Grants Program In Full Swing

Marion Community Foundation’s competitive grants program, begun back in June, is now in full swing. The July 28 application deadline has expired and 29 major and 24 mini-grant proposals were received. More than $800,000 was requested.

Currently the Grants Committee is busy reviewing the submissions and determining which finalist interviews are needed. Once the rigorous review process is complete – sometime in August – recommendations will be forwarded to the Board of Trustees for consideration.

The public announcement of the grant recipients will, once again, be made at a Grants Announcement Breakfast, scheduled this year for September 7.

Marion Community Foundation will award nearly $350,000 in grants from the 11 funds in the competitive grants program.

“While the funds involved in our competitive grants program provide a great deal of support to Marion charities, it is worth noting that these funds are only a small portion of the more than 130 funds currently in the Foundation’s portfolio,” said MCF president Brad Beshout. “Thousands of dollars of additional grant funds are awarded each year from designated and donor advised funds in addition to the competitive grants program.” Several of the articles in this issue of Legacy detail the scope and diversity of projects supported by some of MCF’s non-competitive grants and donor advised funds.

The following is an overview of the competitive grant funds available via Marion Community Foundation:

Health Care Fund – MCF’s first fund, this fund awards grants for projects, programs, and organizations that address the health related needs of the community.

Henry Heinzmann Community Food Pantry Fund – Grants are available to support community food pantries and organizations which provide meals for the poor and homeless of Marion County. The fund was created by a gift from Dr. Henry Heinzmann, a former member of MCF’s board and past chairman.

Francis & Thelma Wise Fund – Grants are available for projects, programs, organizations that treat or prevent arthritis, Parkinson’s disease, and blindness or other vision impairment. This fund was created by a bequest from the estate of Francis Wise.

Helen Cunningham Handicapped Fund – Grants are available to support and fund programs and organizations that promote the general welfare and recreation of persons with disabilities and that provide assistance for handicapped individuals and their families in Marion County. This fund was created by the Society for the Handicapped of Marion County, of which Cunningham was an active member.

Robert M. & Dorothy C. Wopat Community Fund – Grants are available for any charitable project, program or organization in Marion County, in consultation with the fund advisor. This fund was recently created by the Wopats. See related article on page 2.

Vera O. McDanel Senior Citizens Transportation Fund – Grants are available to support and fund programs that provide for the transportation needs of senior citizens residing in Marion County. This fund was created by a bequest from Ms. McDanel.

Unrestricted Funds – Grants from the following unrestricted funds are available for projects, programs, and organizations that support any worthy charitable cause in Marion County, as determined by MCF’s Board of Trustees:

“C” Fund – A fund created by an anonymous donor with a gift of stock;

Founders’ Fund – A fund created by MCF’s staff and Board of Trustees, with other members of the community later adding to the fund;

Chester and Mildred Roberts Fund – A fund created by the sons of Chester and Mildred Roberts to honor the memory of their parents, prominent figures in Marion history;

Conway Family Charitable Fund – A fund created by a gift from James Conway’s family trust; and,

Kenny Martin Charitable Fund – A fund created from the estate of the late Kenny Martin, a long-time employee of the City of Marion and an avid model railroader.

In 2009, Marion Community Foundation awarded $257,000 in grants to fund 12 projects in the Marion area. The organizations receiving funds included the Center Street Community Health Center, Marion Adolescent Pregnancy Program, Ohio Heartland Community Action Commission, Salvation Army, Marion County Health Department, Operation Community Spirit., Legal Aid Society, Marion Area Counseling Center, Eye-to-Eye Low Vision Support Group, and the Marion Family YMCA.

In the past 12 years, MCF has awarded nearly $4 million in grants and scholarships. Its funds address the Marion area’s needs in healthcare, the arts, environment, education and economic development.

Additional information is available by calling 387-9704 during standard business hours, as well as online at marioncommunityfoundation.org. The Foundation’s new email is: marionlegacy@frontier.com.
Holloway Creates Four New Funds

A generous gift of $400,000 from the estate of long-time Marion resident Mary H. Holloway has made possible the creation of four new funds to benefit Marion area organizations. Separate funds have been created with Holloway's gift to support the Humane Society of Marion County, the Marion Palace Theatre and the Marion Family YMCA, as well as the creation of a donor advised fund which will make grant awards based upon suggestions made by the fund's donor advisor. Grants will begin in 2011.

Holloway was a fixture of Fahey Bank, having served as a secretary there for many years.

The Mary H. Holloway Humane Society Fund will benefit the Marion Area Humane Society and provide an annual grant for veterinary care for animals in its care and for animals in the process of being adopted through the Society.

