

# Thoughtful Giving

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Cover: Massena Arts and Theater Association President Allison Smith inside the historic Schine Theater.

**THE NORTHERN NEW YORK COMMUNITY FOUNDATION** is dedicated to making Jefferson, Lewis, and St. Lawrence counties more sustainable and vibrant communities where all residents can thrive. As the region's community foundation, we are the place where generosity meets the commitment and mission of nonprofits and the potential of students. Since 1929, many people have entrusted their charitable resources to the Foundation, creating a permanent source of philanthropic capital. That generosity made it possible for the Foundation to award more than \$4.36 million in grants and scholarships in 2025 and collaborate and lead on many meaningful initiatives.

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# FRIENDS ARE THE HEART OF THE DIFFERENCE WE MAKE TOGETHER



“Great communities don’t happen by themselves. It takes committed citizens who are driven to lead and willing to step up and invest in a better tomorrow.”

It is the time of year that we can predictably feel the grip of winter slowly loosening as we start to look ahead to the promise of spring and new beginnings. You will notice, too, with this issue of **Thoughtful Giving**, we are turning the page to a renewed look. In addition to the news and updates you’ve come to expect, we hope this new format will allow for more opportunities to better tell the many stories of the work you make possible.

Over the last 17 years, I have been fortunate to be associated with the work and mission of the Community Foundation. During that time, more of you have found a pathway to unlocking the best potential of the place we call home. One of the best things that has come from that time is getting to know the many amazing donors who make it happen. Each of you has a unique and compelling story to tell and has left an indelible mark on our region. You are woven into the fabric of what makes living here great.

As we do each spring, we shine a

special spotlight on those who make the decision to support our work directly through the **Friends of the Foundation Community Betterment Annual Fund**. Their one gift each year signals the highest level of belief in the power of community philanthropy in ways that are immediate and lasting, casting a wide net of betterment that affects us all.

We view each of those listed on the following pages as part of our family. We know your belief in the value of our partnership requires a high level of trust, something we never take for granted. Many of you have given year after year, and we acknowledge your steadfast friendship and all it represents.

Throughout the year ahead, we look forward to sharing with you more examples of the difference you make, the lives you change, and the communities you build. All of these become part of your story, and ours, and we are beyond grateful to work alongside you in that worthy endeavor.



Rande Richardson is president and CEO of the Northern New York Community Foundation. He has served donors in his present role since 2009. A lifelong Northern New York resident, he is a former funeral director and a proud father of two lacrosse goalies. Email him at [rande@nnycf.org](mailto:rande@nnycf.org).

# FRIENDS OF THE FOUNDATION

## 2025 Community Betterment Annual Fund Supporters

Community Foundation donors ensure that Northern New York has a flexible and reliable source of philanthropic resources — today, tomorrow, and forever. More than 400 individuals, families, and organizations from across Jefferson, Lewis, and St. Lawrence counties and beyond made gifts to help enable our work together in communities across our region. All **Friends of the Foundation Community Betterment Annual Fund** donors between **January 1** and **December 31, 2025**, are gratefully recognized here.

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# FOUNDATION BUSINESS PARTNERS

## 2025 Community Betterment Annual Fund Supporters

The Community Foundation gratefully acknowledges gifts of businesses and organizations in support of Foundation leadership programs and initiatives. Those that directly supported the Friends of the Foundation Community Betterment Annual Fund, and/or the Youth Philanthropy Council, LEAD Giving Circle, Community Spirit Youth Giving Challenge, or Operation Snowstorm between January 1 and December 31, 2025, are gratefully recognized here. Their gifts help make our work together possible.



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Youth Philanthropy students participate in a team-building exercise during orientation.

## NEW 'YOUTH PHILANTHROPY EXPERIENCE' OPENS TO RISING NINTH-GRADERS

"We are excited to build upon more than a decade of positive youth development and offer younger students a unique summer experience in our community. Participants will gain an incredible insight into the needs of our communities and what makes them thrive."

