Impacting Mecosta County

*Cindy and Karl Linebaugh*

While endowment-based philanthropy may not be the easiest to understand, it is powerful. Endowment allows the Community Foundation to meet its goal to provide long-term support for local residents. As our work continues to move forward, we are grateful for wonderful donors who understand how important it is to have this impact on our community.

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Chair’s note

At the Community Foundation, we have taken a lot of time to reflect on all the great things that were accomplished last year, and we are excited to share some of those stories throughout this newsletter. However, as excited as we are about what was done in 2022, we are just as excited about what’s going to happen in 2023!

The Community Foundation wasted no time getting started. Last month, we launched our Philanthropic Services Committee. The committee is part of our renewed focus to attract energetic donors who share our vision for a better Mecosta County. In addition, we have begun strategic planning with the purpose of giving us a clearer path to accomplishing our mission of improving quality of life.

As always, everything the Community Foundation has done, or will do, would not be possible without the support of our community. Thank you!

Respectfully,

Tom Tacia
Board Chair
In 2015, Cindy and Karl Linebaugh created an unrestricted fund at the Community Foundation. While there will always be needs in the community, they recognized that these needs change over time. Their goal was to help Mecosta County thrive in the future.

“Mecosta County Community Foundation holds a special place in our hearts,” wrote Cindy and Karl. “As residents of Mecosta County for over 50 years, we have come to realize how many agencies and nonprofits are in need of financial support. Our fund allows the Community Foundation to determine which organizations have the greatest needs at any particular time.”

The Cindy and Karl Linebaugh Family Needs Fund has supported numerous nonprofit organizations throughout Mecosta County, including Manna Pantry and the Mecosta Conservation District. Manna Pantry provides support to those who are facing food insecurity in the Big Rapids area. Mecosta Conservation District preserves our natural resources while providing residents a great place to live and grow.

Endowment has allowed the Community Foundation to support both of these organizations thanks to the generosity of donors like Cindy and Karl. “We all have a responsibility to improve the quality of life in Mecosta County,” wrote Cindy and Karl. “It is our time to give back.”

A unique opportunity to give

Cornerstone Legacy Society

When someone gives to the Community Foundation, it goes beyond simply supporting our organization; it makes a direct and positive impact in the community. There are many ways to give to the Community Foundation, and each gift is valued and appreciated. One meaningful way an individual can give is through an estate gift.

When someone decides to name the Community Foundation in their will or estate plan, it offers us the opportunity to sit down with the donor to truly understand how they want to support the community beyond their lifetime. Through this process, we are able to establish goals and create a plan to achieve them together.

To honor those who give through their estates, we created the Cornerstone Legacy Society. The society received its name from those who helped us establish the Community Foundation during the original cornerstone campaign. It is comprised of those individuals who are committed to seeing the Community Foundation grow in order to improve the quality of life in Mecosta County.

There are three simple steps to be involved in this society. 1: Include the Community Foundation in your estate plan. 2: Give an annual gift to the Community Foundation. 3: Share your story with us. These three steps help provide sustainability and encourage others to join. For more information, please contact Maria E. Gonzalez at 231.924.5350 or mgonzalez@facommunityfoundation.org.
2022 financials

Impact by the numbers as of December 31, 2022

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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Caring for families in times of need

Ronald McDonald House Charities West Michigan

Just a few miles from Helen DeVos Children’s Hospital, away from the busyness of downtown Grand Rapids, is one of the city’s best-kept secrets. On a five-acre lot that looks more like a home than a hotel, sits Ronald McDonald House Charities West Michigan (RMHC).

For families who have children needing to stay in the hospital, they serve as a home away from home. “What we provide here is a place for families to relax, breathe, and not have to worry about the little things after a full day at the hospital with their loved one,” said Hanna Visser, development and grants coordinator at RMHC. “Families that live more than 30 minutes from the hospital can stay here, receive meals, and even utilize our transportation to and from the hospital for free.”

In 2022, RMHC was able to serve 375 families, 14 of whom were from Mecosta County. A one-night stay costs $195, with the average stay per family being two to four weeks. However, families who stay at RMHC never receive a bill.

“A common misconception for many is that we are funded by a billion-dollar company,” said Mallory Brouwer, RMHC development and marketing director. “That’s just not true. One hundred percent of our funds are raised or donated. The funds from the Community Foundation and other fundraising allow us to provide the services we do without passing the cost onto our guests.”
Serving in new ways

The Community Foundation’s 12 trustees come from all over the county and have a wide range of professional backgrounds. Some of our trustees have served on the board on and off for over a decade, while others were welcomed just last year. Our diversity is our strength, as it allows us to represent and serve each population in our county. However, one thing that all our trustees share is their passion and pursuit for a better community.

Trustees review grant applications from local nonprofits, nurture and maintain relationships with donors, and encourage individuals and organizations to get more involved with the Community Foundation and surrounding areas.

Trustees also serve on five different committees alongside community members. The newest of these is the Philanthropic Services Committee, which will work to increase awareness of philanthropic needs across Mecosta County while educating the community on how to donate time or resources to meet those needs.

The Community Foundation is always looking for individuals who would like to get involved. If you’re interested in serving on one of our committees or would like to invest your time in other ways, reach out to Maria E. Gonzalez at mgonzalez@facommunityfoundation.org for more information.