalyst to accomplish community projects;
• Expanding our communities’ endowment by encouraging philanthropy.

We address a broad range of community goals rather than focusing on one particular issue. In this way, we are able to meet changing needs and provide support to the people who live and work in the Black River Falls Area.

The Board of Trustees

Gil Homstad*
Chairman

David Hoffman*
Vice Chairman

Kay Finch
Secretary

Michael Dougherty
Treasurer

Ashley Ahl

Jim Bible

Brad Chown

Kristi Hanson

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David Millis
Mary O’Brien
Dennis Richards*
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Fred Stai
Tom Mills—
Executive Secretary from 1985 to 1999

The Foundation’s History Book is available at no cost. Contact Julie Murray at the Foundation office brfareafoundation@centurylink.net or 715-284-3113.
Al & Jeanette Lahmayer Award Recipients

The Trustees of the Foundation have selected Al and Jeanette Lahmayer as recipients of this year’s Special People Award. Al and Jeanette have been true partners in their life journey, their personal lives, in part of Al’s professional career, and in their community endeavors. We thought you would enjoy learning about their life history in Black River Falls.

Now in their tenth decade, Al and Jeanette’s early years saw them entering the age of self-awareness in the great depression of the thirties, Jeanette in Kentucky Appalachia and Al in Milwaukee. Their lives were much impacted by W.W.II. Al was inducted into the Army in the later stages of the War, and Jeanette went to work as a clerk typist on an Army base in Indianapolis. It was at that Army base that Al met his blue-eyed Kentucky Wonder Woman!

Their courtship lasted several years, while Al pursued first his college degree and then graduate school in Optometry. Together, their life ambition was a modest one. Marriage, a family, and a nice home—the American dream. Al had chosen Optometry as a career, because he could be a solo practitioner in a small town, something that appealed to both he and Jeanette. “I often say, I’ve done two small things in my early life that were the key to everything, I chose Optometry for a career, and I asked Jeanette to be my wife and partner.”

In the rest of this article, Al shares their story and reminisces about their community involvement over the years.

We got married midway through Optometry school in Chicago. After graduation, my first job offer arrived in the form of a phone call from Dr. Robert Krohn in Black River Falls. We took the “400” train to Merrillan where we were met by a group including Dr. Bob and Tom Mills. A bit of Kentucky drawl and a smile from Jeanette, and they hired both of us. Jeanette as a secretary, and me as the guy who was with her.

Ten years later, the Krohn Clinic reorganized, forming a medical partnership. I purchased the eye care portion of the practice and began my independent practice. I built my first Eye Clinic on the corner of 2nd and Main Streets. Thirty years later, I had the same architect design the Eye Clinic next to the Hospital for myself and my son, Bruce, who was now my partner. Sixteen years later, after forty-six years of practice, I retired. Later, Dr. Bruce merged the practice with the Gundersen Clinic and just recently began a well-earned retirement himself.

When asked to be an officer in the Wisconsin Optometric Association, I saw an opportunity to repay something to Optometry, which had done a lot for me. In 1973, Optometrists were not yet allowed to use drugs in their practices. This was handicapping our ability to diagnose pathology, and went against the public’s best interest. Along with other doctors, we began the effort to change this Wisconsin law. It took five years. In 1978, the Governor signed a Bill rectifying this situation at our convention. Also that year, I had the honor of being President of our Association and being recognized as “Optometrist of the Year”.

In 1952, we were blessed with our first son, Bruce. In 1953, Mark joined our family and in 1960, our daughter, Ruth Ellen, completed our dream team. Our second son, Mark, was a beautiful baby, but when he was about six months old, we noticed his motor development was behind schedule. This is when we learned that Mark would be a special needs child. Since that day, a portion of our life has been involved with the field of people with disabilities. At the time, there were no services to help these folks. Wisconsin had no chapter of laws that covered disabled citizens, and Jeanette and I were asked to do a survey about the needs of the disabled in Jackson County. It wasn’t until 1960 when John F. Kennedy, who had a developmentally disabled sister, was elected President that national attention began to focus on the matter.

Jeanette and I wanted to get our kids out into the country, so in 1965 we sold our home in town and moved to a 180-acre farm. Two years later, Jeanette thought it was time to replace our decrepit farm house. She picked a quiet, private spot with a beautiful view for our new home. The site was some distance from the main road and our driveway cost more than the original farm did! We designed our dream home and as with the Eye Clinic, I was the general contractor. This was our home for over fifty years until we recently moved into Spaulding Place. In addition to the Eye Clinics and our home, Jeanette and I built a number of other buildings together including a small apartment building, and did several renovation projects together.