– Leslie Renzi, Youth Philanthropy Experience advisor

The Community Foundation's new summer **Youth Philanthropy Experience** is set to take off in July with up to 17 rising freshmen who attend school or reside in Jefferson County.

The unique experience will deliver a broad introduction to community philanthropy, grantmaking, and hands-on learning about the vital work and missions of local nonprofits.

Students will attend three-hour morning sessions at the Community Foundation and participating Watertown-based

nonprofits beginning Monday, July 27, and concluding Friday, July 31.

As the Foundation's **Youth Philanthropy Council** has grown in the past 15 years, the new week-long summer program is an opportunity for younger students to learn about their community, meet local leaders, develop debate and critical thinking skills, and collaborate with peers.

Those who participate in the experience will be empowered to make a difference in their community through grantmaking and volunteer opportunities.

Students will be entrusted with grant decisions that will allow them to directly impact the quality of life of the area. Adult leaders, Foundation staff, and current and past Youth Philanthropy Council members will mentor participants.

Students who reside in or attend school in Jefferson County are invited to apply. Ideal students are committed to the full experience and able to attend all sessions during the week-long program.

Applications open **Wednesday, April 8** and students will be accepted on a rolling basis until the program is full. The application should be completed solely by the student who is applying. Candidates selected for further consideration will be contacted individually.

Contact Community Foundation Philanthropy Associate **Emily Pfeil**, [emily@nnycf.org](mailto:emily@nnycf.org), or **315-782-7110**, with questions or to learn more.



Massena Arts and Theater Association President Allison Smith inside the historic Schine Theater in downtown Massena.

## FOUNDATION FUNDING HELPS RESTORE SCHINE THEATER IN HEART OF MASSENA

**C**ommunity Foundation grant funding totaling \$60,000 will help the **Massena Arts and Theater Association** move its vision for a new heart of downtown closer to reality.

In December, the Association was awarded a \$50,000 Community Foundation matching grant and a \$10,000 grant from the **Dr. D. Susan Badenhausen Legacy Fund** at the Foundation to support the \$3.2 million project.

The investment reflects more than financial support. Over the past two years, the Foundation has worked closely with the volunteer-led organization, offering guidance on fundraising strategy, community engagement, and long-term sustainability as the project has taken shape.

That partnership has helped position restoration of the historic Schine Theater as a catalytic investment in Massena's downtown, blending arts and culture,

"Partnering with Northern New York Community Foundation helps to validate our belief in and passion for this project. The Foundation's belief in the project enables us to continue knowing that such a reputable funder sees our vision and believes in the project."

— Allison Smith, president, Massena Arts and Theater Association

community pride, and much-needed economic development.

Originally built in 1918, the ornate movie house closed in 1995 and has remained largely vacant since. Today, community leaders are working to transform the 14,000-square-foot building into a multi-use performing arts and community event center designed to serve residents of all ages.

"This project has moved, in what feels like a very short time, from a group of passionate concerned citizens hoping to save

a beloved theater into a viable community organization that is ready to serve as the backbone of downtown Massena and the North Country," Massena Arts and Theater Association President Allison Smith said.

Work is projected to begin this summer with substantial completion targeted for early 2027.

The project represents a broader goal for the Foundation: helping communities invest in places that bring people together and strengthen the cultural and civic life of the region for generations to come.



# THOUGHTFUL LEGACIES

So they are never forgotten. Touching lives. Forever.

All tribute gifts made in memory of the following individuals are thoughtfully recognized on pages 14 and 15 of this issue.

## CALEB WESLEY ALFORD

**C**aleb Wesley Alford brought energy, humor, and kindness to every place he went. Born in Rochester



in 1998, a son to **Rebekah Alford**, he spent his early years working alongside his grandfather on the family farm, developing the strong work ethic

and warm spirit that defined him. A 2016 graduate of South Jefferson High School, Caleb was a standout athlete who loved sports, but lacrosse was his true passion. He continued his playing career at SUNY Oswego, where he earned a degree in business management in 2020 and led the Lakers as the team's top scorer during his sophomore season. Caleb carried that same enthusiasm into his work and everyday life, from helping at his family's restaurant, Rainbow Shores, to traveling for work along the East Coast and discovering new places and great food. Most recently, he had begun a new chapter in Charleston, S.C. When Caleb passed away unexpectedly at 27, his family honored his life by establishing a lacrosse scholarship at the Community Foundation for South Jefferson students, ensuring his passion for the game and encouragement of others will inspire young athletes for years to come.

