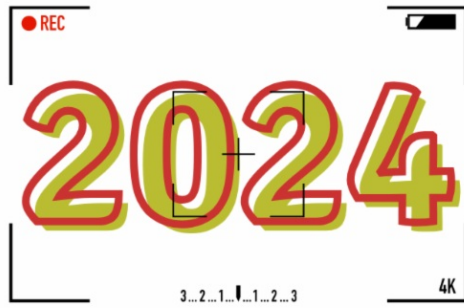




January 2025

Just when we thought 2023 might be our biggest year yet, along came 2024. In the month since you've read the December newsletter, A LOT has happened.

GIFT VIII has the potential to change the trajectory of Rush County. Another \$5M investment from Lilly Endowment coupled with \$787,500 for endowed, unrestricted Community Grants Funds and \$450,000 for the **Love Community Center**. Assets have grown to more than \$30M. More than \$3M in gifts from people like you. A record year for grants and scholarships totaling more than \$1M. While these numbers are impressive, they tell only part of the story.



in a snapshot

Lilly Endowment's GIFT VIII

\$5M GRANT

Rural Revitalization Plan



\$1,237,500

Gifts + Match

\$487,500: Donors' Gifts

\$750,000: LEI Match



Assets

\$30M+

Donations

\$3M+

New Funds

12

Grants

\$800,000+

Scholarships

\$250,000+

It's your generosity and support, Lisa, that makes all the difference for Rush County - today, tomorrow, and forever. Thank you!

And don't count out 2025. As our GIFT VII large-scale project, The Love Community Center, wraps up with a grand opening in the coming months, work on the GIFT VIII Rural Revitalization Plan will begin soon. These are exciting times. Happy New Year indeed!

RCCF Receives \$5M in NEW Funding from Lilly

Endowment for Rural Revitalization Plan



In case you missed the BIG NEWS, we're thrilled to share that RCCF has been awarded a NEW \$5M Large-Scale Community Leadership Implementation grant from **Lilly Endowment Inc.** through their GIFT VIII initiative! You might remember that the last one jumpstarted the Love Community Center in late 2020.

So, what will these dollars be used for? A large-scale plan to revitalize our small rural communities including:

- Expanding broadband access into the County
- Removing blighted properties to allow for new housing
- Enhancing recreational opportunities in our smaller towns through parks, playgrounds, and river access points

We're the only community foundation in the state to have received the maximum award in the last two rounds of GIFT opportunities. Please join us in thanking Lilly Endowment and taking pride in the confidence they have in Rush County!

[READ MORE](#)

GIFT VIII Match Update: 100% That's a Wrap!



Rush County, you are amazing! Your generosity has paid off – big time. THANK YOU for wrapping up Lilly Endowment's GIFT VIII match!

What does this mean? **\$787,500 will be added to unrestricted Community Grants Funds** (including 9 new funds!) and **\$450,000 will go toward the sustainability of the [Love Community Center](#).** That's \$1,237,500 to support

Donors Start 4 MORE New Funds



Last month we told you about [7 new funds](#) started recently. We have 4 MORE to share with you. **We're touched by the stories and grateful for the generous hearts of our donors!**

All of these are **unrestricted Community Grants Funds**, which took advantage of the GIFT VIII match:

- [Doug and Lonnie May Family Community Fund](#), started by the May family
- [Grow Kindness Community Fund](#), started by anonymous donors
- [Holly Bess Community Fund](#), started in memory of Holly by her husband, Brian, and their family
- [RCHS Class of 1976 Community Fund](#), started by anonymous donors

Our Thanks to Ben Wicker and Phil Kuhn

As 2024 came to an end, so did the terms of two long-time RCCF board members, **Ben Wicker** and **Phil Kuhn**. Both served six years and took on the role of president during their tenure. We're grateful for their expertise, leadership, and service! And to their families for sharing them with us, we send our thanks, too. We appreciate you guys - don't be strangers!



"To see the expansion and evolution of what the Foundation has become over the years - from the \$10M from Lilly in the last 4 years to numerous other significant gifts and projects - it's just been very cool to be a part of that. I know the Foundation is in great hands and thanks for allowing me to be a part of it!"

- Ben Wicker

"Thanks for the opportunity! I was a scholarship recipient, so I jumped at the opportunity to be on the board as a way to give back. It's been nothing but fun. When I joined the board, we were sitting on roughly \$20M of assets. Now we're over \$30M. 50% growth in 6 years, along with huge projects that I know we're all really proud of is amazing!"

- Phil Kuhn

IMPORTANT DATES



2025 Scholarship Applications due by 2/15/2025. [Apply now.](#)

Community Events Calendar: [Find and submit local events.](#)

ICYMI (In Case You Missed It)

Here are the top stories from last month.



[Jenna Lawler, Rush County's 2025 LECS](#)



[3 grants to support the LCC](#)



[7 new funds started \(as of 12/13\)](#)

What Will Your Legacy Be?



Updating your estate plans this year? Consider making a gift in your will to RCCF. It's a simple way to make a legacy gift. You can leave a percentage or remainder of your estate or a specified amount to RCCF in your will or trust. Gifts made in your will allow you to care for your loved ones and support your community forever.

[FIND SAMPLE LANGUAGE](#)

December Tribute Gifts

Each gift you make in memory or in honor of a loved one supports Rush County forever. In 2024 that total was \$67,820. We are grateful for your kindness and generosity!

In Memory of:

AJ and Marie Meyer
Alfred Yager
Alice Ruth Wiley, Glen Wiley,
Lauren
Alice Wiley
Ashley Spurlin
Barbara J. Shaver
Bill Griffis
Carol and Ralph
Charles Niccum
Connie Cameron
Danny Piper
Dewey Powers
Don Turner
Frank Pezdek
Fred Thoman
Gail and Vivian Willis
George and Avolyn Tevis
George and Betty Owens
George and Marcella McAhren
Grant Brower
Helen Louise Amos
Holly Bess
Ivan Wooley
James Stewart, Sr.

Robert and Beulah Shouse
Robert Gehrke
Robert N. Veatch
Robert White
Russell and Betty Bane & Rick Bane
Ruth Shouse
Scott Brooks
Scott Southerland
Tom Gates
Tom Grenisen
Verl Clemons & Bob and Marcia Ash
Wilson Brooks

In Honor of:

Barbara White
Customers & Patrons of Hoeing
Supply
Dave Northam
Eleanor Yager
Frank and Judy Schwegman
Gerald and Anita Mohr
Grant Reeves
Greg and Cindy Harcourt
Home Place Farm (Chester & Faye
Meal)

Jeff Knecht
Jerry Geise
Jessy McClure
Marcia Ellis
Molly Spaeth
Ned Foster
Peggy Sue Earnest
Richard Colvin
Richard Dunn
Robert & Virginia Waltz, Joe Y. &
Edna Columbe, David R. Columbe

Jake Shaffner
Jane Niccum
Jennifer Myers
Kayleigh Gordon
Ken and Sue Masters
Mike and Karen Spaeth
Nancy Mitchell
Nancy O'Dell



KEEP IN TOUCH



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