

Newsletter

December 2016



Foundation Thanks Christensen & Welcomes Ewalt to WACF Board



As 2016 comes to a close, Dale Christensen steps down from the Watertown Area Community Foundation Board after 10 years of service. Christensen's history with the Foundation began nearly 35 years ago first as a trustee representative with Wells Fargo from 1981 until retirement in 2002; and then beginning as a board member appointed by Wells Fargo in 2006.

Over the course of those years, Christensen helped in awarding numerous grants and was also instrumental in the continuing growth of the Foundation through telling others about the Foundation's good works and assisting donors with their charitable bequests.

"We could only imagine - back in the beginning - that the Foundation would grow to what it is today," Christensen said. "We've grown to approximately \$16 million and have awarded nearly \$6 million in grants over the years.

"We've added 'Area' to our name," he continued. "It's exciting to see us move into a more open setting, trying to bring in outlying community donors as well as land owners."

Christensen and his wife, Diane, established a fund at the Foundation in 2006. They have two children and three grandchildren.

Christensen's successor is Charlie Ewalt, president of Enercept. Ewalt comes to the Foundation after 28+ years in banking - most of which were management/leadership roles. Most recently, he was Market President for Wells Fargo in Watertown and Business Banking Manager for Wells Fargo Watertown, Milbank, Brookings and Huron. Ewalt has been president of Enercept for the almost four years.



Ewalt and his wife, Jayne, have been married for 32 years and have three children, one granddaughter and another on the way. He has served on the Board of Directors for the Watertown Area Development Corporation, Valley City Development Corporations and the Open Door in Valley City (similar to Human Services Agency here), Britton Economic Development

Jan's Note



For the last couple of years, I take the opportunity in December to write about the many gifts in our community which have occurred over the year that I am thankful for. The following are some of the gifts we've received in 2016.

One of the first gifts to greet me at the Foundation door is a sculpture which is part of Watertown's Artwalk. Thanks to sponsors and Friends of Artwalk, sculptures enhance our downtown, as well as the Redlin Art Center's grounds, and are enjoyed year-round by residents and visitors of all ages.

Beyond Artwalk, work continues to be done to improve downtown Watertown - a place that is home to Foundation's office as well as many other thriving businesses and organizations. Thursday Night Live, featuring weekly outdoor summer concerts in the core of downtown, grew both by numbers attending and what the event has to offer - now it even includes a Merchants' Market.

The Boys & Girls Club of Watertown embarked on a fund-raising campaign to renovate its facility and plan for its future. The Foundation is proud to be a continuing partner with the Club as it became the recipient of the largest grant in our history.

Corporation, Britton Area Community Foundation, Britton Area Chamber, Britton Soccer Association, Huron Ag Chamber Committee, and Clark area Chamber of Commerce. He also served on finance committees for St. John deBritto Catholic Church in Britton and Holy Name Catholic Church in Watertown.

Ewalt joins the WACF Board enthusiastically. “Through my years of involvement in community activities, I’ve been impressed and humbled by the incredible generosity of people who donate toward projects and activities that are meaningful to them. In some cases they’re volunteering their time and talent. In other cases, they’re giving their hard earned funds. It’s all important.

“Watertown is fortunate to have the Watertown Area Community Foundation, which has been able to support these projects and activities in the past,” he added. “It exists because of the foresight of community leaders who established the Foundation, and the generosity of past donors. Watertown is a better place because of the financial gifts bestowed on the Foundation. It will get even better with gifts provided to the Foundation now and in the future!”

“The Foundation gives special thanks to Christensen for his exceptional service,” said Jan DeBerg, WACF executive director. “We also welcome Ewalt to the Board. Both Christensen and Ewalt are all about ‘looking forward and giving back’ for the simple reason that they love their community.”

“It has been a privilege to work with the staff, Jan and the other board members over the past 10 years,” Christensen said. “We have a Youth Council and Women & Giving program that are 2nd to none in the business! I’ve also enjoyed watching Giving Back 365 grown and involve younger people in philanthropy. What a great ride to go out with Foundation assets over \$16 million – unbelievable!”

The Lions Club is stepping up to make the Lions Park on Third Avenue West all that it can be. The impressive multi-purpose facility, rightfully named Prairie Lakes Wellness Center – after its main sponsor, is nearing completion.

Watertown Area Transit service grows each year. Transit gave 56,689 rides this year – a 21% increase over last year! There are now cameras installed on the buses which further ensure passenger safety.

Our community is fortunate to have the Mellette House and the Codington County Heritage Museum. The Bramble Park Zoo continues to get bigger and better each year. Did you know it is home to 700+ animals?

We enjoy a cleaner, greener and prettier community due to the continuing efforts of the H2O-20 Clean & Green Committee. Lake Kampeska is also cleaner, in part, due to the Lake Kampeska phosphorous removal project, a process which continues to improve.

Watertown Mayor Steve Thorson claimed we would, and Watertown did have the largest fireworks show in the state thanks to many sponsors and the Lew Raderschadt family. It was also a gift that Lew got to take part in the event before he passed away.

The Redlin Art Center shared Terry Redlin’s last painting with the community this year. Though we had to say goodbye to Terry in 2016, he continues to offer us the amazing gifts of his paintings, other art and events in a beautiful venue.

We’ve been enjoying the Holiday Lighted Parade now for 20 years! The beautiful Winter Wonderland at Stokes-Thomas City Park continues to be an annual gift thanks to the Optimist Club. While the Watertown Regional Library is certainly a gift in its own rite, library staff members go above and beyond every year to host the annual Community Foundation’s

Boys & Girls Club

GRANT BEGINS – Here Liz Christianson, executive director of the Boys & Girls Club; and Jan DeBerg, executive director of the Watertown Area Community Foundation, look at plans for a newly renovated Club.

DeBerg awarded the Club its first \$100,000 of the Foundation's \$500,000 multi-year grant. The grant matches \$250,000 in capital campaign donations and \$250,000 in gifts to grow the Club's endowment fund. DeBerg says the Foundation is proud to be a part of the Club's past, present and future.



Christmas Tree Fundraiser. Don't miss your chance to give back this month by voting for any or all of the 15 local organizations with trees on display there.

Truth is, so many organizations in our community, give 365 days out of the year. There are so many more not mentioned in this column. I know I speak for many when I say "Thank you."

Watertown Area Community Foundation



From Left: Angie Reppe, Lee Schull, Dale Christensen, Dr. Lesli Jutting, and Laurie Benson.

Trustee Representatives: Scott Olson, Great Western Bank; and Tyler DeBoer, Wells Fargo Bank, NA; Staff: Jan DeBerg, executive director; Greg Blow, donor development; Julianne Endres, marketing/donor services; Jill Slobotski, administrative assistant.

The Watertown Area Community Foundation is governed by a volunteer board who broadly represent the Watertown Community. These board members are appointed by the:

*City of Watertown
Watertown Area Chamber of Commerce
Watertown School District
Great Western Bank
Wells Fargo Bank, N.A.*

As of January 2015 our assets were approximately \$15 million. We have over 100 funds that provide grants and scholarships each year to residents and organizations in Watertown.

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