When Mark was nine years old, he had not yet been to school, as special education did not exist at that time. Jeanette took it upon herself to meet with then school Superintendent, Mel Schmallenberg about the situation. Mel knew Mark and believed he was certainly trainable and most likely educable. Superintendent Schmallenberg stated “We should have a class for these kids”.

In 1962, a class was started and taught by a former one-room school teacher, who did a marvelous job. Mark was the classes first pupil. This was the beginning of Special Ed in the Black River Falls school district and eventually led to the Special Ed teachers and classes we know today. More than fifty years later, Jeanette and I honored Mr. Schmallenberg’s foresight by donating $50,000 to a designated subfund of the BRF Education Enrichment Fund, managed by the BRF Area Foundation.
Mark lived at home until he was forty-two. He had seen his brother and sister leave to live their lives and he wanted to be on his own. At the same time, Jeanette and I had the concern universal to parents of children with disabilities, “Who will look after him when we are gone?” Jeanette and I developed a plan to build a special home for Mark and some of his friends where he could live permanently. The project involved many steps. (1) A non-profit organization called Halcyon House (meaning tranquil or peaceful) Habitat was formed. (2) Application for IRS approval for a 501(c)3 designation was obtained. (3) Architect Curt Biggar, who had known Mark since his birth, was obtained. (4) The city of BRF donated the building site. (5) Jeanette and I funded the project with much of our retirement savings. In 1996, Halcyon House, 745 N. 8th Street was completed. Mark and his friends each have separate apartments, and the project was a huge success.

In the early years, while working at Krohn Clinic, I often went to Neillsville to play golf with then-Clinic Manager Bill Wilcox. When we began we were not very good at the game. We played for years and gradually we got worse! Bill and I were golf partners for fifty-eight years and gradually we got worse! Bill was very good at the game. We played for years until Bill passed away. Over the years Bill and I talked about trying to start a golf course in Black River Falls. That idea was the seed that eventually grew into the Skyline Golf Course. Bill was President in 1956 during the construction of the course, and I was the President the following year when the course opened. Jeanette was secretary of the BRF Recreation Association when they originated the original nine-hole golf course, Al continues to support the golf course. Recently a major fund raising drive was held for the Skyline Golf Club. While the golf course itself was profitable, the clubhouse, used by organizations and individuals for hundreds of events each year, operated at a loss. When the Lahmayers were asked for a donation of $20,000 (the maximum being solicited), Al raised the ante by stating he and Jeanette would donate $50,000 if others would do the same! Others did, and the Lahmayers generous challenge resulted in $250,000 being donated by five families.

In addition to Halcyon House, the Lahmayers participated in MANY activities to assist those with disabilities, including both financial assistance and assistance with buildings to provide services for special needs individuals.

When Al comments that the balance of the BRF-EEF fund is now close to $500,000, he fails to mention that this is in large part a result of the Lahmayer donation challenge done last year. Al and Jeanette generously donated $25,000 to the fund, with a challenge that they would donate an additional $25,000 if the community would match that amount. A tremendous fund raising effort was put forth and the community responded very generously, far exceeding the $25,000 goal.

Al briefly alludes to his involvement in getting a correctional facility located in BRF. In reality, Al was one of three people responsible for bringing this facility and the subsequent jobs to our community. Al Lahmayer, Tom Mills and then-State Senator Rod Moen spearheaded this project and the results to our community have been immeasurable.

Thank you Al and Jeanette. Your bridge buddy is correct - YOU DID IT IN SPADES!
Alma Center Area Community Fund
- In 2017, donors gave $7,920 to the Alma Center Area Community Fund. These donations have been acknowledged directly by the Alma Center Area Community organization. Thank you to all who have and continue to support this worthwhile project.

Alma Center/Humbird/Merrillan Education Enrichment Fund
- In 2017, donors gave $5,324 to the ACHM Education Enrichment Fund. These donations have been acknowledged directly by the ACHM-EEF committee. Thank you to all who have and continue to support this worthwhile organization.

Mike & Mona Anderson Memorial Fund
- AXA Financial (In Honor of Todd Anderson)

BRF Area Foundation General Fund
- Jon & Maureen Homstad (In Memory of Gay Gardipee)
- Richard & Sara Larson (In Memory of Lillian Stetzer & Vernon Jacobson)
- Link Media Wisconsin
- Ann Peterson

BRF-Education Enrichment Funds
- In 2017, donors gave $166,716 to the three BRF Education Enrichment Funds. These donations have been acknowledged directly by the BRF-EEF committee. Thank you to all who have and continue to support this worthwhile organization.

Skyline Funds
- In 2017, donors gave $91,675 to the three Skyline Funds. These donations have been acknowledged directly by the Skyline committee. Thank you to all who have and continue to support this worthwhile organization.

