



Aileen Andrews photo

Don Herrmann is a volunteer for the Fond du Lac Public Library Job Opportunity Center. Hermann, along with other volunteers, help with computer access and research opportunities. The center has books on hand for resume and other job related information.

FDL Area Foundation presented \$1.1 million in grants

In 2010, the Fond du Lac Area Foundation awarded 406 grants totaling more than \$1,100,000. In 1975, the Foundation was able to award only one grant for \$350. Through the years more and more local people learned about the opportunity the Fond du Lac Area Foundation provided in helping them establish charitable endowment funds that would stay right here, to benefit our own community.

Thanks to the generosity of thousands of local donors throughout the years, the Fond du Lac Area Foundation has now awarded more than 10 million dollars in the form of grants to the Fond du Lac community. We are very proud of our community and the generosity of our donors to now have eclipsed the \$10 million dollar mark.

Our community is so fortunate, that Carl Tonjes and the founding board of directors recognized the value a growing endowment could provide. Endowment was emphasized throughout the years. Unlike many community foundations in the country that have mostly non-endowed funds, more than 95% of the Fond du Lac Area Foundation's funds are endowed. What does that mean to our community? It means that the Fond du Lac Area Foundation will be here forever. It means that every year, under normal market circumstances, the amount of money that will be reinvested back into the community will continue to grow, even if no one else would ever add to it. It means that the Fond du Lac Area Foundation will be able to provide greater and greater benefit to this wonderful community we call home.

The Fond du Lac Area Foundation currently has over 250 component funds. The Foundation provides donors with a variety of different fund types to choose from and can work with donors to help

them decide the best areas for their fund to benefit. People with a charitable dream and who were able to see that dream become a reality with the Foundation started all these. These funds can be started with as little as \$1,000. These funds are a great way to leave a legacy for a family member or a loved one. Whether you want to give a gift, start a fund, or even volunteer with the Fond du Lac Area Foundation, your support and generosity have allowed the Foundation to not only survive for the last 35 years, but also to thrive. The Fond du Lac Area Foundation will continue to follow its mission of creating a better community by promoting philanthropy, awarding effective grants, and providing leadership on important community issues ... today & forever, notes - Joseph Braun, director of development.

A 12-member volunteer board of directors who each are eligible to serve two three-year terms governs the Fond du Lac Area Foundation. Current board members serving as volunteers are chair-Steve Millin, vice-chair Tom Herre, treasurer Brian Johnson, secretary Steve Franke, Steve Cramer, Pat Miller, Steve Peterson, Vikki Sadoff, Mimi Sager, John St. Peter, Jack Twohig and Nancy Witkowski. Employees, Sandi Roehrig, Joe Braun, Sue Steinbarth and Jenny Zacherl, serve the Fond du Lac Area Foundation. The staff has a combined 46 years of community foundation service experience.

The Foundation held its sixth annual dinner in October and awarded its "Legacy" awards for outstanding philanthropy to The Stone Family- Peter & Barbara, Adam & Jill, and Eric, and to Agnesian HealthCare. The Sophia Foundation, our first Supporting Organization, established by Virginia Duncan Gilmore provides grants with a special focus toward

Business is booming at Fond du Lac Public Library's Opportunity Center

As economic indicators go, the Fond du Lac Public Library's Opportunity Center might tell a different tale than the national statistics. While there's good news about the U.S. economy rebounding from its deep recession, there still are plenty of people in the Fond du Lac area who struggle with unemployment or underemployment.

The Opportunity Center is a computer lab and resource center for job seekers located in the lower level of the library. Computers are available with no time limits for job-search work, including writing resumes and cover letters and applying for jobs online. Qualified community volunteers are on hand to offer assistance. The center was created and is managed by Josh Cowles, an AmeriCorps*VISTA volunteer.

The library augments the free computer services at the center with free classes to

help job seekers build critical skills. Classes for early 2011 include sessions on writing resumes and interviewing. Classes are taught by area experts, often human resource professionals, who can provide real-life examples and real-world scenarios. Students get personalized help through resume reviews and mock interviews.