## RONALD L. BOVAY

**R**onald Lee Bovay believed deeply in family, hard work, and the strength of community. An entrepreneur



and small-business owner, Ron operated Richville Furniture for many years, building not only a livelihood but lasting relationships with neighbors and

friends across the region. Born in 1937, Ron graduated from Hermon High School and attended Canton ATC. He married **Gail Aldridge** in 1955, and together they raised a daughter and two sons while sharing 43 years of marriage before her passing in 1999. In 2013, Ron married **Ann Adams**, continuing a life centered on family and companionship. Beyond business, Ron was known for his generosity and quiet commitment to helping others. A longtime friend of the Community Foundation, he supported charitable causes that were meaningful to him and Ann, while also volunteering his time with numerous organizations. When Ron passed away at 88, his family honored his spirit of giving by directing memorial gifts to the Community Foundation. Through this thoughtful tribute, his example of service, generosity, and community pride continues to inspire and make a difference.

## NANCY A. CHAMBERLAIN

**F**or more than three decades, **Nancy A. Chamberlain** shaped young lives through teaching, encouragement,



and example. A home economics educator whose career began at Copenhagen Central School, Nancy later returned to Lewis County to teach at

Beaver River Central School, where she inspired generations of students until her retirement in 1979. Born in Ilion in 1924, Nancy graduated from Ilion High School and earned her degree from Cornell University in 1945. She married **Clifford Ivan Chamberlain** in 1947, and together they raised four sons while sharing nearly 50 years of marriage. Beyond the classroom, Nancy devoted her time to church and community, offering her talents to organizations and causes that reflected her generous spirit. Family remained at the center of her life. When Nancy passed away in February at the remarkable age of 101, her family honored her legacy by directing memorial gifts to the Community Foundation in support of the **Beaver River Central School District Educational Foundation Annual Fund**, ensuring the school she served so faithfully continues to benefit future generations.

## VELMA M. COBB



**V**elma M. Cobb was a steady source of kindness whose generosity quietly shaped the lives around her. Born in Woodville in 1939, she grew up surrounded by brothers and treasured the close-knit family bonds that would remain central throughout her life. A graduate of Union Academy of Belleville, Velma began her career in the Watertown office of Black Clawson before building a loving home in Adams with her husband, **John W. Cobb Jr.**, whom she married in 1960. Together they raised a son and daughter and shared 51 years of marriage. Along the way, Velma worked as a secretary, helped neighbors care for their homes, and offered friendship and support to many

who needed it most. Velma and John were devoted to their community and to causes that strengthened it. When Velma passed away at 86, her family honored that spirit by directing memorial gifts to the Community Foundation to help build the **John W. Cobb Memorial Fund Scholarship**, also recognizing her support of John's longtime dedication to the fire service. Through this thoughtful tribute, Velma's compassion and devotion to others continue to make a difference.

# ROBERT “BOB” STURTZ

**R**obert “Bob” Sturtz believed that success carried a simple responsibility: give back to the community that helped make it possible. A lifelong North Country businessman, Bob built Slack Chemical Company into one of the Northeast’s leading chemical distributors after purchasing the Carthage-based firm in 1986. Under his leadership, the company grew, guided by his belief that people — especially employees — were the heart of any successful enterprise. His success in business was only part of Bob’s story. Service and generosity were equally central to his life. He and his wife, **Jean**, shared a deep commitment to the North Country and to the organizations that strengthen its communities. Together, they raised a family while building a culture rooted in hard work, kindness, and giving back. Through



the years, Bob lent his leadership and support to many causes across the region, stepping forward to lead when he saw a need, often without being asked. He and his family were longtime friends of the Community Foundation, believing strongly in its mission to grow philanthropy for the good of the area. In 2015, through a transformative gift, Bob and Jean were instrumental in the creation of the Foundation’s Northern New York Philanthropy Center, creating a welcoming space where nonprofits, donors, and community partners can come together to strengthen the region. Through his example, Bob

demonstrated that leadership is measured not only by what one builds in business, but also by what one gives back. The Community Foundation’s philanthropic impact on the region was forever enhanced because of his steadfast commitment.