Grace Webb Memorial Fund
- Jane E. Lokken
- Dennis & Kathleen Racki
- Beryl W. Spencer
- Gladys Webb

In Memory of Dorothy Fields
- Dr. Jerry & Lori Kitowski

In Honor of Gay Gardipee
- Black River Memorial Foundation Trail Maintenance Fund

Robert Mubarak
- Michael & Betty Lind
- Laurel Sackett Meek
- Robert & Loretta Miazga
- Robert Mubarak
- Barry & Julie Murray
- Nyla Musser
- Judy Radcliffe
- Douglas & Barbara Radke
- Robert & Candace Reed
- Margaret Rewald
- Andrew & Brenda Schlafer
- Tom & Kathy Tomter
- Troy & Marianne Torkelson
- Tim & Sandy Tranberg
- Juleen Tredinnick
- Ed & Diane Vlach
- Harvey & Diane Wood
- Ann Zillmer
- Kenworth Division
- Eau Claire Co-operative Oil Company
- Paccar Financial Corporation
- Wifi Accounting Firm

Dean Nortman Memorial Scholarship
- Margaret Mattson

Dustin Rozmenoski Memorial Scholarship
- Harold & Donna Frett

Thank You! Fund Donations  (June 1, 2017 to May 31, 2018)
The Black River Falls community has a rich history of coming together to support its own. One only has to drive through town to appreciate the many amenities we have, attend the Senior Award Night to be awed by the number of local scholarships awarded, or simply attend the Friends of the Foundation Luncheon, to recognize the generous spirit which our community does so well.

“When we give cheerfully and accept gratefully, everyone is blessed.” – Maya Angelou. This quote seems a fitting way to begin when talking about the Black River Falls Area Foundation (BRFAF). The Foundation, which has provided grants to over 100 different community organizations, is completely funded by the willingness of our community to give cheerfully, and as a result, everyone within the community is blessed by the outcome.

There is never a shortage of charities and organizations in need of funding, and when one chooses to give, it is important to give thoughtfully. One of the most critical considerations when choosing which organizations to support is the efficiency with which the charity will use your donation to fund the programs you want to support.

While this may seem like an overwhelming task for someone that simply wants to do good for others, there are many organizations that can help them review charities and assist with prioritizing both the efficiency of the organization, as well as the alignment with their interests. Charity Watch, www.charitywatch.org, founded 25 years ago as the American Institute of Philanthropy, is America’s most independent, assertive charity watchdog, and has developed a simple rating system and standards by which all charities can be measured and compared.

The Black River Falls Area Foundation strives to be as transparent as possible in its work. While we are not large enough to be on the Charity Watch website, we most definitely use the established standards to continually monitor our efficiency. The Foundation operates through its Board, which is a diverse group of Trustees all having the best interests of our community in the forefront.

While everyone would love to believe that 100% of each donation goes directly toward meeting the goals of the organization, this is not possible. The American Institute of Philanthropy’s (AIP) Top-Rated organizations keep overhead at 25% or less of their funds raised.

For the past six years, the BRFAF has operated with an average 6% overhead costs, an exceptional value, which ensures that 94% of all resources are available for grant and scholarship programming!

Another metric that is often utilized when evaluating the efficiency of a charity is the cost of raising $100. The AIP considers spending $35 or less for every $100 raised as a reasonable fundraising cost.

Again, the BRFAF would receive an A+ rating, spending an average over the past six years of a mere $2.15 for every $100 raised.

These charts visually represent the true value of a donation to the Black River Falls Area Foundation when compared to hundreds of national charity organizations.

The Foundation takes the responsibility to invest its money wisely and manage the donations carefully, very seriously. Doing so allows the Foundation to feel confident that the generosity of the donors is invested into the community in the most thoughtful ways possible. Thank you for your past donations and for considering the Black River Falls Area Foundation for your future investments in our continuing efforts to the community!
$149,000 awarded to 23 Local Non-Profit Organizations


Aptiv (f/k/a Riverfront): toward capital improvements of the main entrance at the Black River Falls facility. Partially sponsored by the Developmental Disabilities Fund.

Blair-Taylor School District; Band Department: toward the purchase of a Timpani drum set to replace the 30-year-old set. Fully sponsored by the Katherine Wold Memorial Fund.

Bolton Refuge House; Jackson County Outreach: create a Laundry Facility for the Transitional Living Program. Fully sponsored by the Gil & Alice Homstad Fund.

Boys & Girls Club of Jackson County: toward enhancement of the Academic Success programming. Fully sponsored by the Peter & Jone Hoffman Fund.

Black River Falls School District; Nexxus Program: toward construction of a school garden, pond and gazebo at the Gebhardt school. Fully sponsored by the BRF Youth Fund.

Black River Falls School District; Staff Training: offer the training program “7 Principles of Positive Psychology that Fuel Success and Performance at Work” to staff who face many challenges being in high stress service careers. Fully sponsored by the Katherine Wold Memorial Fund.

