



STRONG FOUNDATIONS

Cultivating, nurturing, and growing legacies

EGYPT OR AN ARCTIC GLACIER, ANYONE?

Blackford High School juniors take a virtual reality field trip to the Egyptian pyramids just before spring vacation. As their teacher Mrs. Karen Bergdoll directs them to a specific point of interest, all swivel toward it in unison. This is a totally engaged classroom. The technology relies on cellphone devices and special goggles.



What IS Virtual Reality anyway?

It's an interactive experience using graphic images in 3D that are generated by a computer. The educational experience here is a process of discovering, exploring, and observing places that the students cannot go. The menu of hundreds of possible field trips includes such items as visiting Istanbul, the Apollo Saturn program, and exploring careers such as civil/structural engineering.



In March 2017, Blackford County Schools used a \$7,500 grant to help purchase a Google Expeditions Virtual Reality Kit. With the Kit devices, students can go on a virtual field trip to places impossible to otherwise travel to by using programs controlled from the teacher's electronic tablet. Students can travel through the circulatory system as part of a biology unit or visit the Arctic polar bears with National Geographic or the pyramids at Giza.

A field trip provides a multidimensional and, therefore, deep understanding of traditional content knowledge. Last fall, juniors in Mrs. Bergdoll's English class took a digital field trip to the Rebecca Nurse Homestead in Danvers, MA, as part of their study of the Puritan setting in Arthur Miller's play *The Crucible*, a play that focuses on the Salem witchcraft hysteria of 1692. Nurse argued against the trials. Then at 71, she was herself accused of witchcraft and hanged. With a virtual field trip, students become more engaged and have a deeper understanding of concepts, in this case, the simple and unadorned life of the Puritans that contributed to the emotional excesses of the witch trials.

The Kit provides a cellphone to each student that functions as a mini-computer and is attached to the student's goggles. The student then views the 3D digital images, moving in a full circle to see the images all around his position. The experience provides the sensation of being inside the virtual world.

This Kit is another way BCS is connecting the modern digital generation to a traditional curriculum so that students find relevance as they expand their knowledge of the world.

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 21
Community Scholarship Awards announced for Class of 2018.

July 5
Postsecondary scholarship applications due.

July 19
Community Grant applications due for last round of grants available in 2018.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Remind currently enrolled college and vocational school students in Blackford County that scholarships are available from the Foundation. Applicants must have a 2.5 GPA for the 2018 spring semester in order to be eligible. Applications are due July 5 and are available at www.blackfordcofoundation.org.

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EMPHASIS ON COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENTS in 2018 Spring Grants

SPRING 2018 GRANTS



For many years youth and adults have been able to take group and individual music lessons at the Blackford County Arts Center. Over the years, grants from the Foundation have made these lessons affordable for all families through scholarships.

Active Living Workshop

On June 21, 2017, local nonprofits participated in an Active Living Workshop. The Workshop was an initiative of the Indiana Department of Health and Health by Design partnering with the Blackford County Purdue University Extension. The goal was to support development of the local natural environment in order to encourage more physical activities in citizens' daily lives. Discussion centered around the strategic planning, policies, and projects needed to construct additional healthy living spaces. Participants also took part in a Walking Audit that examined the local sidewalks. Their insights resulted in a grant awarded to Hartford City from the Indiana Department of Transportation for new sidewalks linking the north side of town.

 Nearly \$127,000 has been awarded to 12 local nonprofits for the first round of grants from the Blackford County Community Foundation in 2018.

Six of the new grant awards support three extensive quality-of-life projects that were planned or further extended last year as an outgrowth of the Active Living Workshop held in Blackford County on June 21. The projects focus on providing local environments that encourage more active lifestyles for Blackford County citizens.

Three grants to the Hartford City Public Library advance the Nature Play Area Project by phases. The first phase completes the paths and other manmade structures for the area (\$20,604); the second phase provides for the installation of a splash pad (\$20,250); and the third phase supplies partial funding for the materials needed at each nature play station (\$10,000).

