

The Greater Cedarburg ... now and forever FOUNDATION

A Newsletter for the Friends of the Cedarburg Foundation

Thirty-fifth Edition — August 2020

Save the Date: September 14-16, 2020 GCF Virtual Fall Fundraiser!



This year our annual Greater Cedarburg Foundation (GCF) Gala Celebration will take the shape of a three-day Virtual Fall Fundraiser with an exciting twist on September 14-16, 2020. While our current COVID-19 reality informs this year's change, it is critical

— perhaps now more than ever — to keep GCF in mind as you consider tangible ways to give back to our community.

Launching on September 14, this event will feature three videos spotlighting how GCF has partnered with community organizations for everyone's benefit.

Says Langholz, "Last year, our live gala celebration, 'A Night at the Cedarburg Museums,' was a huge success in raising funds thanks to our community, and we look forward to doing the same virtually this fall for organizations that may be more in need than ever. Over the last few years, our grant cycle included donations to the VFW, Family

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Bill Wernecke Sr. Receives 18th Annual Civic Award

When Bill Wernecke Sr. was 14 in 1946, a double-feature at the Rivoli Theatre cost 14 cents and his parents — who lived in Whitefish Bay — bought a small business called Cedarburg Lumber "way out in the middle of nowhere."

"My father was a great salesman in the coal industry and a very hard worker," says Wernecke, 87, this year's recipient of the Greater Cedarburg Foundation's Annual Civic Award. "He originally wanted to buy a hardware store, but when the opportunity arose to grow a small lumberyard, he didn't hesitate."

"I was fascinated with everything, especially the machinery," Bill explains. "None of us knew anything about the business, but it was a matter of survival and we were ready to learn."



"Raising a family here in such a close-knit atmosphere, Sue and I thought it was the right thing to give back to the community that gave us so much," said Bill Wernecke Sr.

Bill graduated from Cedarburg High School as class valedictorian in 1950 while working summers in the family business. He went on to earn a business degree four years later at

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Langholz Leads GCF



Mark Langholz

Mark Langholz, an attorney at Levy & Levy S.C. in Cedarburg, was installed as the president of the Greater Cedarburg

Foundation (GCF) at its annual meeting on June 9, 2020. Langholz replaces John Cordio, who remains on the board as past president.

"Those who live in Cedarburg really do love our community and take great pride in it," Langholz said. "I believe GCF is such a tremendous organization because we get to connect with those who feel so strongly about Cedarburg — and be an avenue whose purpose is to fund projects to improve our greater community. People know it takes vision and hard work to maintain the investment in our community, and I am very proud to be part of this continued effort."

A graduate of Marquette University Law School, Langholz focuses his practice on family law while also assisting his clients with small business matters and litigation. In addition to his law practice, Langholz has served as President of the Cedarburg Chamber of Commerce, President of the Cedarburg Cultural Center, and Board Member of Advocates of Ozaukee County, among other leadership roles. He has also coached a variety of youth sports teams in Cedarburg.

He and his wife, Lori, have two children — both of whom attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison. They have lived in Cedarburg nearly 14 years.

Organizations Receive Grants from GCF

Special Grants Provide Direct Assistance during COVID-19 Crisis

The Greater Cedarburg Foundation (GCF) awarded nearly \$40,000 to eight area non-profit organizations this spring as part of its annual grant cycle process. Recipients were to be recognized at the GCF Civic Event to be held at the Cedarburg Cultural Center, but this event was canceled due to concerns for public health and safety based on COVID-19.

“We are very proud to support these organizations with funding to advance a variety of social, arts, history, and educational programs,” said Heather Cain, GCF grant committee chairperson. “We hope these grants will help make a difference in our community.”

Organizations receiving grants for the 2020 annual GCF grant cycle review include:

- **Family Enrichment Center of Ozaukee, Inc.** for a carpet replacement project
- **Family Sharing of Ozaukee County** to purchase a truck to retrieve and distribute donations
- **Friends of the Port Washington Senior Center** for its Aging Mastery Program

- **Interfaith Caregivers of Ozaukee County** for its outreach program “BeFriend a Senior Today”
- **Lakeshore Regional Child Advocacy Center** to upgrade facilities that will allow greater attendance
- **Ozaukee County Historical Society** to rehabilitate Cedarburg’s original train station that was relocated to Pioneer Village
- **Ozaukee Family Services** for its Parents as Teachers Program, which provides education and guidance to parents to help understand stages of early childhood development
- **Saukville Community Food Pantry** for a walk-in freezer to expand food pantry outreach

In addition, GCF Board Members held a special session in early April to approve three additional grants that total \$25,000 to non-profit organizations positioned to provide immediate, direct help to families in need who were being impacted by the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. These organizations receiving targeted funds include Ozaukee Family Sharing (\$10,000)

and Saukville Food Pantry (\$10,000), both specifically for food purchases, and Family Promise (\$5,000) for direct client assistance to families impacted by the COVID-19 crisis.

