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Hayden Lake Weighbors



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Living the Juicy Life!

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Women's Gift Alliance

Making a difference through collective philanthropy

By JoAnne Baldwin

18 years ago, Janice Baldwin of Hayden Lake never thought that the women's collective giving group that she founded would put over \$1.48 million dollars back into Kootenai County. In June, three local nonprofits, through a thoughtful process, were awarded \$25,000 each.

- Tesh, Inc. will use their funds for a remodel of their kitchen.
- Safety Net Inland Northwest will establish a base in Kootenai to help alumni foster children get set up when they go out on their own.
- The Women's Center dba Safe Passage will use the grant to hire a mental health coordinator for abused children and families.

Women's Gift Alliance didn't happen in a vacuum - like so many good ideas and successful groups, it was the intentionality and inspiration of several women who pooled their talents and financial resources to make this come to life. Janice assembled a board that launched a group that would impact a broad range of cultural, educational and charitable nonprofits in the area. The first year, 52 women served as the founding members and voted to award its first pooled grant of many in the area to Kootenai County Search and Rescue.

Today, Women's Gift Alliance is 140 members strong and looking to grow. With more members, additional grants can be given and the community benefits collectively. Members are invited to not only contribute financial resources, but serve in other ways and actively participate in the grant

selection process as a part of the grant committee or help with gatherings and events that happen during the year. As the organization has become a community in and of itself, WGA members participate in book clubs to deepen understanding of philanthropy and our region's needs and encourages personal giving by allocating a portion of each annual financial contribution to an individually designated gift.

This group doesn't want to hoard all this learning and generosity for itself, which is why this year, the Annual Gathering is open to all - women and men - and tickets are available today. Aaron McMurray, Chief Strategic Officer at Innovia Foundation is the keynote speaker and will be sharing about the power of philanthropy and leaving a legacy for the community. The date of the event is Tuesday, September 20 at beautiful outdoor venue, Settlers Creek (www.settlerscreek.com) from 5 - 8 PM. Visit our website (www.womensgiftalliance.org) for details on how to purchase tickets \$90 a person or buy a table of eight for \$700.

If you're interested in being a part of this transformative group of women, eager to learn, give back, we'd love to have you - any woman is welcome to join Women's Gift Alliance with a tax deductible contribution to Idaho Community Foundation, a 501c3. The annual membership dues are \$1,050. The funds are directed to the WGA Pooled grant fund (\$500), an individual gift to any nonprofit you choose (\$250), WGA Endowment Fund (\$250) and \$50 for WGA administrative fees.

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