## WILLIAM “BILL” P. DOYLE II

**W**illiam P. “Bill” Doyle II built a life defined by warmth, humor, and generosity. A Potsdam native and proud member of Immaculate Heart Central’s Class of 1968, Bill carried a strong sense of community throughout his life. He built a successful career in sales, first rising to district manager at Century Housewares and later working with the team at WWTI TV 50. In each role, his easygoing nature and genuine interest in others made him both a trusted colleague and a valued friend. Bill proudly served in the U.S. Army Reserve and remained deeply engaged in his community. He valued family above all. Together with his first wife, he shared two daughters. Bill later married **Debra Platko**, building a family that included a son and daughter. Following Bill’s passing, his family chose a tribute that reflects his enduring connection to Immaculate Heart Central. Memorial gifts established the **William P. Doyle Memorial Golf Scholarship** at the Northern New York Community Foundation, helping IHC seniors pursue their goals. Through this scholarship, Bill’s legacy of encouragement and generosity continues to open doors for young people.



## CHARLOTTE M. FULKERSON

**C**harlotte Marie Fulkerson inspired generations of students through nearly three decades in the classroom. A dedicated educator and lifelong learner, she taught mathematics at South Jefferson Central School from 1962 until her retirement in 1988, encouraging students to think critically and pursue new possibilities. She also helped introduce computer classes to the school—an early step toward preparing students for a changing world. Born in Bellona, New York, in 1936, Charlotte spent part of her childhood on the family farm before moving to Rochester. She later attended Union Academy in Belleville and earned her teaching degree from SUNY Brockport. In 1953, she married **William “Bill” Fulkerson**, and together they shared 72 years of marriage while raising a son and three daughters. A devoted teacher and passionate student of art, Charlotte believed in helping others flourish. When she passed away in January at age 90, her family honored her life through memorial gifts to the Community Foundation, ensuring her spirit of learning and encouragement continues to uplift others in the community she served.



## CAROL ANN KABAN

**C**arol Ann Kaban devoted her life to caring for others as a nurse, military officer, and mentor to fellow caregivers. Born in Lowville in 1942, Carol graduated from Lowville Academy and earned her nursing diploma from the House of the Good Samaritan in 1962. She built a distinguished career defined by clinical excellence and constant learning, earning advanced certifications in lifesaving and trauma care while serving patients across the North Country. Her work ranged from hospital nursing to high-intensity roles as a flight nurse and paramedic assistant, where her calm expertise made a critical difference. Carol also served her country for 22 years in the United States Army Reserve, retiring as a lieutenant colonel at Fort Drum. Adventure, travel, and the outdoors brought her joy beyond her profession. When Carol passed away in January at 83, her family directed memorial gifts to the Community Foundation to strengthen the **Rosamond Van Arnam Memorial Nursing Scholarship**, ensuring her commitment to compassionate care continues through future generations of nurses in our community.



## JOAN TAYLOR WELCH



**J**oan Taylor Welch devoted her life to helping young students discover the joy of learning. Born in Massena in 1933, Joan graduated from Massena School before earning a bachelor's degree from Potsdam State College and a master's degree from St. Lawrence University. She spent more than 25 years teaching fourth grade at Nightengale School, leaving a lasting impression on generations of students. In 1997, she married **Dr. Allen A. Welch**. She remained dedicated to education throughout her life and in 2014 established the **Dr. Allen A. and Joan Taylor Welch Education Fund** in memory of her husband, who practiced dentistry in Massena for over 37

years, and **Donald J. Connors** and **Kathryn Fay**. The fund provides annual scholarships to graduating Madrid-Waddington seniors. Through Joan's will and in her memory, an additional gift will be added to the fund to provide scholarships to students graduating from Massena Central School. This gift is also in memory of Joan's parents, **Henry Ward Taylor** and **Beulah Hess Taylor**. The Welch's lasting imprint on local students will continue for generations to come.