Since it opened in 2009, the Opportunity Center has had more than 2,000 visits by job seekers, and volunteers at the center have logged more than 1,300 hours. Job Smart U and Money Smart U class attendance has totaled nearly 400. The Opportunity Center is just one piece of the larger "big L-literacy" approach at the library.

"We strive to promote literacy in all its forms," said Hall. "Financial and economic literacy is of special importance in our country and community now. But literacy through reading about and discussing important issues is just as critical. In no other time in my memory is civil discourse more important and needed more."

On March 16, the library will host a forum featuring the four Fond du Lac City Council candidates. A panel of local media will pose questions on local issues. The session is open to the public and will be podcast on the library's website, fdpl.org.

In general, business is booming. In 2010, there were 400,000 visitors to the main library. Circulation of materials was up as well. Last year brought new advances in customer service and technology - with new self-help stations and improvements in the free internet computers. This year, the library will focus on family literacy.

"We're excited about launching a new program this year, 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten, that will focus on getting parents and kids reading together," Hall said. "The program stresses the importance of the family's role in building the fundamentals of learning." Hall said the library also will add a third satellite location in partnership with a major local business.

the populations of women and children.

The Oakfield Community Fund continued their service as the foundation's only regional affiliate fund. Citizens of the Oakfield area have been building up an endowment that will: Provide a base organization to coordinate support for education and the arts beyond the traditional school district budgets, encourage and increase local business, civic, private sector, and individual support within our school and community, encourage and recognize student and teacher achievement in our schools, encourage innovation and life-long learning for community members of all ages, and support the use of the most recent technologies in teaching and learning.

The Woman's Fund of the Fond du Lac Area Foundation is working toward a goal of \$1 million. The Woman's Fund is governed by a board of 21 volunteer women whose goal is to affect positive change in the lives of women by developing and providing funding, engaging women in philanthropy, and creating understanding of the strengths and challenges of women in our community.

Start something BIG - help FDL's Big Brothers Big Sisters

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Fond du Lac County is not your typical organization. The mission is to help children in this community reach their potential through one-to-one relationships with mentors that have a measurable impact on youth. The BBBS vision is providing successful mentoring relationships for all children who need and want them, contributing to brighter futures, better schools, and a stronger community for all.

For more than 100 years, Big Brothers Big Sisters has operated under the belief that inherent in every child is the ability to succeed and thrive in life. As the nation's largest donor and volunteer supported mentoring network, Big Brothers Big Sisters makes meaningful, monitored matches between adult volunteers ("Bigs") and children ("Littles") in communities across the country.

National research has shown that positive relationships between Littles and their Bigs have a direct and measurable impact on children's lives. By participating in our programs, Little Brothers and Sisters are more confident in their schoolwork, performance, able to get along better with their families, 46% less likely to begin using illegal drugs, 27% less likely to begin using alcohol, 52% less likely to skip school.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Fond du Lac County offers two different programs for our children and mentors.

Community-based mentoring allows Bigs and Littles to enjoy one-to-one outings and activities, such as taking a walk

in the park, going to a museum, hanging out and talking, or just inspiring each other. Some Bigs meet their Littles on the weekends, while others get together with their Littles in the evenings. Each match is unique and develops a schedule that works for them.

School-based mentoring allows children to realize their potential by spending time with a mentor at school. This program works very well for volunteers who work during the day but would like to make a difference by spending time with a child over their lunch hour once per week.

Littles enjoy having their Bigs eat lunch with them and spend time with them in the classroom, the school library, the gym, or on the playground.

Our agency is committed to matching children in Fond du Lac and its surrounding communities with wonderful adult mentors from all walks of life. Whether you are finishing up high school, enrolled in college, working full-time, or retired, WE NEED YOU!

At Big Brothers Big Sisters, we have tremendous confidence in our ability to impact children and put them on the right path. In order to accomplish this, we need the support of our community and its businesses. New this year, we are providing "Lunch & Learn" opportunities for businesses eager to learn how they can get involved and help make a difference. We are also currently seeking dedicated individuals who are passionate about our mission to join our board of directors.

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