City of BRF; Police Department: to purchase a Smart Car for patrolling the Foundation Trail, Local Parks, Golf Cart Paths. Fully sponsored by BRF Area Foundation’s General Fund.

City of BRF; Public Library: to support the Summer Reading Program for youth, and to purchase Legos for the Lego Club II. Fully sponsored by the BRF Rotary Club Fund.

Friends of the Black River Falls Library: materials for the adult literacy program, to sponsor “2019 Jackson County Read” program, and toward an indoor golf tournament for children during summer programs. Fully sponsored by the Jackson County Bank Community Service Fund.

Hixton Volunteer Fire Department: toward the purchase of new Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus Packs. Partially sponsored by the Tim & Kay Finch Family Fund.

Jackson County Emergency Medical Association: to purchase 7 ResQPR Systems (one for each rescue vehicle) with carry cases. Fully sponsored by the Mary Van Gorden Charitable Fund.

Jackson County Division of Public Health; Car Seats: to purchase car seats for low income families and to train JCHHS employees on the proper installation of the car seats. Fully sponsored by the Katherine Wold Memorial Fund.

Jackson County Division of Public Health; Food Safety: to provide classes to educate people serving food to the public that are not required to have a license, such as at sporting events, churches, fraternal groups, etc.

Jackson County Humane Society: toward construction of a new animal shelter. Partially sponsored by the James & Carol Dougherty Family Fund.

Jackson County Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers: toward helping create awareness of the new “Time for You” program. Fully sponsored by the Stanley Held Fund.

Lutheran Social Services; Wazee House: to remodel the lower level of Wazee House to create and furnish a group room conducive to facilitating group curriculum sessions with clients. Fully sponsored by the Erwin & Thelma Holmstad Memorial Fund.

Skyline Golf Course: toward expenses incurred when the HVAC system at the Clubhouse was replaced. Fully sponsored by the Incubator Development Fund.

Together for Jackson County Kids - Strengthening Families Program: for meals, travel and advertising for the twelve-week program. Fully sponsored by the Peter & Jone Hoffman Fund.

Town of Brockway; Brockway Town Park: to purchase a surveillance system. Fully sponsored by the Gil & Alice Homstad Fund.

Village of Alma Center; AC Community Fire District: to update the lighting on the Fire Trucks. Fully sponsored by the Tim & Kay Finch Family Fund and the Mary Van Gorden Charitable Fund.

Village of Merrillan; First Responders: toward replacement of their 1998 Ambulance. Fully sponsored by the Tim & Kay Finch Family Fund.
**2018 Grant Recipients**

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**Donor Advised Grants**

$123,000 Awarded to 10 Recipients

**Foundation General Fund**

- Jackson County Historical Society, and
- Friends of the Black River both at the request of donors John & Nancy Mills Howard.

**Hoffman Aquatic Park Maintenance Fund**

- City of BRF for replacement of the Swimming Pool furnace.

**Peter & Jone Hoffman Fund**

- Boys & Girls Club of Jackson County for operating expenses in Black River Falls.
- BRF Area Foundation for 2018 Grants.
- BRF United Methodist Church for general operations.
- Gateway Council: Boy Scouts for Camp Decorah.
- Hazelden Foundation for admission payments for those in financial need.

**Mary Van Gorden Library Endowment Fund**

- BRF Library History Room for operating expenses.

**Grace Webb Memorial Donor Advised Fund**

- Jackson County Elementary School Libraries for materials to enhance children’s interest and love of reading.

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**Alma Center Area Community Grants**

$7,881 Awarded to 5 Recipients

**Alma Center Fire Dept:**

- Vehicle & Building entry equipment, Station 2 – Humbird Truck

**Alma Center First Responders:**

- Purchase 4 new pager/chargers to update technology

**Town of Garden Valley:**

- Funding for Commemorative Book, 150th Anniversary Fund Advertising, Refreshments

**Lincoln High School:**

- Upgrade/replace musical instruments for Jr./Sr Band Department

**Lincoln Elementary:**

- Purchase five iPads for use with STEAM robots

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**BRF Education Enrichment Grants**

$20,278 Awarded to 18 Recipients

**Band**

- New Concert Tuba

**Elementary/Middle**

- Middle School Choir Grant

**Forrest Street**

- Nonfiction Book Area For Eager Readers
- Update Social Manipulatives for Students
- Nonfiction Leveled Books for First Grade Team
- Lego Learning

**Gebhardt**

- Wood Shop

**High School**

- Implementing the 8 Mathematical Standards
- Swivel Robotic Platform Video
- Anti-Distraction Driving Campaign
- FCCLA Empty Bowls
- Phy Ed Audio Visual Cart

**Middle/High Schools**

- Spanish Library

**Red Creek**

- 5th Grade Math Manipulatives
- Alternative Seating for Wobble Chairs
- 3 Sisters Garden
- Flexible Seating Choices
- Sensory Room
Richard L. Hilliker Scholarship Fund

Richard L. Hilliker turned 80 on April 9, 2018. In honor of this milestone, a gathering of friends and family took place at the Del Bar in Lake Delton, to celebrate. The evening offered a chance for storytelling and the sharing of memories.