“Our board felt that the GCF was in a position to help during this difficult time and took action to make these special grants,” said John Cordio, immediate past GCF President. “The GCF board would like to appeal to everyone in the community to consider donating directly to non-profit organizations that enhance our quality of life in the Greater Cedarburg Area during this unprecedented time.”

The Greater Cedarburg Foundation’s mission is to preserve the local cultural heritage, enhance artistic endeavors and support educational, social and community-based services in the Greater Cedarburg area.

Since its inception, the Greater Cedarburg Foundation has awarded more than \$1.5 million in grants to deserving projects and nonprofit organizations in the community.

The grant cycle begins each year in October, when applications are available online at cedarburgfoundation.com.

GRANT SPOTLIGHTS ...

Family Sharing of Ozaukee County

Alleviating hunger in Ozaukee County with dignity and compassion is the mission of Family Sharing of Ozaukee County, founded in the 1970s and featuring a resale store that generates funds to stock its food pantry.

Says Executive Director Julie Hoover, “Our Resale Store has reopened and is operating with limited hours due to COVID-19 – most of our volunteers are older and in the vulnerable population. With this income stream reduced, community donations are vital. Our pantry has remained open throughout the Safer At Home orders, and

we know that the number we serve will increase as the pandemic and its economic impact continue.”

The GCF grant helped fund a truck to pick up necessary food items, school supplies and personal care items, and additional funds are ensuring that food is on the pantry shelves for anyone who needs additional support during this crisis.

“We are so grateful for the generosity of the Greater Cedarburg Foundation and its supporters – you make our work possible,” concludes Hoover.



Family Sharing of Ozaukee County: A dedicated volunteer packs up food items and food supplies for delivery to those in need.

GRANT SPOTLIGHTS ...

Lakeshore Regional Child Advocacy Center

Providing real solutions for children and families dealing with abuse, domestic violence, and trauma is the mission of the Lakeshore Regional Child Advocacy Center (LRCA), which received a grant from GCF this spring to expand its community education outreach.

“We develop partnerships with local mental health professionals, child protective services, law enforcement, D.A. offices, Advocates of Ozaukee County, and other allies – connecting them with children and families to provide concrete resources, support and solutions and help reduce additional trauma,” says Amanda Didier, LRCA’s Executive Director.

The LRCA’s Child Education Center provides a meeting place for these connections, where a myriad of key functions take place: interviews with children and families, case reviews, and large-group educational opportunities such as live speakers, webinars, and other classroom training. Thanks to this grant, the center will allow for much-expanded capacity along with additional furniture and designated offices for the LRCA staff who coordinate these opportunities.

“We are very grateful for this added capability to serve our communities as we strive to increase awareness of child abuse

and family violence, and provide educational opportunities to help start new pathways toward change,” says Didier.



Lakeshore Regional Child Advocacy Center: Children and families receive creative, concrete support to help reduce trauma and develop new pathways toward change.

Ozaukee County Historical Society: Restoring a local gem



Ozaukee County Historical Society: Our local history and heritage is reflected in treasures such as this original train station, which is currently receiving further restoration.

Built in 1907, the Cedarburg Train Station accommodated the increased passenger rail traffic of the time, which spurred social and economic development in small rural communities. With the dawn of the automobile and desire for independent

travel, the last passenger train came through Cedarburg in 1950. The train station continued to be used as a freight line for delivery, shipment and maintenance.

“In 1982, the old Cedarburg Train Station was slated to be burned down by the Milwaukee Road,” says Mary Ann Velnetske, 2nd Vice President, OCHS. “OCHS rescued it from its fiery fate and moved it to Ozaukee County Pioneer Village and then launched into a period of tremendous restoration.”

The Cedarburg Train Station now welcomes thousands of visitors each year, offering visitors the chance to connect to a bygone era and see a variety of railroad memorabilia.

While OCHS has maintained, patched and repaired the train station through the years, further restoration now will take place thanks to the GCF grant to help repaint in 1940s Milwaukee Road colors brown and tan, replace the platform overhead lights with vintage 1940 lights, and add a newly redesigned freight platform with a ramp, among other things.

“Our mission is to preserve, advance and disseminate knowledge of the history and heritage of Ozaukee County,” continues Velnetske. “Preserving this precious landmark and its artifacts allows future generations to learn about Cedarburg’s past and the important role the railroad played in our regional development.”

