

Legacy



Ice Arena Wins Tourism Development Grant – GPCF Scores!

Greater Polson Community Foundation boosted Mission Valley Ice Arena's project after learning MVIAA won a Montana Dep't of Commerce \$1.25 million grant by committing to provide the arena's electronic scoreboard, budgeted at \$50,000. MVIAA is among the organizations GPCF has supported, and received three Trust-Based grants.

MVIAA Board Chair Devin Huntley said, "We're grateful for all GPCF's support. What we are building is more than a facility. It's a place where people can gather, grow, and create memories. It has the potential to change lives, strengthen connections, and provide opportunities that will benefit our community for years to come."

MVIAA hopes to break ground August 1, using local service providers wherever possible. Only the ice infrastructure will require a specialty provider. MVIAA Director Carmine Mowbray said, "We're getting heartfelt support from service providers, most recently Marc Carstens who provided an aerial environmental survey at no cost. Others have stepped up, offering significant discounts because they love the project."

Montana Commerce grant money is generated from

Montana's lodging tax, and Representative Linda Reksten supported earmarking the funds for tourism development during the 2023 legislature. Rep. Reksten alerted the MVIAA of the grant.

Mowbray added, "This award is clearly the result of our generous community expressing their desire and willingness to support this facility. And Greater Polson Community Foundation is a keystone supporter."

"We will continue to ask the community for help to make the arena more welcoming, and for programming and equipment," Huntley said. "We hope you will find this as exciting as we do as this dream becomes reality."

In addition to Huntley and Mowbray, MVIAA directors are Jamie Buhr, Linda Greenwood, Hilary Lozar, Charlie Mizia, Joel Onsager, Steve Todd, and Chuck Wall. All serve on a volunteer basis.



One idea showing GPCF proudly on the arena scoreboard - Jennifer Rolfsness image.

GPCF Field Trip Inspires Trades Students

GPCF has a long collaboration with the Polson Schools and one of our favorites is the Construction Trades project which we started four years ago. We purchased tool belts and tools for the students along with a trailer to store the tools. Our goal was to help PHS students be job ready at graduation and alleviate some of the shortage of trades people in our area. We all want to see students graduate and be employable.

To address the shortage of trades people, we talked to Polson School Superintendent Andy Fors and PHS Principal Betsy Wade about the possibility of taking students on a field trip to tour Flathead Valley Community College to pique their interest in construction programs at FVCC - everything from reading blueprints, construction basics, CNC machining, plumbing, electrical, carpentry, to field experience and heavy equipment basics. We added in Culinary because a few students were interested in that



program.

Mrs. Wade arranged the field trip and rode the school bus with 19 sophomores. Some of our Board Members met the students at FVCC for the tour. The kids got a comprehensive view of the campus. Our tour guides were excellent and gave the kids lots of time for questions about each of the areas we observed. Getting an opportunity to see what the FVCC students built in class was an eye-opening experience. Tour guides spent time telling kids about all the programs and included information about dual enrollment - Running Start - with Northwest Montana high

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GPCF Field Trip, continued

schools which makes classes highly affordable and also gives students opportunities for scholarships.

Flathead Valley Community College promotes excellence in lifelong learning, focused on student success and community needs. Students achieve certifications, and most students have jobs in their chosen profession before they complete courses.

FVCC's Culinary Institute of Montana is a 22-month training in food, food handling, storage, nutrition, preparation, human resources management, and budgets. For three weeks each Spring, up to 16 students

Initially [the students] were quiet, but as the tour progressed, they became much more engaged and enthusiastic when they thought about possibilities for their futures.

- GPCF President Toni Whealon

create a menu, purchase, manage, and create a special lunch which they open to the community to showcase their talents.

Affordable, well-designed student housing was on the tour which impressed the kids. We overheard one student mentioning that he would be able to go home on weekends to visit family since Kalispell is so close to Polson.

Some of these Polson kids had never been to Kalispell before, or to a college campus. Initially they were quiet, but as the tour progressed, they became much more engaged and enthusiastic when they thought about possibilities for their futures.

Why Support GPCF? Here's What Donors Say – by Penny Jarecki

Members of the GPCF Anchor Society are a special group of visionary people who have included GPCF in their wills or estate plans. By so doing, they have the opportunity for tax benefits, and they are leaving an indelible mark on Polson, one that will benefit future generations and ensure the lasting legacy of the GPCF.

We asked some current Anchor Society members why they made legacy gifts, and here is what they said:

"I like giving support to my community. I also like the system GPCF has for screening grant applicants. I don't have to figure out where there is the greatest need or where my donation does the most good. GPCF does it for me." - Jan Smith Kasson

"I like making a contribution to our community through GPCF, a non-political organization focused on the needs here in Polson. I am happy with the way donations have been distributed." - Mickey Rosa.