Richard’s children and their families also decided to give him a very special gift. They took advantage of one of the Foundation’s new options, Specified Term Scholarships, (See article below) to create a scholarship in his honor. Next year, a scholarship in the amount of $2,000 will be given to a graduating Senior or an Alumni of Black River Falls High School who is pursuing a career in Natural Resources, Environmental Science or Conservation. The children’s intention is to offer this scholarship annually in perpetuity.

Congratulations to Richard and THANK YOU to his children for commemorating the occasion by giving back to our community and for creating a Specified Term Scholarship!

Donors Take Advantage of New Options For Scholarship Donations

In addition to our Traditional Scholarship Fund the Foundation now offers two additional scholarship donation options:

- **Foundation Scholarship Fund**: Donors who desire to help with the rising costs of education may make a one-time donation of $100 or more to this fund. Please specify a Jackson County school if other than BRF.
- **Specified Term Scholarship**: This fund is designed for donations in amounts ranging from $2,000 to $24,000. Scholarship amounts are preset at $2,000 per year and the length of the scholarship term will be determined by the amount of the donation, or the scholarship may be funded annually. Donors creating this type of scholarship fund may name the fund, perhaps in honor of a loved one or as a memorial. In addition, donors may be involved in establishing the scholarship’s requirements and selection guidelines if they so desire.

Contact the Foundation for more information about these new options.

Gerald & Nancy Laabs Scholarship Fund

Jerry grew up in Curtis, Wisconsin, the son of a cheesemaker and a school teacher. Throughout his life, Jerry would often mention the Laabs Cheese Factories. Later in life, he and Nancy spent many hours researching the Laabs family genealogy. Jerry graduated from Tomah High School and UW-LaCrosse with a degree in Business and History. He remained a history buff throughout his life, focusing on the Civil War and the various battles that were fought during that time period. Jerry graduated from UW-Madison Law School in 1969. He was and remained an avid Wisconsin Badger sports fan. Jerry made many trips to Madison with his good friends, and as his boys grew it was common for Jerry, Marc and Jay to enjoy crisp fall afternoons watching the Badgers at Camp Randall. Jerry practiced law in Black River Falls for 32 years. He was committed to and cared about his clients. Many of his clients credited their success in part to Jerry’s advice and services. Jerry served as Jackson County Circuit Court Judge from 2002-2008. Judge Laabs genuinely cared about people and, knowing his decisions affected the lives of those before him, was thoughtful and deliberate in every decision he made. He also worked hard to develop and implement the County’s first treatment court program. Judge Laabs was very proud of this accomplishment and under his oversight, the treatment court was a success.

Nancy grew up in Black River Falls, the daughter of Lloyd and Virginia German. She graduated from Black River Falls Senior High School and UW-Eau Claire with a degree in Social Work. She was a social worker at Jackson County Health and Human Services, Family Heritage Care Center, and Ho-Chunk Nation Child and Family Services. Nancy is proud of the work her colleagues and she did to assist many people who were developmentally disabled move out of institutions and into their own homes with supportive services. She worked hard to enable people who were frail and elderly to remain living in their homes.

Jerry and Nancy raised two boys, Marc and Jay. It is said of most parents that their children are their pride and joy – that is an understatement for Jerry and Nancy. They thoroughly enjoyed raising their sons. Both Marc and Jay graduated from Black River Falls Senior High School. Marc and his wife, Amy, have two children: Beckett and Tatum. Jay and his wife, Katherine, have three children: Elizabeth, Andrew and William.

After Jerry’s retirement, he and Nancy spent the winter months in Arizona, highlighted by visits from family. They loved spending time with the grandkids. Jerry spoke of his grandchildren with the same pride and joy that he spoke of his own boys.

After Jerry’s passing, Nancy left Black River Falls to be closer to her family, and now enjoys the additional time with her sons, daughter-in-laws and grandchildren. Community was important to both Jerry and Nancy. Jerry helped set up a number of non-profits in Jackson County including the Black River Child Care Center, Jackson County Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers and the Black River Falls Tennis Association to mention a few. Both were involved in various service organizations to benefit the community. Jerry and Nancy both taught Sunday School at Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Education enabled Jerry and Nancy to pursue careers that were difficult, but rewarding. For this reason, Jay and Katherine have chosen to honor them with an annual scholarship to be awarded to a BRF graduating senior attending UW-Madison. Thank you Jay and Katherine for establishing a Traditional Scholarship Fund.
A Scholarship Fund created by gifts from individuals, organizations and businesses, awards education grants to selected area students. The following 46 scholarships totaling $72,000 were awarded in 2018.