GCF Virtual Fall Fundraiser (from pg. 1)

Enrichment Center of Ozaukee, Friends of the Port Washington Senior Center, Interfaith Caregivers of Ozaukee County, and the Lakeshore Regional Child Advocacy Center, among others.”

In addition, this April GCF Board Members held a special session to approve three additional grants to non-profit organizations positioned to provide immediate, direct help to families in need who are being impacted

by the current COVID-19 pandemic. Organizations that received these targeted funds include Ozaukee Family Sharing and Saukville Food Pantry, both specifically for food purchases, and Family Promise for direct client assistance to families impacted by the COVID-19 crisis.

Since 2001, the Foundation has awarded grants totaling more than \$1.5 million to many valued community organizations

and projects that preserve the local cultural heritage, enhance artistic endeavors and support educational, social and community-based services in the greater Cedarburg area.

“Please consider tuning in on September 14-16, 2020 and donating to our 2020 Fall Fundraiser – watch for emails to come,” says Tim Wilkinson, board member and annual GCF fund drive chair. “We appreciate donations of any size.”

Annual Civic Award (from pg. 1)

Northwestern University, where he met his wife, Sue, who was a student in the Medill School of Journalism there.

After both graduated in spring of 1954, they married and moved to the apartment above what is now the Java House on Washington Avenue. Bill's father promptly told him, "Your mother and I haven't had a vacation in the four years since you've been in college. We are leaving shortly for six weeks in Europe, and you are in charge."

Once again, Bill dove in.

"It was tremendously challenging, but interesting and exciting," says Bill. "Dad was wonderful – a tough taskmaster but also a good teacher. It was wonderful helping people build their dream homes...tangible and rewarding, and I was motivated."

When Bill eventually took the helm at Cedarburg Lumber in the late 1960s, he forged forward and, with a thriving business that involved all three of their children – Bill Jr., Clark, and Trish – both Bill and Sue began giving back.

"Cedarburg is a very special place," he says. "To live here, raise a family with the security and close-knit atmosphere, we felt it was the right thing to start giving back to the community that gave us so much. My parents always did – they taught by example."

Bill joined the Cedarburg Lions Club, becoming president in 1961, and went on to lead the Cedarburg-Grafton Rotary Club as a charter member in 1964 (he, along with Don Levy, are the only surviving founders).

Eventually, Bill became President of CESSA 19 School Committee, served on the board of St. Boniface Church in Mequon, and helped rebuild the memory garden at St. Christopher's in River Hills.

Cedarburg Lumber brought the Cedarburg Fire Department's Survive Alive House to life locally, teaching grade schoolers the importance of having a plan to get out of a burning house. The company also provided the community with a special gathering place in the Centennial Park Gazebo, and donated supplies to local Eagle Scout projects through

the years. And working with the Cedarburg Landmark Preservation Society, the lumberyard helped provide new windows and a new roof to help restore a local architectural treasure – the Cedarburg Mill.

Decades later, Bill joined forces in raising funds for the Cedarburg Public Library's interior furnishings; in six months' time, this community raised \$700,000 to get the job done. What's more, Bill prioritized joining the founding team that launched the Greater Cedarburg Foundation.

While helping young people was a primary focus in this couple's philanthropic efforts, Bill continued his commitment to growing Cedarburg Lumber from a team of 10 to more than 180 employees when they sold the business 59 years later in 2005. Bill Jr. joined the company officially after earning an MBA at Northwestern in 1979. Clark went on to become an archaeologist in Austin, Texas, and Trish is a multi-faceted church employee locally.

Cedarburg Lumber became an employee-owned company, so everyone had a stake and an incentive to work hard and value the business as owner-employees who all received benefits of the company's success.

"One of the biggest rewards was watching the people who worked side-by-side with us grow, mature, and enjoy what they did – it was a very special community of people who worked for the company 20, 30, 40-plus years," he says.

"I feel good when I'm involved," he concludes. "To be involved with my family, doing things we all believe in, really creates an interesting, fulfilling life."

Bill Wernecke Sr. would have been honored officially at the 18th Annual Cedarburg Civic Celebration this spring, along with recent 2020 grant recipients, joining the founders and friends of The Greater Cedarburg Foundation in celebration of his 2020 GCF Annual Civic Award. In the interest of health and safety due to Covid-19, this event was cancelled. Sadly, Sue Wernecke passed away this spring a few weeks after this interview. Our deep condolences to the Wernecke family.

ABOUT THE FOUNDATION

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The Greater Cedarburg Foundation is a community trust that establishes endowments and administers the income thereon for the betterment of the greater Cedarburg area. The Greater Cedarburg Foundation works closely with the Greater Milwaukee Foundation, where it maintains an affiliation. Gifts to the Greater Cedarburg Foundation are tax deductible to the extent applicable under relevant tax law.



www.cedarburgfoundation.com