



Fall 2010

CONNECTION

Generosity, Leadership & Service

Longtime foundation friend will be missed



When LaGrange County Community Foundation (LCCF) had the photo of a cross section of county residents taken for the website home page, Elsie Willard's name was one of the first on the list. Elsie graciously agreed to be included.



The photo shoot was just a small event in a long history of Elsie's personal involve-

ment with the community foundation she was instrumental in founding.

Elsie R. Willard retired from LaGrange Community Hospital where she served as administrator (from 1974-1986) after retiring from BorgWarner in Bellwood, IL. In 1978 the Willards moved to Elsie's husband Joseph's home area, living in a Sturgis motel while renovating the family home at the corner of Spring Street

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Bricker bequest establishes scholarship



The Home Market, located next to the bank on the north side of the Howe town square, was part of life for many LaGrange County families. Melvin Bricker's welcoming smile was familiar to those who shopped there from the time Mel began his career working for previous owner Sherman Thurman through all the years he owned the store himself. Three years after starting at the market, he bought it and combined the old shop area with an adjacent storeroom to provide a larger facility.

Melvin Bricker and Marjorie Yunker both attended Lima School. Daughter-in-law Ann Bricker says Marjorie liked to joke that she didn't like Melvin all that well when they were in school together. But on June 6, 1937, the two were married in a double wedding with Marjorie's sister Gwendolyn Yunker and her fiancé Howard Emmert at the Howe United Methodist Church.

Marjorie graduated from Indiana State Normal School (later Ball State)



(Continued on page 2)

6 nominees for Heart of Gold award



The unselfish dedication of those who continually share their time, talent and treasure to benefit others often go unrecognized. LaGrange County Community Foundation (LCCF) Board of Directors and staff believe it is fitting that an organization focused on “inspiring and sustaining generosity, leadership and service in our community” should provide a way to acknowledge the quiet heroes who work tirelessly to make life better for those living around them.

The foundation solicited public nominations for the 2010 Heart of Gold award. Six county residents nominated individuals they believe are impacting lives to be considered for the award which will be presented at a luncheon on Saturday, November 6, 2010, from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at St. Joseph’s Catholic Church in LaGrange. The recipient will select a county nonprofit to be the recipient of a \$1000 grant.

The luncheon will feature a silent auction of donated items including two South Africa Photo Safaris, and door prizes. Seating is limited. Call LCCF at 463-4363 or e-mail jpilgrim@lccf.net to check for available seating.

Elsie Willard (continued from page 1)

and Townline Road in LaGrange. Some time after her second retirement, Elsie and several bankers from the community were invited by the Elkhart County Community Foundation to a meeting in Plymouth to hear details of a proposal from Lilly Endowment, Inc. which was offering \$1 million to start a community foundation in LaGrange County. The bankers and business people involved in those early meetings believed that collecting local donations to match funds from Lilly Endowment in order to increase the pool of permanently endowed money made sense. They accepted the challenge and in 1991 the LaGrange County Community Foundation was established.

Miles Perkins of Farmers State Bank offered office space in the bank basement where Elsie served as LCCF Executive Director from the foundation’s beginning until May 1994. She continued to serve on the board of directors until 1997.

The Willards founded the LaGrange County Public Library Fund, the Cultural Arts Council of LaGrange County Fund, and the LaGrange County Youth Fund. As LaGrange County Community Hospital Administrator, Elsie founded the Healthcare Fund. Also, after Joseph Willard’s death in 2002, Elsie founded the Joseph J. Willard Scholarship Fund.

Throughout her lifetime Elsie Willard continued to support the organization she helped establish. She was an honored guest at LCCF events and an ongoing example of a citizen of the community who believed the foundation was an important asset to the county and was faithful in her support.

Bricker gift (continued from page 1)

and taught third grade for three years at Scott School. She retired from teaching when their children were born—daughter, Carolyn (Faust) and sons, J. Melvin and David. Following the sale of the Home Market, Melvin was involved in real estate, creating several subdivisions in the Howe area.

Melvin died in 2004 and Marjorie in January, 2010. After Marjorie’s death, the LaGrange County Community Foundation received notification that the Brickers had designated a bequest to LCCF in appreciation for the work the foundation does in the county.

Perkinsscholarship established

Long time Stroh resident Miles Perkins and his wife Judith have established a non-permanent scholarship fund at LCCF. The scholarship will be awarded in 2011. Details will be published on the website (www.lccf.net) as soon as they are available.

Miles Perkins was the first president of LCCF and served on the board of directors from 1991-1997.

Miles and Judith Perkins also established the endowed Stroh Community Fund in 2000 and have been part of the foundation community since it was founded in 1991.

President of the board



Westview Junior High School Principal Paul Johnston will become president of the volunteer board of directors of LCCF on January 1, 2011.

Johnston was selected for the role at the LCCF annual meeting in June. He has served as board secretary since January 1, 2009, and has been a board member since January 1, 2006.

