

The Cornerstone

"Investing in People to Improve the Quality of Their Lives"




From Left: Representatives of the Food Bank, Lynda Frost (Montana Rail Link, third from left), Kelly Milodragovich (Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation), Joni Jo Uhi (Envirocon), Monica Cederberg (Washington Business Services) and Mike Halligan (DPWF). **Below:** Kelly Milodragovich hands over a box of food to be loaded on the truck by Missoula Food Bank's Nick Roberts.

AT THE BEGINNING OF DECEMBER, the Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation announced the distribution of \$128,000 to 57 food banks and food pantries across Montana. In connection with these grants, Washington Companies employees donated more than 800 pounds of food to local food banks and pantries. According to Mike Halligan, Executive Director of the Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation, "Food banks and food pantries are on the front lines, helping those in desperate need of a nutritious meal. With the winter months and the continued economic crisis, we at the Foundation believe it is imperative to support the community organizations that are fighting so valiantly to serve an ever-growing population of Montanans in need."

The Foundation has always made annual gifts to the State's largest food banks at this time of year, but in 2009 they decided to add to the donations. Working with the Montana Food Bank Network, the Foundation identified all sizes of food banks and pantries across the state that could use some extra assistance. Then, after determining the population size served by each organization,

the Foundation sent donations of \$1,000, \$3,000, or \$5,000.

"This is a hard time for our community, but it's so uplifting and empowering to watch the hardships we all face be balanced by these acts of generosity," said Nick Roberts of the Missoula Food Bank. "We need to be ready to help those who are going to need us, and this helps us as we prepare to respond."

This holiday giving program wrapped up a year of prioritized giving by the Foundation to basic needs organizations. Given the continued recession, the Foundation will continue its emphasis on providing basic needs grants throughout 2010. 



The Foundation helps the Missoula Cultural Council provide a fun and safe New Year's celebration of the arts

The Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation sponsored First Night Missoula is a community-wide, alcohol-free New Year's Eve celebration of the arts. For several years, the event has seen attendance in the thousands. Produced by the Missoula Cultural Council, a local non profit arts agency, efforts are made to keep admission affordable. However, many low-income families still cannot afford to attend. To allow these families to join this holiday community event, the Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation, along with other local agencies, purchased several hundred admission buttons.

The Council distributed these buttons through the Missoula City County WIC Office, the Missoula Food Bank, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, WORD,

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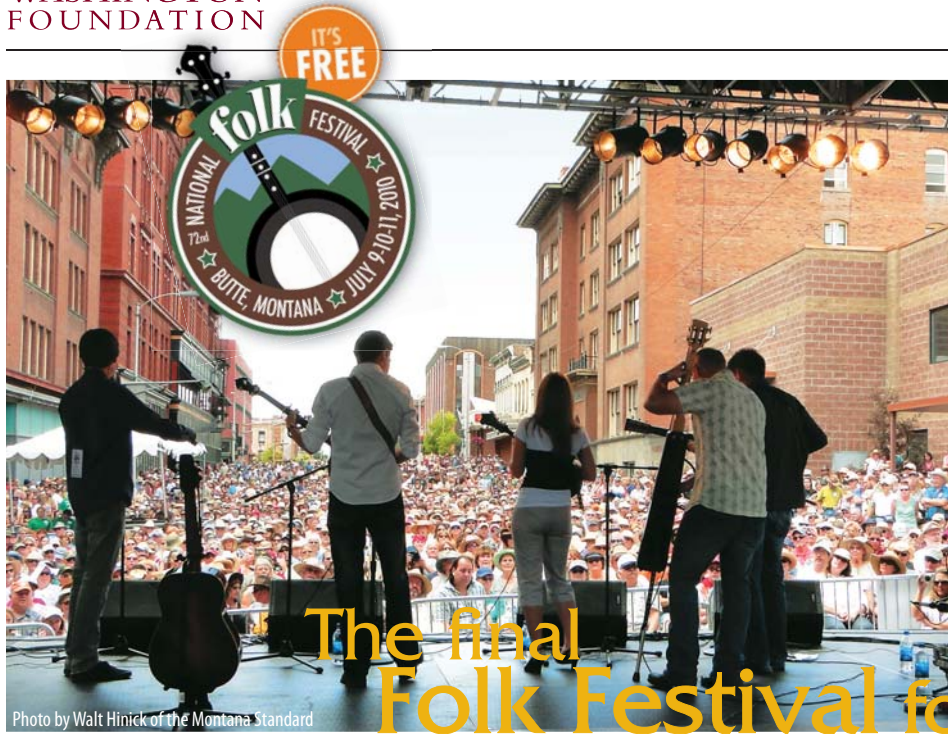
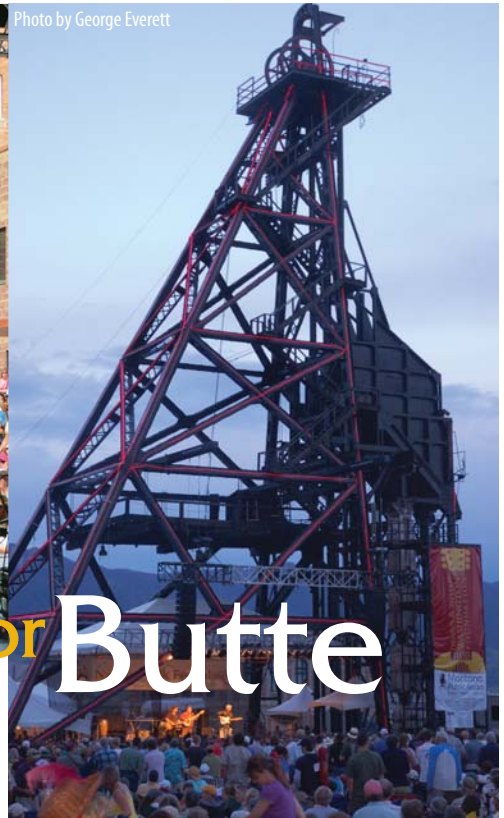