Another community grant will help local children and adults create a mural as part of the Arts in the Park program of Arts Place, Inc. (\$1,000). The mural will be portable and on display at the Hartford City Public Library and other local sites.

Two other existing community projects have received grants for enhancing their current facilities. The Blackford Greenway will add trees, trail cameras, benches and other amenities (\$10,000); and the Hartford City Parks and Recreation Department will use grant funding to enhance the Wilderness Park (\$15,000).

Tori's Butterfly Garden Foundation will continue its sponsorship of SummerFest in downtown Hartford City on July 27 with help from a grant (\$2,500).

The Blackford County Historical Society was awarded a grant to adapt a garage space to archival storage standards in order to expand their historical preservation area (\$3,000).

Three grants provide partial funding for youth programs with a history of providing services in Blackford County. Arts Place, Inc. will continue its MusicWorks program providing music instruction to local youth (\$25,000). Blackford County's Dolly Parton Imagination Library program will continue sending high quality children's books to local children ages birth to five (\$2,500). Blackford County Schools will again provide Camp Invention as a weeklong summer camp for elementary students with activities focused on science, technology, engineering, and math (\$5,000).

Four grants provide funding for ongoing health and social service needs in the county. A grant was awarded to the Mental Health Association of Blackford County for two residential summer camp fees (\$1,000). Another was given to the Blackford County Senior Citizens Center for security equipment and perishable foods for preparing seniors' meals. A third grant provides funding for Community and Family Services to stock the county's two food pantries (\$5,000). And a grant went to Blackford United Way, Inc. as part of this community's support for its fifteen member agencies' programming (\$5,000).

The next round of grant awards will be announced in August. Applications, which are due July 19, are now available online and at the Foundation.

NATURE PLAY AREA OPEN HOUSE APRIL 21

The construction on the Nature Play Area located to the east of the Hartford City Public Library began in December with construction crews working as the weather permitted. The Area will specifically encourage reading skills as children play in this outdoor setting.

A public open house was held April 21 (Earth Day) at the library that included a tour of the Nature Play Area and refreshments. The project is currently requesting donations of time and money to complete the project. Donations will be matched by the Foundation. For more information and/or to volunteer your time and talents, see www.blackfordcofoundation.org.



POST SECONDARY SCHOLARSHIPS AT THE FOUNDATION

Since 2000, the Blackford County Community Foundation has offered funding for scholarships to college students who are enrolled in a second year or beyond of a college/career education course of study or are nontraditional students. These scholarships have typically offered about \$500 to a student who qualifies, i.e., a student who has earned at least a 2.5 overall GPA and is a legal resident of Blackford County.

More than \$234,000 has been awarded to 233 local students in postsecondary scholarships. Over the past ten years, more local college students have expressed an interest in these scholarships. The Foundation typically now receives 25-35 applications each year. For the 2017-18 academic year, 28 students received a total of \$9,620 in postsecondary scholarship support.

The Foundation has three permanent funds whose earnings currently provide most of its postsecondary scholarships. The Betty L. and Robert W. Renner Community Fund provided \$45,500 in scholarships since 2013, and the Voyance and Zella Kegerreis Memorial Scholarship Fund provided \$93,200 since 2008. In 2017, the newly established Helen and Howard McCollum Family Scholarship Fund awarded its first postsecondary scholarship. Additional scholarships are also sometimes provided on an annual basis by special contributions. For example, in 2017 two additional postsecondary scholarships were given by Tri-Kappa Associates.

Applications for the 2018 postsecondary awards are available online at www.blackfordcofoundation.org.