## JOHN GEORGE "JACK" LEWIS

**J**ohn George "Jack" Lewis carried his Northern New York roots with him throughout a lifetime devoted to education and community.



A proud member of the Watertown High School Class of 1956, Jack built a distinguished 37-year career in public education.

After earning bachelor's and master's degrees in educational administration from SUNY Oswego and a doctorate from SUNY Albany, he served students and families at Shenendehowa Central Schools in Clifton Park, including three decades in school leadership. Together with his wife, **Valerie**, they raised a daughter and a son and celebrated 61 years of marriage. Jack also believed deeply in community involvement. A passionate sports enthusiast, he helped young athletes discover the discipline and confidence of wrestling, serving as a coach and mentor to many. When Jack passed away in January, his family directed memorial gifts to the Community Foundation to help grow the **Watertown High School Class of 1956 Scholarship**, a lasting tribute that will support students from the hometown he always cherished.

## JOSEPH P. MALATINO

**J**oseph Peter Malatino believed in serving others, whether standing proud in the U.S. Air Force or helping



customers at the Post Office. Born in Watertown in 1933, Joe graduated from Watertown High School and enlisted in the U.S. Air Force. As an air-

craft engine mechanic, he served around the world before returning home with an honorable discharge as a staff sergeant. Following the service, he was a lineman for the New York Telephone Company. He later joined the United States Postal Service, where he built a nearly three-decade career. In 1976, Joe married **Marianne Belcher**, and together, they made their home in Hounsfield and shared a love of the outdoors. They also shared a deep appreciation for their community and the importance of education. Following Joe's passing at age 92, his family honored his life by directing memorial gifts to help grow the **Belcher Scholarship** of the Community Foundation, which will continue to have a lasting impact upon local students as they pursue studies in environmental conservation.

## BRADLEY W. SMITH

**B**radley W. Smith spent his life grounded in the place he loved most. Born in Pierrepont Manor in



1936, he remained deeply connected to his hometown and the people who shaped it. A graduate of Mannsville-Manor High School, Brad built a career

as an agricultural salesman, traveling throughout the Northeast, forming friendships as readily as business ties. In 1962, Brad married **Nancy Belloff**. Together they raised a son and two daughters and built a life centered on faith, family, and service. An avid outdoorsman, Brad found joy in the woods, on the trail, and wherever nature called. In retirement, he and Nancy spent part of each year in Arizona, where they embraced warm weather, hiking, and volunteering in their communities. Longtime friends of the Community Foundation, Brad and Nancy established charitable funds to support causes close to their hearts in the communities they cherished. Through their generosity, Brad's legacy of kindness and care for community continues to make a lasting difference.

## KEVIN S. JOHNSON

**K**evin S. Johnson was known for the quiet kindness and generosity he showed to family, friends, and everyone he met. Born in Watertown in 1976, Kevin graduated from Indian River Central School and went on to earn degrees from Jefferson Community College and SUNY Albany. He recently joined the Nanotech Center in Albany as a technician with New York Creates, where he became part of a team advancing cutting-edge technology. When Kevin passed away unexpectedly at 49, his family chose a meaningful way to honor his life. Memorial gifts were directed to the Community Foundation to help build the **Kelli Johnson Memorial Scholarship Fund**, celebrating his sister's legacy while supporting future students. Through this thoughtful tribute, Kevin's spirit of generosity continues to open doors for young people pursuing their education.