### Black River Falls Alumni Association Scholarship ($1,500)
**Alice Homstad Memorial Scholarship-Year 2 of 2 ($2,500)**
- **Nikolas Pardoe** (2016 BRF Graduate)
- Black River Falls
- Attending: UM Twin Cities – College of Science & Engineering
- Course of Study: Major-Aerospace Engineering and Mechanics; Minor-Computer Science
- Career Path: NASA

### Black River Falls Alumni Association Scholarship ($1,500)
**Alice Homstad Memorial Scholarship-Year 2 of 2 ($2,500)**
- **Nikolas Pardoe** (2016 BRF Graduate)
- Black River Falls
- Attending: UM Twin Cities – College of Science & Engineering
- Course of Study: Major-Aerospace Engineering and Mechanics; Minor-Computer Science
- Career Path: NASA

### Black River Falls Alumni Association Scholarship ($1,500)
**David & Marilyn Hoffman Scholarship ($2,000)**
- **Dean Nortman Memorial Scholarship ($500)**
- **Natalie Gawron** (2016 BRF Graduate)
- Black River Falls
- Attending: UW Green Bay
- Course of Study: Human Biology with emphasis in exercise science
- Career Path: Doctorate in Physical Therapy

### Black River Falls Alumni Association Scholarship ($1,500)
**Kacey Koenigs** (2016 BRF Graduate)
- Black River Falls
- Attending: University of St. Thomas
- Course of Study: Bachelors in Accounting & Masters of Science in Accountancy
- Career Path: Auditor at a CPA Firm

### Black River Falls Alumni Association Scholarship ($1,500)
**Alisanne Dunneisen** (2016 BRF Graduate)
- Black River Falls
- Attending: UW Whitewater
- Course of Study: Major-Communication Sciences and Disorders; Minor-Family
- Career Path: Graduate School

### Black River Falls Area Foundation Annual Senior Scholarship ($2,000)
**Lauren Perry**
- Black River Falls
- Attending: UW La Crosse
- Course of Study: Kinesiology
- Career Path: Doctorate in Physical Therapy

### Black River Falls Area Foundation Annual Alumni Scholarship ($2,000)
**Kate Phillips** (2005 BRF Graduate)
- Black River Falls
- Attending: Colorado State University
- Course of Study: Accounting
- Career Path: Certified Public Accountant

### Black River Falls Area Foundation Alumni Scholarship ($2,000)
**Jody Stoker** (1991 BRF Graduate)
- Black River Falls
- Attending: UM Twin Cities
- Course of Study: Statistics
- Career Path: Actuary

### Black River Falls Area Foundation Annual Senior Scholarship ($2,000)
**Allan Brenengen Memorial Scholarship ($1,500)**
- **Natalie Fischer**
- Alma Center
- Attending: Winona State University
- Course of Study: Elementary Education/Reading Instructionist
- Career Path: Teacher

### Thomas R. Gilles Memorial Scholarship ($1,000)
**Stephanie Brauner**
- Black River Falls
- Attending: University of St. Thomas
- Course of Study: Accounting
- Career Path: Career in Business/Accountant

### Don Halverson Memorial Scholarship ($1,500)
**Karli Rickert**
- Black River Falls
- Attending: University of Iowa
- Course of Study: Speech & Hearing – Communication Sciences & Disorders
- Career Path: Speech therapist at a hospital

### David & Marilyn Hoffman Scholarship ($2,000)
**Matthew LaFaunge** (2015 BRF Graduate)
- Black River Falls
- Attending: UW La Crosse
- Course of Study: Major-Exercise Sports Science; Minor-Sport Management
- Career Path: Master’s Degree in Sport Administration

### David & Marilyn Hoffman Scholarship ($2,000)
**John Antonelli** (2017 BRF Graduate)
- Black River Falls
- Attending: UW Madison
- Course of Study: Double Major–Biology and Economics
- Career Path: Medical School
Duane & Lavina Hoffman Scholarship ($1,500)
Jake Ramos
Black River Falls
Attending: UW Madison
Course of Study: Mathematics
Career Path: Education

Robert (Knuckles) Johnson Memorial Scholarship ($1,500)
Madison Shramek
Hixton
Attending: UW La Crosse
Course of Study: Major-Biology; Minor-Business
Career Path: Dentist

Leland & Jeanette Larson Memorial Rotating Scholarship – 2018 Lincoln High School ($2,000)
Callie Frey
Alma Center
Attending: Winona State University
Course of Study: Major-Graphic Design; Minor-Marketing