"GPCF is the only foundation that benefits Polson and keeps the donations local. I've known people

on the GPCF board of directors forever and trust their judgment to spend my donation wisely." - Matt O'Neill

"Having enjoyed more than half of my adult life in the Polson community, I feel the need to give back, and GPCF is a choice for my estate plan." - Jim Oates

"We have enjoyed being members of the Polson community. Looking forward, we feel legacy giving through the GPCF is a great way to give back to the community we have come to call home." - Bob and Marsha Vick

How can YOU join our Anchor Society?

It can be as easy as deciding to **Leave Five**- designating only five percent of an estate to GPCF with remaining 95 percent to be allocated to the family or other worthy causes.

Leave Five may not sound like much, but if we all did it over time, it would have a tremendous impact on our community. **Leave Five** and become a member of the Anchor Society.

Anchor Society

Larry & Dorothy Ashcraft
Pat Binger
John S. & Elaine Cowan
Charles & Henrietta Jarecki
John and Jan Smith Kasson
Joe and Kathy Kuberka
Greg and Sue McCormick
Jim Oates
Matt & Eovonne O'Neill
Donna Jean Roffson
Mickey Rosa
Jim and Joanne Simpson
Ferri Srch
Susie Thorsrud
Bob & Marsha Vick
Jerry & Toni Whealon
John P. Zarlung
Amy Hetzler Zimorino

The Anchor Society recognizes those who have included GPCF in their estate plans.

Let us know if you'd like to join these generous community supporters.

**Please Consider This**

Naming the Greater Polson Community Foundation (GPCF) in your will establishes your permanent legacy. Every gift to the GPCF permanent endowment fund benefits the community you love forever.

Faces of Philanthropy – Tricia and Brian Campbell

GPCF is pleased to introduce Brian and Tricia Campbell as our Faces of Philanthropy this issue. Here's Tricia's reply:

Why have we chosen to support the Greater Polson Community Foundation? Brian and I have lived in the Polson community 58 and 42 years respectively. We have worked, raised two daughters, volunteered, and made many friends during those years. We have also received many benefits from this community and now we are able to give back a portion of what we have been given. The Greater Polson Community Foundation has been an organization that we feel uses our giving responsibly and wisely.

Our giving to the GPCF is part of an endowment which means that we can count on our investment to perpetuate into the future. This is important to Brian and me as we watch our own family members making their start in the Mission Valley. Projects that are supported by the Greater Polson Community Foundation will continue to provide a thriving future for those we care about. We trust them to vet

and select grant recipients that benefit the community. We have enjoyed reading about the various projects that receive support from the Foundation. It's very satisfying to learn about programs and the positive impact they promote in our community.

Giving to a Foundation that reviews and holds an organization accountable as to how they use their grant money gives us the reassurance that our donations are being used wisely.



GPCF Impact Grants Add Color; Keep Kids Water Savvy

Art 4 Polson

Thanks to Greater Polson Community Foundation's unwavering Impact support and energized fundraising, *Art 4 Polson* raised enough money to commit to six more Polson murals this summer.

There will be a "Welcome to Polson" mural on the side of Flathead Signs and Graphics building. The artist chosen is Vicky Poole. The giant letters "Polson" will depict cute pups, the beautiful Séliš Ksanka Qlispé dam, Wild Horse Island horses and a treasured car belonging to building owners, Mike and Jodee Lemm.

In June, volunteers of any talent and ability are encouraged to help "Paint the Town" as a part of a Community wide project. To be a part of the fun, Contact Natalie at nraffield@gmail.com

GPCF helps Polson's community thrive, adding art for folks to enjoy, bringing people together and fostering a sense of pride. These fantastic murals will enhance Polson in a positive way.



Polson 2nd Graders "Look before they Leap"

The GPCF Grant-funded Safety Around Water Program occurred March 9-19, 2026. This program teaches safety skills and tactics relevant for all bodies of water, from the pool at Mission Valley Aquatics to our beautiful Flathead Lake, rivers, and creeks. The focus is on survival swimming, not typical swimming lessons. Students practiced preparation techniques for emergencies, such as losing your floatie, falling off your SUP or kayak, slipping off the dock, or even a boat wreck. Skills are bubbles (clearing water from the nose and mouth to breathe), bobs (the ability to submerge calmly), blinking the water out of the eyes (seeing where you are), and kicking with direction and floating (the ability to move from one point to another). *Look Before You Leap* teaches a child to jump where it is clear, and to jump deeply enough to avoid injury. One instructor is on our local Search and Rescue team and helped raise the students' awareness about water dangers, as well as how to use these skills if he or his team is there to rescue them. The last day included flipping a raft and an emergency scenario in which the kids practice staying calm and working together.