Photo by George Everett



The Dennis And Phyllis Washington Foundation Doubles Its Support For The National Folk Festival With \$200,000 Challenge Grant To Mainstreet Uptown Butte

THE DENNIS AND PHYLLIS WASHINGTON FOUNDATION awarded an unprecedented \$200,000 challenge grant to support the National Folk Festival returning to Butte July 9-11, 2010. In 2008, the Foundation sponsored the family area of the Festival, and in 2009, sponsored the Original Stage at the \$100,000 level. This year, seeking to amplify the economic and cultural opportunities presented by the Festival, the Foundation doubled its support to a \$200,000 challenge grant. "In 2008 and again in 2009, the Festival experienced an huge increase in visitor attendance, proving that Butte could host such a high-quality family event and people would attend from all over," said Mike Halligan, Executive Director of the Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation. "The National Folk Festival provided a platform to showcase the culture and rich history of the people of Butte and Montana as a whole and we are honored to partner with Mainstreet Uptown Butte to help sponsor the event in 2010."

The Foundation hopes its support will
The Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation, *The Cornerstone*

ensure the success of the 2010 National Folk Festival by encouraging other Montana businesses to chip in. This year's event will help set the stage for a self-sustaining annual event that will bring world class talent to Butte and much needed tourist dollars to Butte and all of Montana.

George Everett, Executive Director of Mainstreet Uptown Butte, said, "The challenge

"The challenge grant comes at a critical time and is an excellent means to inspire other individuals and businesses to support the 2010 festival."

grant comes at a critical time and is an excellent means to inspire other individuals and businesses to support the 2010 Festival. We're excited to get started and the Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation's commitment to match sponsorships up to a total of \$200,000 will give business contributions twice the impact.

According to one survey, the Festival had a statewide economic impact of more than \$17 million in 2009.

"This was not an easy choice for us in these turbulent economic times, but it was made easier by the demonstrated economic benefits of the Festival to the region over the past two years," said Rolin Erickson, Montana

Resources President and member of the Foundation's Board of Directors. "We see it as an established benefit for the entire state that continues to expand and have a greater economic impact each year."

The Festival is a fantastic event for all ages, so be sure to mark your calendar for July 9-11! The event requires around 900 volunteers to make the event happen, creating a variety of jobs during different times of the weekend. You won't want to miss the third year of this fantastic event in Butte. For more on the Festival and how to help out please visit their website at www.nationalfolkfestival.com.

BANJOS, BAGPIPES & BOOGIE IN BUTTE

Top Left: The view from the Granite Street stage behind Sierra Hull, looking out on the crowded downtown boulevard .

Top Right: A tightly-packed audience enjoys the music at the Foundation-sponsored "Original Stage" at dusk in July 2009.
Photos courtesy of Mainstreet Uptown Butte

State Support Spotlight

THE FOUNDATION WORKS to improve lives through funding education and projects in the areas of health and human services, arts and culture, and community service. In 2009, the Foundation provided 243 community grants, totaling \$1,624,688. The following projects are but a few of the many recently supported.

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Equinox Theatre Company

Areas served: Gallatin, Park and Madison Counties

Now in its fourteenth year, Bozeman-based Equinox Theatre Company works to produce modern theater projects that challenge audiences and may not be produced elsewhere in the community. In addition to its professional productions and jazz series, Equinox offers theater and comedy classes to adults, children and teens. Specifically, the Foundation's grant will support the Teen Theater program, which provides young adults, many in rural areas, with the opportunity to improve their



Above: Highschoolers in productions of *I Hate Hamlet* and *Grease* at the Equinox Theater in Bozeman, Montana. Photos courtesy of Equinox Theater.

theatrical skills. Students receive training in music, drama, puppetry, and comedy improvisation but most importantly gain self-confidence, communication skills, and imagination. Through its youth programming, Equinox seeks to teach young people how to work as a team, take a project from vision to completion, and ultimately to have a fun, safe and productive environment in which to grow. To learn more about Equinox, visit them online at www.equinoxtheatre.com.