When donors establish a scholarship fund, they can specify criteria for awarding a scholarship from their fund, such as making the awards to students who have already started their college/career training, as is the case with postsecondary scholarship funds. The Foundation currently has three permanent funds dedicated to helping local students in their second year of college/career education and beyond. Interest in such scholarships on the part of students continues to grow because local community scholarship awards that are part of a student's financial aid package at a college or vocational school are often only available for the first year of the student's studies.



W.O.W. CORNER

"Believing all women are worthy, W.O.W. strives to combine our gifts and talents to benefit the women and children of Blackford County."

W.O.W. Grants Again Support Projects Targeting Local Women and Children

 Four local organizations were awarded grants in 2017 to help better the lives of women and children in this community. Grants were given for

1. A workshop to enhance relationships and confidence for girls at Blackford Junior High School;
2. New inventory for the Silver Lining incentive store, which exchanges coupons earned by parents for taking their child for health and wellness visits for childcare items, such as cribs and diapers;
3. Virtual Reality Escape Room Kits at Blackford Junior High School to encourage teamwork and critical thinking skills for students; and
4. Equipment and supplies for a new after-school program at the Montpelier Civic Center.

Applications for the new 2018 grants will be available online in late spring.

Award winners will be determined at the W.O.W. Annual Fall Meeting on October 7.



For additional information on membership or on W.O.W. grants, contact Elizabeth Witt | 765.348.3411 | ewitt@blackfordcounty.org.

Blackford County Community Foundation Welcomes Three New Members to the Board of Directors in 2018

The Foundation welcomes three new members to its Board of Directors in 2018. All three are Blackford High School graduates and have deep family roots in this community.

Mitch Glentzer works with alternative investments as part of the Kline Family Farms operation in Blackford County. He holds both a law degree and an MBA thus bringing both a legal and a financial perspective to the Board.

Brian Waters is a licensed funeral director for the Pitman-Richman and Waters Funeral Homes in Eaton and Hartford City. Waters is the president of the Hartford City Main Street organization, a local group associated with Indiana's

Main Street Revitalization Program. He has experience in marketing, especially social media marketing.

Adam Lenz is a geologist and a senior project manager at Creek Run Environmental Engineering in Montpelier, another family-owned local business. Lenz's scientific and environmental background may lend the Board additional technical insights on specific community projects. His other interests include youth sports and education in Blackford County.

The Foundation's Board of Directors currently has eleven members, each serving a three-year term.

BLACKFORD COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER BREAKS GROUND FOR BUILDING PROJECT

On Tuesday, May 1, the Blackford County Animal Shelter held a groundbreaking ceremony as the kickoff event for the beginning of construction on the new building project. The 100' x 40' building will house the shelter's dogs and cats, a medical facility, and a reception area.

Fundraising for the project began three years ago in May 2015 with a donor matching grant from the Blackford County Community Foundation. The generous donations of patrons initially provided over \$210,000 for the project. Since then additional donors have added gifts, large and small, to the project fund to cover the entire cost of the building.

The Animal Shelter relies heavily on volunteers, who provide needed help, funding, and even new mowing equipment for grounds maintenance.

The groundbreaking ceremony included a display of mowing equipment recently donated by Terry Smith, Four Seasons Sales and Service; a donor recognition address by supporter Julie Forcum; and the lifting of the first shovelful of building ground by Dick Weaver surrounded by well-wishers.



Donors Honor Family and Friends with Memorials and Honorariums

Many donors to the Blackford County Community Foundation choose to make gifts that honor the family and friends in their lives. In 2018, the Foundation has been privileged to receive gifts that pay tribute to the following people.

IN MEMORY OF:

Patsy Twibell	Mr and Mrs. Herbert Hanley	Steve Ludwig
Sue Lewellen	Mr. and Mrs. Robert Pitts	Louise Clamme
Hope Heavenridge	Charles "Jake" Reichard	Robert Thomas
Joel Leaman	Robert Coffield	

IN HONOR OF:

Thomas Ehrhart
Steve and Ann Ludwig

Blackford County Community Foundation Board of Directors 2018

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