## DEBRA S. GALLOWAY



**D**ebra S. Galloway devoted her life to inspiring creativity and curiosity in young people. A passionate art educator, she spent her entire career at General Brown Central School District, where she established the school's art department and curriculum, opening doors for generations of students to explore their talents. She also shared her love of language by teaching Spanish during her tenure. Born in Watertown in 1952 and raised in Black River, Debra graduated from Carthage Central High School before pursuing her passion for art and education at Canton ATC, SUNY Potsdam, and SUNY Buffalo, earning a Master of Fine Arts and certification in art education. Beyond the classroom, Debra cherished life with her husband, **Clifford "Skip" Galloway**, at their home in Pillar Point, where they operated a small hobby farm and welcomed family and friends. She cared deeply for animals and was dedicated to preserving local history and culture. To honor her legacy, Debra's family established the **Debra S. Galloway Memorial Scholarship** at the Community Foundation, supporting graduating seniors from General Brown High School and continuing her lifelong encouragement of creativity and learning.

## EDWARD ALLEN RUSSELL

**E**dward Allen Russell built a life defined by hard work, integrity, and a deep commitment to his community.



A 1975 graduate of Watertown High School, Ed followed in his father Harold's footsteps and took over the family service station in 1989. For decades, it

was more than a place for repairs, it was a trusted neighborhood hub where customers were greeted by name and neighbors looked out for one another. Under Ed's steady leadership, the station stood as a symbol of reliability and honesty. He was known not only for skilled work, but for his willingness to help anyone in need, whether supporting local causes or making sure someone could get safely back on the road. Ed proudly operated the business until retiring in 2021. Family meant everything to him. With his wife, **Barbara**, they raised a daughter, **Julia**, and built a life rooted in love and community. Following his passing in February at age 68, his family established the **Edward A. Russell Scholarship** at the Community Foundation to support students pursuing studies in auto mechanics, ensuring Ed's legacy of perseverance, craftsmanship, and community service continues for generations.

## DONALD H. MCKEAN

**D**onald H. McKean helped young people chart their futures. A teacher, coach, and ultimately



director of guidance at Thousand Islands Central School, Don steered hundreds of students toward college and careers. His steady counsel shaped

lives and strengthened a community. A graduate of Palmyra-Macedon Central School, SUNY Brockport, and the University of Rochester, Don began his career in physical education before finding his calling as a guidance counselor, helping to set hundreds of young men and women on their paths to success. He also served for many years as a part-time immigration officer at the Thousand Islands border and gave generously of his time to civic and charitable causes. He married **Joyce A. Milligan** in 1965 in Cape Vincent and together they raised two sons. When he passed away in January at 85, his family honored his lifelong commitment to students by directing memorial gifts to the **Thousand Islands Foundation**, a Community Foundation affiliate. Through this tribute, Don's enduring belief in education, and in young people, continues to open doors.

## NANCIE S. WILLIAMS

**F**or nearly four decades, **Nancie S. "Wiggy" Williams** shaped the lives of young students with patience,



humor, and a deep commitment to learning. A beloved fourth-grade teacher at Holy Family School, she began teaching in 1956 and remained

in the classroom until her retirement in 1995, guiding generations of children. Born in Watertown in 1935, Nancie graduated from Watertown High School and pursued her calling in education through studies at LeMoyne College and SUNY Potsdam, earning her permanent teaching certificate. Her classroom was known not only for learning, but for laughter, reflecting the warmth and wit that made her so memorable to students and colleagues alike. Nancie's life was grounded in her Catholic faith and a quiet dedication to serving others. She generously volunteered her time and talents to organizations that strengthened her community. Through a gift in her will to the Community Foundation, Nancie ensured her kindness and generosity will continue to benefit the community she loved, an enduring tribute to a life devoted to teaching and service.

## IN OUR NEXT ISSUE ...

Our summer 2026 issue of **Thoughtful Giving** will feature stories and memorial tributes about the lives and legacies of several Community Foundation supporters who recently passed, including **Janice M. "Jan" Beck**



# RECENT TRIBUTE GIFTS

Remembering those we lost and honoring those we love

Includes only gifts made to the **Friends of the Foundation Community Betterment Fund** from Nov. 18, 2025, to March 11, 2026, or for those who recently passed.