GPCF Vision Statement

We facilitate and invest in the development of a robust and welcoming community where all have the opportunity to be healthy, educated, creative, productive, and prosperous.

Here are the people who help us realize our vision:

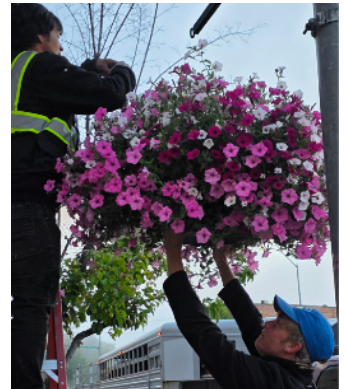
Donors –November 1, 2025 to May 26, 2026 (Our generous Flower Basket donors will be recognized in Fall *Legacy*)

Bill & Tamara Alley
Jacob & Jami Baumann
Tim & Cindy Beebe
James (Mac) Binger
Bill Boettcher
Jamie Boettcher
Ronald & Colleen Bone
Mark & Luann Bray
Paul & Kathy Briney
Joe & Gerry Browning
Laura & Jim Burrowes
John & Jill Campbell
Sarah Beck
Dave & Bea Cottington
John & Elaine Cowan Trust
Davidson Family Foundation
Dennis & Pat DeVries
Tim & Janelle Donovan
Richard & Cindy Dunshee
Craig & Sharla Ekegren
Scott Ellis
Travis & Linda Fisher
Robert & Sharon Fulton
Greg & Lynn Gardner
Robert & Patrice Gerrie
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Gary & Judith Goodman
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David & Holly Lewing
Howard & Diane Long
Alan & Linda Madsen,
Flathead Lake Forevers
Edgar Maldonado
Mary Martin
Debra McClenahan
Lynn McNamer
Fred & Sherry Nelson
Dodger & Sally Newhall
Marget Newman
Nancy & Alan Nicholson
James Oates
David Overcast
Katherine "Kitty" Pedersen
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Chuck & Jean Rigg

Dave & Suz Rittenhouse
Kitte Robins
Jamie & Connie Muller
Seguino
Peggy Seifert
Keith & Jean Seifert
Jody & Jennifer Seifert
Paul & Kolyann Sinclair
Ric Smith Century 21 Big Sky
Roger & Libby Smith
Norman & Monica Laflin-Smith
Eric & Blair Sprunk
Judy & Anais Starr-Preston
John & Pat Stene
Francis & Lulu Stock
Rosemarie Strobe
Mac & Karen Swan
Gary & Nancy Teggeman
The Waterproof
Foundation, Inc
Ron Tjaden
David & Patricia Van Acker
Marc & Becky Vergeront
Paul & Stacy Wallner
Tom & Sharon Walsh
Richard & Kathy Walsh
David & Cynthia Waterman
Gail Woods
Jerry & Toni Whealon
John Zarleng

Speaking of Flowers . . . they are adorning our Downtown now!



Passion for Polson

Dinner & Fun!



Live Auction & Raffle Baskets
Bring your bidding spirit (and your wallet)

5:30 pm Thursday, July 23!

No tickets sold at the door — limited to the first 200

Menu Includes Your choice: Prime Rib or Alaskan Halibut
Montana desert and "Passion for Polson" signature drink.

Flathead Lake Forevers
28275 Skipping Rock Lane, Big Arm



Scholarship Recipients

June Syvrud Music Scholarship
Ashlin Peters

Mission Valley Masons Scholarship
Innocent Arnold Max Ramesar
Antoinette Adams Angelina Adams
Brooklyn McClure Jake Helser
Eli O'Neill Chase Courville
Madison Harris Brielle Zempel

Stock Family Scholarship
Ruger Ellis Patience Hatch

GPCF Directors

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Liz Cunningham Linda Fisher
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Penny Jarecki, Past President
Jennifer Rolfsness, Executive Administrator
*Newsletter layout and graphics contributed
by Clarity Communications
Carmine Mowbray
Flag photo: GPCF photo*

Ask us about Designated GPCF Memorials

Memorial gifts honor those who
loved our community,
and are invested in the GPCF
permanent endowment fund.

Contact Us

P.O. Box 314, Polson, MT 59860
(406) 883-4723; gpcf4723@gmail.com
greaterpolsoncommunityfoundation.org
Instagram:
Polson Community Foundation
Find us on Facebook!