The Mary H. Holloway Palace Theatre Fund will make annual grants to the Palace Cultural Arts Association to support and present community theatrical productions, including summer community theatre musical productions.

The Mary H. Holloway Donor Advised Fund has been established. The fund advisor, in collaboration with MCF's Board of Trustees, will recommend recipients of grant distributions for any charitable purpose in the Marion area.

Created by a gift from the estate of Mary H. Holloway, the Nobel F. Holloway YMCA Scholarship Fund has been created to provide YMCA membership scholarships to Marion County residents in need. At least one-half of the YMCA membership scholarships shall be provided for children under the age of 16 and family memberships. The fund is a legacy to both Mrs. Holloway's brother and father.

All of the Holloway Funds are open to additional contributions.

Matching Grant Supports Parks

Marion Community Foundation has made an emergency matching grant of $2,500 to the Marion County Commissioners to restore staffing for the County Parks Administrator. Budget cuts at the Commissioners' offices necessitated staff reductions which cut hours for Karen Kelley, Director of the Marion County Park District, from 20 to 12 hours per week. The grant enables the Commissioners to restore Kelley's hours.

While community foundations such as MCF are very reluctant to make grant awards to government agencies, this situation is different because the County Commissioners accepted MCF's challenge by matching the grant with additional appropriations of $2,500.

"MCF welcomes this unique collaboration which will enhance the quality of life in Marion County," said MCF president Brad Bebout. "We have invested a lot of time, money and effort supporting Karen Kelley in her role to develop the Marion Tallgrass Trail."

This multi-purpose recreation trail is being developed on a former railbed in western Marion County. Located not far from Whirlpool at 2093 Holland Rd., the trailhead already has a shelter and paved parking area. Ground breaking on the trail itself is imminent.

Marion Community Foundation has provided more than $50,000 in grants thus far to support the purchase of the land from CSX and the development of the facilities now in place.

"We at Marion Community Foundation believe in the rails-to-trails project," said Bebout. "We see the completed project as a great benefit to the Marion community. This emergency matching grant is a way to provide assurance for the money already invested in the project; for, without staff hours, this worthy project will not come to fullness."

Two funds at MCF, the Don Alsop Memorial Fund and the Dr. & Mrs. Glen Burton Jr. Memorial Fund, directly support the Marion Tallgrass Trail project and have provided for a welcome center at the trailhead and interpretive nature signage along the trail.

Honda Funds GetSETGo

The Science Engineering Technology GetSETGo Fund has been newly created at Marion Community Foundation with a gift of $40,000 from Honda; and, Honda has indicated the intention to provide an additional $40,000 next year. This fund has been established to provide "hands on" training to prepare students for education and careers in science, engineering and technology.

Bar Association Creates Fund

The Marion County Bar Association has established a donor advised fund at Marion Community Foundation. The fund was created with a gift of $50,000 and will begin making awards in 2011. Led by the Bar Association's Executive Committee, the organization will suggest charitable grants each year for any charitable purpose in Marion County.

This fund was developed in consultation with MCF President Brad Bebout, an attorney since 1980 and former president of the Bar Association.

Wopat Funds Growing

Marion Community Foundation has received its first distributions from the estates of Robert and Dorothy Wopat. The initial distributions of $6.1 million are the start of a $16 million gift the Wopats designated for their three funds at MCF. The funds include: the Robert M. and Dorothy C. Wopat Community Fund, a donor advised fund which makes grants to any worthy charitable cause in Marion; the Robert M. and Dorothy C. Wopat Scholarship Fund, which awards scholarships to Marion area students; and, the Wopat Family’s YMCA Fund, a designated fund.

The Wopats made their initial gifts of $205,000 in 2008 to create the funds and bequeathed their entire estates in 2010.
Mid-Year Grants Awarded

Marion Public Health

Marion Community Foundation has awarded a grant in the amount of $5,000 to Marion Public Health from the Helen Cunningham Handicapped Fund. The grant will provide needed assistance for individual requests for health services.

ABLE

Marion Community Foundation has awarded a mid-year grant of $3,000 to Marion Technical College’s ABLE (Adult Basic and Literacy Education) program. ABLE assists area adults who did not complete high school in obtaining their GED. This grant is in line with MCP’s mission to support area scholars.

Downtown Marion

An emergency grant of $1,000 has been awarded to the local merchants’ group, Downtown Marion, by Marion Community Foundation.

“We feel this is an organization that is important to support,” said MCP president Brad Bebout.

Downtown Marion is under new leadership with former Palace Theatre director Elaine Merchant now at the helm. With the appointment of this trusted name, Downtown Marion has corrected prior financial problems. The City of Marion has suspended funding pending the completion of an audit. “We at Marion Community Foundation felt that help was needed to bridge the gap until the City restores funding,” said Bebout.