Alice Homstad Memorial Scholarship – Year 1 of 2 ($2,500)
Matthew Bronsdon
(2016 BRF Graduate)
Hixton
Attending: UW Madison
Course of Study: Double Major–Spanish and Biology
Career Path: Medical School

James Jr. and Anna Klir Memorial Scholarship ($1,000)
Natalie Danielson
(2016 BRF Graduate)
Black River Falls
Attending: UM Duluth
Course of Study: Major–Music Education; Minor–Theatre
Career Path: K-12 Music Educator

Lions/Rotary Scholarship ($2,000)
Tillie Moldenhauer
Black River Falls
Attending: UW Madison
Course of Study: Major–Psychology; Minor–Spanish
Career Path: Medical School

Alice Homstad Memorial Scholarship – 1 Year Award ($2,000)
Alisha Quall
(2017 BRF Graduate)
Black River Falls
Attending: UW Madison
Course of Study: Major–Spanish; Minors in Chicano/a and Latino/a Studies and Global Health
Career Path: Medical School to become a Pediatrician

Jackson County Bank Foundation Alumni Scholarship ($2,000)
Hailey Collins
(2016 BRF Graduate)
Black River Falls
Attending: UW La Crosse
Course of Study: Major–Business Management; Minor–Accounting
Career Path: Owner/Operator of Photography Business

Krohn Clinic Physicians Memorial Scholarship ($2,000)
Katlyn Leadholm
Black River Falls
Attending: Viterbo
Course of Study: Registered Nursing
Career Path: Emergency Room Nurse

Ralph & Alice Lund Memorial Scholarship ($1,000)
Ethan Anderson
Black River Falls
Attending: UW La Crosse
Course of Study: Finance
Career Path: Financial Planner/Advisor – Continue the family business

Gerald & Nancy Laabs Scholarship ($2,000)
Benjamin Bluedorn
Black River Falls
Attending: UW Madison
Course of Study: Undecided

Kelly Mauck Memorial Scholarship ($1,500)
Bailee Ciezki
Black River Falls
Attending: UW Marshfield
Course of Study: Business and Marketing
Career Path: Position in advertising, public relations, or promotions

Elizabeth Danielson Janssen Nursing Scholarship ($2,000)
Kasey Roskos
Merrillan
Attending: UW Oshkosh
Course of Study: Registered Nursing
Career Path: Emergency Room Nurse

Leland & Jeanette Larson Memorial Scholarship – Taylor ($2,000)
McKenna Nehring
Taylor
Attending: Western Technical College
Course of Study: Liberal Arts

Philip & Aldena Meyer Memorial Scholarship ($1,000)
Sunny Rufsholm
Black River Falls
Attending: Viterbo
Course of Study: Choral Music Education
Career Path: Vocal Music Director
Rick Millis Memorial Scholarship ($2,000 per year for 2 years)
Kaytlin Johnson
Black River Falls
Attending: Concordia University Wisconsin
Course of Study: Radiologic Technician

Pearl (Toddy) Porath Memorial Senior Scholarship ($1,000)
Matthew Collins
Black River Falls
Attending: Western Technical College
Course of Study: Videography
Career Path: Photography/Videography

Meghan Powell Memorial Scholarship ($1,500)
Ricky Lamp
Merrillan
Attending: Winona State University
Course of Study: Elementary Education

Rick Millis Memorial Scholarship ($2,000 per year for 2 years)
June Brown
Alma Center
Attending: UW Oshkosh
Course of Study: Nursing

Lt. Terry Preston Memorial Scholarship ($1,000)
Caitlin Smart
Black River Falls
Attending: Chippewa Valley Technical College
Course of Study: Criminal Justice
Career Path: Potentially work for the FBI

Dean Nortman Memorial Scholarship ($500)
Maria Lee
(2013 BRF Graduate, 2017 Graduate of UW La Crosse with a degree in Exercise & Sports Science Pre-Professional and a minor in Spanish)
Black River Falls
Attending: Graduate School - UW La Crosse
Course of Study: Doctorate Degree
Career Path: Dr. of Physical Therapy

Gene & Judy Ransom Scholarship ($2,000)
Jessica Turk
Alma Center
Attending: UW Eau Claire
Course of Study: Art (Emphasis in Graphic Design)

Dean Nortman Memorial Scholarship ($500)
Olivia Lee
(2011 BRF Graduate, 2015 Graduate of UW Oshkosh with a Degree in Biochemistry)
Black River Falls
Attending: Concordia University School of Pharmacy
Course of Study: Doctorate of Pharmacy
Career Path: Residency in a hospital setting

Dustin Rozmenoski Memorial Scholarship ($1,000)
Zakery Smetana
Black River Falls
Attending: Western Technical College
Course of Study: Internet Technology

