



MONTANA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

all about Montana's future

Infinity

Montana Community Foundation eNewsletter

September 2020

Letter From Mary

Dear Friends,

Over the last several weeks, it has been very difficult to read the headlines and watch fires devastate communities, including some of our own. It has been a stark reminder that disasters don't have timelines or give us fair warning that they're on their way. They also don't care that communities are struggling through a pandemic. They just happen.



First responders are some of our greatest community treasures. Thanks to each of you who are on the front lines. Your service is amazing. I also want to express my deepest condolences to those who have lost their home, property, loved ones, or a combination of all three. Our family had a house fire many years ago. The experience is one that has left a lasting impression.

Thank you to the organizations and individuals providing support to these communities. There is no question that immediate disaster response matters in these situations and that there is a long road to recovery that lies ahead as the fires burn out and people return home.

September is Disaster Preparedness Month and recent events also emphasize the need to ensure our own families and communities are ready when disaster strikes. [Ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov) has a pertinent theme this year- "disasters don't wait."

Throughout this month's issue, we want to share some of the tools available to ensure you are disaster-ready. You'll read how MCF is working with local communities to be prepared and provide philanthropic support to communities impacted by a disaster. Local communities matter!

Together we can ensure a strong future for Montana and keep our communities safe. Thank you for all that you do.

Sincerely,



Mary K. Rutherford
President & CEO

Census 2020: September Update



- "As of September 10, 2020, Montana's 2020 US Census self-response rate of 59.5% ranks 46th amongst all States and Washington D.C." [Learn more.](#)
- "It takes just 10 minutes to answer 9 simple questions that will shape your community for the next 10 years." [Get counted.](#)
- If you have not yet responded to the Census, you may receive a visit from someone at the United States Census Bureau. [Learn more here about how to verify the validity of the census taker.](#)



September is Nation Preparedness Month

With the help of [Ready.gov](#), we would like to share with you 4 tips to help you and your family prepare for any disaster. [Learn more.](#)

1. **Get a Kit** of emergency supplies. [Recommend supplies to include in a basic kit.](#)
2. **Make a Plan** for what you will do in an emergency. Develop a family emergency plan, create a plan to shelter-in-place, and create a plan

to getaway.

- 3. Be Informed** about what might happen. Go to [Ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov) to learn more about potential terrorist threats and other emergencies or call 1-800-BE-READY (1-800-237-3239) for a free brochure.
 - 4. Get Involved** in preparing your community. Go to www.citizencorps.gov for more information and to get involved.
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Local Community Foundations Putting Disaster Toolkit Grants to Work

The Community Foundation of Greater Northern Rosebud County is putting its Disaster Toolkit Grant from MCF towards purchasing an electronic reader board sign to put on Front Street near the Emergency Services Building in Forsyth. It will be used for nonprofit messages and safety messages like “buckle up” during non-emergency times; then during disasters, it could be used for directions, instructions, and messages related to the disaster. CFGNRC is still raising additional funds for the reader board as they believe that it will be a helpful asset to providing information to Forsyth and the Northern Rosebud County. [Learn more and contribute to the project here.](#)

MCF provided the Community Disaster Preparedness Toolkit Grant to participating local community foundations through its involvement with Philanthropic Preparedness, Resiliency, and Emergency Partnership (PPREP), a program of the Funder’s Network. PPREP provides participating community foundations with knowledge, skills, tools, and resources about disasters and the unique roles that community foundations can play within the cycle of disaster: preparedness (including strengthening resilience and adaptation), response, and recovery. The Center for Disaster Philanthropy serves as the curriculum development and technical assistance partner for the program.

AT&T Public Hero Scholarship

Thanks to the support from hundreds of people, and businesses like AT&T, the Montana Disaster Relief Fund has continued to support communities in times of disaster and beyond. Local organizations received funding from the AT&T Public Hero Scholarship to support first responders and firefighters in rural parts of Montana. Red Lodge Fire Rescue was one of scholarship recipients last year.

Red Lodge Volunteer firefighters, Mark Brown and Dennis Kreatz, were able to utilize the scholarship funds to attend a four-day training at the Big Rig and Mass Transit Rescue Academy in Round Rock, Texas. “Training with other professional firefighters and first responder in real-life scenarios allowed us to add to our current skills in a way that we don’t usually have access to,” says Mark, an eight-year Lieutenant at Red Lodge Fire Rescue.

Those eligible to apply include volunteer fire departments and emergency services organizations. If you meet the requirements, [apply here](#).

Montana Disaster Relief Fund

In 2017, wildfires ravaged Montana, consuming over 1.4 million acres across the state. The Montana Community Foundation responded by setting up what is now known as the Montana Disaster Relief Fund, a nonpermanent fund at MCF, as a vehicle for charitable giving to support those affected by the fires. Though the 2017 wildfires have since flamed out, MCF has maintained an ongoing partnership with groups like Montana Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) and Montana Disaster and Emergency Services. The fund has continued to provide philanthropic support during Montana disasters such as floods, blizzards, and COVID-19.

Over the last few months our state and so many others around us are again experiencing the hardship of wildfires. This serves as a reminder that we need to continue to support the Montana Disaster Relief Fund so that Montana communities can rebuild and thrive after disaster hits their towns, homes, and land. You can help your fellow Montanans by supporting our communities in the aftermath of disaster. Give Now to the [Montana Disaster Relief Fund](#).

Celebrating 30 Years of Service to Montana



This month we would like to celebrate our Vice Chair, Kelly Bruggeman. She is celebrating 30 years of service leading the First Interstate BancSystem Foundation, the charitable affiliate of First Interstate Bank.

Kelly is responsible for First Interstate Bank's philanthropic activities such as donations, grants, employee gift and volunteer matching, companywide volunteer day, employee emergency fund, and several financial literacy projects including student run savings banks. She is also responsible for developing programs like Neighbors Feeding Neighbors, the Company's Employee Emergency Relief Fund, the 25 Year Anniversary Club, Coats & More, Commitment to Community Volunteer Day and, the implementation of EverFi Financial Education, and numerous other initiatives.

In 1990, the Foundation awarded six grants for a total of \$47,500 and in 2019 the Foundation awarded \$5.2 million. There were 13 branches when the Foundation started and now there are 140.

"Congratulations to Kelly for encouraging philanthropy in Montana and for serving as a resource and a role model for so many in this field." - Laura Brehm, MCF Board Chair.

“Kelly’s mentorship and leadership are remarkable. Her commitment to Montana shines through in all that she does. I appreciate her gentle, kind, competent leadership. She’s a wonderful thought partner.” - Mary Rutherford, President and CEO, MCF

Kelly currently serves as the Vice-Chair on the MCF Board of Directors. Kelly’s insight and leadership are true assets to MCF.

Congratulations Kelly!

Generosity at Work

In response to COVID-19, several community funds were established by local community foundations and United Ways across Montana to help those affected by the pandemic. To date, grants from community-specific funds for COVID relief have exceeded \$1 million.

[Learn more about the fund in your community.](#)

ABOUT MONTANA

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

We're all about Montana's future. Through the power of permanently endowed funds, we help people achieve their philanthropic goals and nonprofit organizations establish stable incomes to support their efforts. Our mission is to cultivate a culture of giving so Montana communities can flourish.



**Give
Now**

