

Foundation awards more than \$240,000

By **RICHARD HANNERS** Whitefish Pilot | Posted: Wednesday, November 10, 2010 9:22 am

The Whitefish Community Foundation celebrated its 10 year anniversary by setting a new record-high in giving to local nonprofits. More than \$240,000 was awarded during the Foundation's annual Community Grants Presentation Event at the O'Shaughnessy on Nov. 4.

About 350 people packed the theater. Music was provided by the Whitefish High School drumline and jazz band. Ten white obelisks on the stage represented in scale the 10 years of fundraising by the Foundation, which began in 2001 with only \$7,000 — all donated by the board members.

Forty different nonprofits were awarded grants ranging from \$500 to \$5,000. With multiple grants, North Valley Food Bank received more than \$20,000 for operations, and Whitefish Schools received more than \$25,000 to help fund projects in music, science, wellness programs, mental health counseling and more.

A total of \$100,000 was distributed from the Community Grants fund, up from \$75,000 in 2009. The fund is supported by private donations, \$35,000 from the annual Whitefish Duck Derby, the Summer Art Social, and interest from the Foundation's Endowment Fund.

Another \$140,000 in grants came from donor-advised funds held at the Foundation by individuals and businesses. The Foundation holds 14 donor-advised funds and seven agency endowment funds. All told, 116 grants were awarded to 73 different organizations.

"More than \$240,000 was distributed tonight, an increase of more than 15 percent from last year and a reflection of the great community in which we live," board president Paul Johannsen said.

Adding in other grants through 2010, the Foundation has given out \$576,000 this year.

Johannsen was recognized at the event for his three years as president. Johannsen brought the Foundation to a new level of giving by embracing major changes and new fundraisers. This past year, Johannsen focused on building the Foundation's Permanent Endowment Fund, which reached a record level of \$1 million under his leadership. Prior presidents included Whitefish mayor Mike Jenson and Dave Stewart.

Carol Atkinson will replace Johannsen as board president. She and her husband Richard, along with Foundation board member John Kramer, raised more than \$20 million for community projects and nonprofits over the past 10 years. Carol was presented the "Golden Duck" award for selling the most entries in the duck derby, but more importantly, an anonymous donation of \$20,000 was made toward the Whitefish Middle School auditorium project.

The Great Fish Award was presented to Shepherd's Hand Free Clinic and director Meg Erickson. Shawn Watts accepted the award on her behalf. The award recognizes the value and service a local nonprofit and its director and staff provide to the community. Previous award recipients

include DREAM Adaptive and Bruce Gibson; North Valley Food Bank and June Munski-Feenan; and Whitefish Theatre Company and Carolyn Pitman.

New this year is the Doris Schumm Community Spirit Award, which comes with a \$1,000 grant. Surrey Schumm presented the award to the Whitefish Lake Institute. Doris Schumm served on the Foundation's board of directors and grants committee for more than eight years.

For more information, visit online at www.whitefishcommunityfoudation.org or call Linda Engh-Grady at 863-1781.