Mary Perry Fine Arts Scholarship ($1,000)
Andrea Peterson
Merrillan
Attending: UW Eau Claire
Course of Study: Education
Career Path: Elementary or Special Education Teacher

Pearl (Toddy) Porath Memorial Alumni Scholarship ($1,000)
Zachary Severson
(2016 BRF Graduate)
Black River Falls
Attending: UW River Falls
Course of Study: Major-Broad Field Social Studies; Minor-Economics
Career Path: High School History and Economics Teacher and also coach High School sports

Pearl (Toddy) Porath Memorial Alumni Scholarship ($1,000)
Emily Byrns
(2017 BRF Graduate)
Black River Falls
Attending: UW Eau Claire
Course of Study: Journalism
Career Path: Broadcast Journalist

Congratulations
Scholarship Recipients
The Foundation has established a permanent Recognition Program for Friends who have donated so generously throughout the years. The program allows donation amounts to accumulate each year as Friends advance through eight giving levels.

2017/2018 Friends of the Foundation are listed below, together with the current level of giving they have achieved.

**BRONZE**
($100 & up)
* Mona Baker
* Anita Damon
* Brad Chown
* James Dingeldein
* Doris Dingeldein
* Mary J. Hansen
* Ruth Hart
* Carl Hermann
* Joan Higgins
* Ann Homstad
* David O. Hoonsbeen
* John Howard
* James Kaphengst
* Jill Kaphengst
* Jeanette Kertis
* Rose Ann Kilar
* Jay Laabs
* Katherine Laabs
* Barbara Lahmayer
* Jean Louis
* Dave Meyer
* Luane Meyer
* Marlene Meyer
* Nyla Musser
* Elaine Ott
* Robert Ott
* Sandra Pistorius
* Judy Radcliffe
* Betty Schanz
* Scholze Ace Home Center; Dan & Sara Scholze
* George Schwab
* Larry Severson
* Shelly Severson
* Timothy Turk

**SILVER**
($500 & up)
Todd Anderson & Family
William Arndt

**GOLD**
($2,000 & up)
Dr. Richard Holder
Eric Homstad
Nomi Homstad
Nancy Mills Howard
Peter Jacobs
Jim Kertis
Karen Stai-Koenigs Insurance Agency
Bruce Lahmayer
Jean Lee
John Lindahl
Sue Lindahl
Brad Lobenstein
Monica Lobenstein
John Louis
John Lund
Dave Mack
Dr. Carol Martin
Carla Mills
Carla (Drecker)
Nielsen
Ernie Nicholas
Mary O’Brien
Lynn Overman
Dr. Jeff Polzin
Sue Polzin
Ray Ransom
Arlene Reid
Thomas Reid
Margaret Rewald
Paul Ripp
Theresa Ripp
Ripp Distributing Company
Lynn Sedlaufer
Jay Severance
Mrs. Vern (Margaret) Severson
Kathy Stittaburg
Todd Stittaburg
Dr. Jon Stowe
Julie Stowe
Marion Stuart
Glen Tamminen
Jean Tamminen
Sherri Torkelson
Tim Torkelson
Mitch Wester
Susan Wester
Mary Beth White-Jacobs
Sara Wiersma
Alice Young
Dennis Young

**PLATINUM**
($5,000 & up)
Marilyn Ackerson
Black River Memorial Hospital
Coldwell Banker River Valley Realty
Dr. Donald Delebo
Dr. James Dickman
Mike Dougherty
Cindy Dougherty
Jean Hagenbrock
John Hagenbrock
Dr. Lyle Hart
Jone Hoffman
Peter Hoffman
Dave Hoffman
Marilyn Hoffman
John Hogden
Kari Hogden
Jon Homstad
Maureen Homstad
Dr. Jerry Kitowski
Lori Kitowski
Bobbi Kitowski
Dr. Nicholas Kitowski
Krohn Clinic
Dr. Gene Krohn
Janet Krohn
Dr. Al Lahmayer
Jeanette Lahmayer
Margaret Legos
Max Michaelson Jr.
Sue Michaelson
Mary Nordahl
Dr. Jerry Overman
Mary Perry
Gene Ransom
Judy Ransom
Denis Richards
Norbert Sedelbauer
Mary Van Gorden
Roger Wiste
Thelma Wiste
The Print Shop; Bill & Kathy Potter

**DIAMOND**
($10,000 & up)
D&S Manufacturing
Gil Homstad
Dr. Kirk Lane & Family
Northern Family Farms

**LEADERS CIRCLE**
($15,000 & up)
Co-op Credit Union
Jackson County Bank

**LEGENDS CIRCLE**
($20,000 & up)
Millis Family

**FOUNDERS CIRCLE**
($30,000 & up)

* WELCOME 1st time Friends!