Heart of Ohio Mentoring and Boys and Girls Club

Emergency grants of $1,500 each have been awarded to Heart of Ohio Mentoring and the Boys and Girls Club of Marion County. Both organizations, which serve local youth, were experiencing fiscal difficulties related to the current economy.

The award to Heart of Ohio Mentoring will assist in its becoming a viable stand-alone organization, following its break with the national Big Brothers/Big Sisters organization. Heart of Ohio Mentoring serves the youth of the Marion area and is known for its fundraiser, Marion Shining Stars.

Albert Hired, Rinesmith Promoted

Marion Community Foundation has hired a new staff member, Jackie Albert, as administrative assistant, and promoted 9-year employee Diana Rinesmith to office manager. The length of Rinesmith’s tenure attests to the stability of the organization.

“As our assets and responsibilities grow, our organization must also,” said MCP president Brad Bebout. “Although we are mindful of the need to be lean and frugal, we also owe it to our donors and community to operate efficiently.”

Albert was first hired as a temporary secretary during the busy scholarship processing period. At the end of her temp contract, she was hired directly by the Foundation on a part-time basis.

P.I.T. Stop

Philanthropic Investment Tips

by Bradley C. Bebout
President of Marion Community Foundation

In a previous issue of Legacy, I wrote about our “customer.” Although I don’t really like the term, I observed that our main customer is our donor. Even though some gifts or acts of generosity might seem to receive more attention than others, rest assured that every gift and every donor is very important to us.

I have the privilege of meeting with many good people and, together, we dream of how we can make the most of their generosity. One dream is not larger nor more important than another. The amount of a charitable gift and the size of a fund are not as significant as the memory of a loved one memorialized or the charitable cause being advanced.

Marion Community Foundation is now steward to more than $22 million in assets and more than 130 different funds. These funds represent dreams to improve the many and varied aspects of life in our community -- education, arts and culture, recreation, economic development, social and civic activities and the environment -- and to keep the memories of loved ones alive.

We have received, in our 12 years of existence, gifts that humbled us, touched our hearts, and left us in awe. What every one of those gifts has in common is a donor or donors who care deeply about Marion County and the people and organizations who make up our community.

So, although some gifts are bigger than others, every legacy created at Marion Community Foundation is huge.
Scholarship Apps Rising, Process Goes High-Tech

Due to the substantial increases in both available scholarships and, subsequently, scholarship applications, Marion Community Foundation will be going high tech in the very near future. Scholarship applications will be available entirely online. The online scholarship applications will allow both students to apply and MCF and its various selection committees to review all submissions electronically. Even letters of recommendation will be able to be submitted online.

"Our hope for online submission," said Foundation president Brad Bebout, "is to make it easier for students, especially those no longer residing in Marion County, to apply." In the last two years, MCF has seen a substantial increase in the number of college student applications. Bebout attributes this to the age and reputation of Marion Community Foundation.

"We (MCF) are now well establish and have been awarding scholarships for so long that we have achieved a top-of-mind status among area students," he said. "Subsequently, an increasing number of Marion area students who have gone off to college are remembering to come home and apply for MCF scholarships to further their educations."

Marion Community Foundation awarded 89 scholarships totaling more than $91,000 in 2010, 14 of those to college students from the Marion area.

Scoops 4 Stephanie

Putting some 'fun' in fundraising, Scoops 4 Stephanie, recently held a unique fund raiser in support of the Stephanie Lust Memorial Scholarship at Marion Community Foundation. The fundraiser, held over the July 24 weekend, involved a bike tour of the Marion area, with stops at four community dairy bars -- Green Camp, Waldo, Richwood and LaRue. More than 80 cyclists participated in the ride which raised approximately $3,000. Participants could choose from four different routes ranging in length from 10 to 40 miles.

The second annual Scoops 4 Stephanie ride was organized by family friends and avid cyclists Alice Piacentini and Ann Baker. Assisting with the set-up were members of MCF's Youth Engaged in Philanthropy (YEP).

"It's wonderful. They devote their time to this -- asking nothing of the (Lust) family," says Geri Lust, Stephanie's mother, "I am just so glad that nobody has forgotten her."

Lust was killed in an automobile accident shortly after her graduation from Pleasant High School. Her family and friends established a scholarship fund at MCF in her memory. The fund awards annual scholarships to students of Lust's alma mater.

More than 80 cyclists participated in the Scoops 4 Stephanie fund raiser the weekend of July 24, raising $3,000 for the Stephanie Lust Memorial Scholarship Fund at Marion Community Foundation.