Thrive

Areas served: Gallatin County

Bozeman-based Thrive has developed programs which encourage healthy family and child development through community awareness, parent education and support to children and families. The underlying premise of the program is that parents who are confident, effective and supported in their parenting responsibilities are more likely to raise successful, productive children. Thrive currently provides services in three broad areas: (1) parent education and support, (2) school-linked services, (3) community education and awareness, and (4) technical assistance. Thrive has two "Parent Place" locations Bozeman and Belgrade where parents can get support and services all year long. For more information, please visit www.allthrive.org

Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies

Area served: Montana

Since 2002, Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies has worked through their "safe sleep" program to deliver cribs and educational services designed to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). Foundation funds will be used to purchase cribs for low-income families expecting a newborn. The cribs are delivered by a public health nurse, who then provides continued support to the family. The



nurse educates the family members about reducing the risk of SIDS, in addition to other supportive information promoting a healthy environment for the newborn. "This program helps support our most vulnerable Montana citizens, infants and children, to provide them a safe, even start," said Salisa Synness, Executive Director of Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies.

The Jacyn Fred Foundation

Area Served: Montana

The Jacyn Fred Foundation was founded in 2001 with the goal of providing financial assistance to families who have children that require specialized medical attention. The mission of the program is to allow families to focus their energy on caring for their children and managing day-to-day challenges of life that often mount when a child is ...Continued on page 4

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Below: The Safe Sleep Program through Healthy Mothers, Healthy babies, provides educational services to families to prevent SIDS. The program distributes materials like the handout shown below, in addition to distributing cribs and providing support throughout the pregnancy and early part of the child's life.



The Cornerstone is the newsletter of the Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation. Contributions of articles and photos are welcomed. Stories in this issue and a lot more can be found on our Web site:

www.dpwfoundation.org

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undergoing treatment for cancer. Specifically, Foundation funds will be directed toward families who need help to pay for approved cancer-treating prescriptions that are not covered by health insurance. For more information on the program, please visit www.jadyfred.org.

MT Bureau of Business and Economic Research

Area served: Montana

The Foundation is a co-sponsor of a statewide series of nine Economic Outlook Seminars presented by the University of Montana's Bureau of Business and Economic Research; this year's theme: "Economic Recovery—what's ahead for men and women workers?" Speaking at the January 22 event in Missoula, Julie Ehlers, Communications Director of Montana KIDS COUNT, a state affiliate of the national program, addressed the critical connection between fostering early childhood



development and creating a globally competitive work force. "The brain develops early circuits that affect positive traits toward the ability to be a successful worker", Ehlers said. Besides long-term goals, Ehlers also stressed that in supporting early childhood education and instituting family-

friendly policies, the business community can see immediate return on investment through fewer days lost by parents missing work to care for kids, retention of employees and higher productivity. Find more information at www.montanakidscount.org.

Construction: A Fun and Unique Charity Event to Benefit The Montana Food Bank Network

It's not too late to get involved! No experience is necessary, a minimal time commitment is required and this is a fun opportunity to work with employees from the other Companies. Or, if you'd rather just come support your fellow employees and check out the impressive structures, that's great too! They'll be on display at the Southgate Mall in Missoula April 9-14. If you are interested in lending a hand, please contact April LaRocque at 523-1107.



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... **First Night**, continued from 1

Community Medical Center's Home and Community Based Services, Youth Homes, Inc., and Habitat for Humanity. First Night has seen a recent increase in family and teen attendance and continues to target activities towards younger audiences. The Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation is proud to help make such a wonderful cultural event accessible to all members of our community and we look forward to a continued partnership with First Night Missoula and the Missoula Cultural Council.



Above: Missoula Mayor John Engen presents youngsters who proudly show off their wearable artwork at Missoula's First Night event.

IS SOMEONE IN YOUR FAMILY CONSIDERING COLLEGE?

We can help you. The Washington Companies Employee Family Scholarship Program provides financial assistance to family members of employees of the Washington Companies who are attending an accredited university, college, vocational technical school, community college, college of technology, or trade school. The scholarship amount is \$1,000 per semester, or \$666 per quarter. The maximum amount per year is \$2,000, and up to \$8,000 per lifetime per person. Eligible students must be enrolled full time and pursuing a degree or certificate. For more information and to apply please visit <http://efsa.washcorp.com>.



Message from Executive Director, Mike Halligan

The Foundation is focused more than ever on basic needs organizations to ensure that low income Montanans and families impacted by the severe economic downturn have the food, clothing, shelter, and other critical services they need to get back on their feet. In addition, the Foundation has always focused primarily on direct service organizations that provide services to help people reach their full potential.

Foundation grant requests have exploded over the past year as the economic recession has adversely impacted non-profit organizations all across Montana. The Grants Committee, which is made of representatives of Montana Rail Link, Modern Machinery, Envirocon, Montana Resources and Washington Services Group, works to help as many organizations as possible that are located primarily in our operating areas. The average grant award for 2009 was approximately \$6,686.