In addition to his school responsibilities, Johnston enjoys spending time with his family and boating. He is interested in antiques and has coached t-ball, baseball, softball and basketball. He is also active in his church.

The bequest will create the Melvin & Marjorie Bricker Memorial Scholarship. “Education always mattered a lot to them, and they liked the idea of helping kids be able to go to college,” Ann Bricker said recently.

This is *YOUR* LIFE

Friday, Nov. 5, first LIFE grant deadline

LaGrange Independent Foundation for Endowments (LIFE) Youth Philanthropy Group met recently to formulate plans for the 2010-2011 school year. New eighth grade representatives from Howe Military, Lakeland, Prairie Heights and Westview joined freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors from each of the four schools for the meeting at Pine Knob Park.

Friday, November 5, 2010, is the deadline for the first cycle of LIFE grants for this school year, and Friday, February 4, 2011, will be the final grant deadline.

The LIFE group members review the grant applications and serve as an advisory committee for the LCCF Board of Directors who make the final decision on grants.

In addition to new navigator, Laney Kratz (see below), this year LIFE has new guides from each of the three county public schools. Principal Donell Housel is the guide for Prairie Heights High School, school counselor Tara Marks is guide for Lakeland High School and Mike Antal, high school study hall, is the guide for Westview High School. New guides join Colonel George Douglass, dean of students, who has served as Howe School LIFE guide for a number of years.



LIFE students divide into teams to focus on one aspect of group planning for the upcoming year of practicing philanthropy.

Youth development intern joins staff



Laney J. Kratz graduated from Prairie Heights High School in 2007 and is currently enrolled in her fourth semester at Trine University majoring in biology. In addition, she is working 20 hours per week as Youth Development Intern at LCCF where her major responsibility is serving as navigator for the LIFE Youth Philanthropy group.

Kratz spent a year serving as an Indiana FFA State Officer, living and working from the FFA Leadership

Center located in Trafalgar, Indiana. During the year she worked with the leadership team to promote FFA to business and industry leaders, represented FFA at the Indiana State Fair, and frequently attended FFA Chapter banquets throughout the state.

Kratz said that although she was slightly apprehensive about the one-year FFA commitment before she applied, she is extremely glad she did it. "It was a huge opportunity," she says, "introducing me to a new appreciation for service and how it impacts you. When you see a need and

are able to give, you get so much more back."

Kratz considers traveling around the state and working with the wide variety of people to be a benefit of the year, but, at the same time, one of the biggest difficulties of the experience. "Living out of a suitcase and living with teammates can be tough," she says. "You have to learn to accept those with very different viewpoints."

In high school, in addition to FFA, Kratz played volleyball and ran track. She was involved in theater productions, was a member of Council for Drug Free LaGrange County and National Honor Society. She received a 4-H Master Achiever Award and says 4-H was life-shaping for her. "4-H has played a huge role in my life," she stated. The past summer Kratz worked at the Purdue University Extension Office in LaGrange.

Laney Kratz heard some details about the LIFE Youth Philanthropy group from her sister Emmy, who was a LIFE member during her high school years, and is excited about the opportunity to work with the young people for the next two years. She believes one of her greatest challenge will be scheduling her work day along with Trine University classes and studying.

The newest LCCF staff member has some unique interests. She gets excited about milking goats and using the milk to make cheese and ice cream. She also enjoys shooting and hunting, and is thinking seriously about a career in veterinary science.



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The LaGrange County Community Foundation, Inc. is a non-profit organization founded in 1991 to serve residents of LaGrange County. The foundation assists donors from all walks of life who want to create interest earning funds to improve the community they care about. The foundation currently manages assets of nearly \$9 million, and awards grants and scholarships to local non-profit organizations and individuals (scholarships only).

Volunteer Board of Directors

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Jan Olinger, Vice President	Dr. John Egli
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Jeff Wible, Treasurer	Steve Scott-Welty
Gene Mory, Senior Advisor	Dr. Rhonda Sharp

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 **Write a Will Day — Nov. 19**

As a service to the community attorney Jeff Wible will be available to write a free simple will at the LaGrange County Community Foundation office on Friday, November 19, 2010, from 8 a.m. to 12 noon. (Fees will be charged for a detailed document.) Call Jan Pilgrim, 463-4363, to schedule appointment.

LCCF Calendar

November 5	LIFE Grant Application deadline
November 6	Heart of Gold Luncheon
November 16	Board Meeting, 6:30 P.M.
November 25, 26	Office Closed, Thanksgiving
December	No Board Meeting
December 23, 24	Office Closed, Christmas
Dec. 31 2010, Jan. 1, 2011	Office Closed, New Year's
January 21, 2011	Lilly Endowment Community Scholarship Application Deadline
February 4, 2011	LIFE Grant Application deadline
February 25, 2011	LCCF Scholarship Application Deadline