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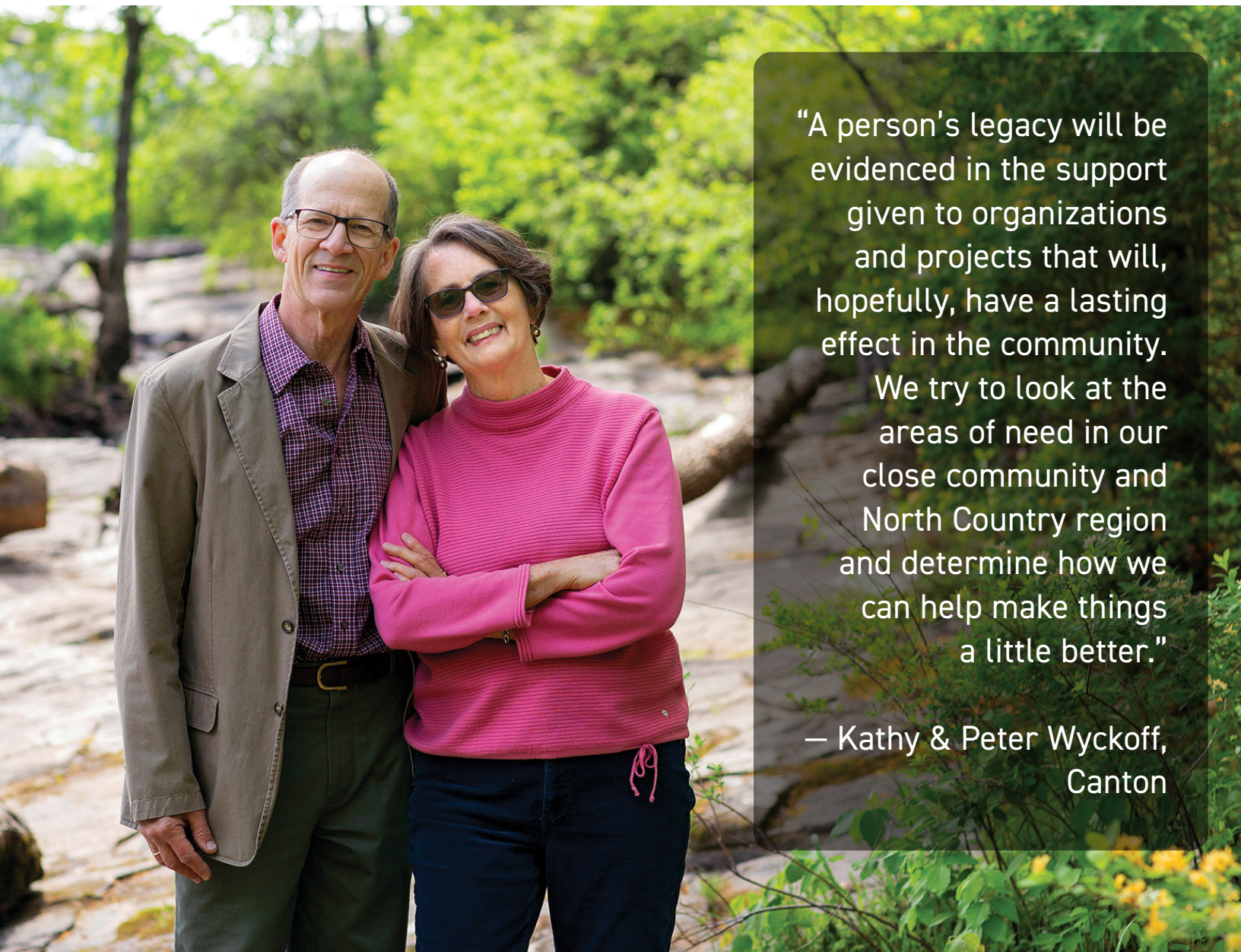


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## OUR COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FAMILY



“A person’s legacy will be evidenced in the support given to organizations and projects that will, hopefully, have a lasting effect in the community. We try to look at the areas of need in our close community and North Country region and determine how we can help make things a little better.”

— Kathy & Peter Wyckoff,  
Canton