



# First Monday



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*From the desk of: Marilynn Miller, President and CEO*  
*Monday, December 4, 2006, 8:00 a.m*

**The temperature outside is plummeting and there are snowflakes in the air.** It looks and feels and smells like Christmas. During this festive month, as people plan celebrations and select special gifts for loved ones, we at the MSU-Billings Foundation celebrate the many gifts of dollars, time, and expertise you have given to the students of MSU-Billings. You've given the gift of education; the gift of a better life. It doesn't get much better than that.

Thank you, and **Merry Christmas** to you and yours.

## **Some November gifts:**

- **ConocoPhillips** contributed \$10,000 to the College of Technology Faculty Excellence Fund for the process plant technology program. They also sent \$2,375 for the ConocoPhillips Process Operations Scholarship, given to Billings Senior High School students enrolling in the College of Technology's process plant technology (process operations) program.
- **Stillwater Mining Company** sent \$25,000 to help with the College of Technology land purchase.
- **Walleyes Unlimited of Billings** established the Roger Larson Walleyes Unlimited of Billings Memorial Scholarship Endowment with a \$10,000 gift. The scholarship will benefit senior biology majors with financial need who are residents of Yellowstone, Big Horn, Carbon, Stillwater, or Musselshell counties.
- **The Home Builders Association of Billings** donated a 1989 International truck valued at around \$7,500 for use by students in the construction trades program at the College of Technology.
- **Heins Creative, Inc.** has joined the 2007 Wine & Food Festival as a \$5,000 corporate sponsor.
- **Dr. Deborah and Rachel Schaffer** added \$10,000 to the Shaffer Family Endowed Scholarship, which they established a few years ago. The scholarship benefits junior or senior English majors who are interested in linguistics or language study.
- **Sandy Wong** contributed \$5,000 to a health & human performance scholarship endowment, established in honor of Dr. Ernest Randolfi. Sandy is also securing

\$5,000 in matching funds from the Wells Fargo Educational Matching Gift Program. The scholarship benefits students in health & human performance.

- **Jane Howell & Dr. Joe Howell** donated \$2,500 to the Library Excellence Endowment. The endowment provides funds to the library for acquiring new resources and maintaining core materials.
- **Dr. Ron Sexton** contributed \$7,500 toward the Marilyn A. Sexton Scholarship Endowment. Education students are eligible to apply for the scholarship.
- **Dorothy Metz** wisely took advantage of the new IRA charitable rollover legislation to add more funds to the Metz Family Scholarship Endowment. The Metz Family Scholarship is awarded to non-traditional students with financial need.
- **Dr. Gary Behm** has committed \$4,420 to the music department.
- **Krista Montague** initiated a new scholarship endowment for women's basketball players with a commitment of \$2,250. Krista is the first to contribute to this new endowment fund.

**Donors support education.** Last year, total charitable giving in the United States increased 6.1 percent according to figures recently released in *Giving USA 2006* by the Center on Philanthropy. However, **gifts to educational organizations increased 13.1 percent.** Giving to educational organizations is estimated to be 14.8 percent of total giving in the country, second only to giving to religious organizations. Most of the increase in education giving was gifts to colleges and universities or their foundations.

So, what does it mean? *Giving USA* doesn't analyze or hypothesize about the reasons for the increase in gifts to education. Based on conversations with alumni and donors to MSU-Billings Foundation, I believe that these somewhat troubling, volatile times in which we live crystallize for Americans the importance of higher education in preparing tomorrow's leaders for a fast-changing, unpredictable future, but a future still bright with America's promise of freedom, peace, and prosperity. Education is key to that bright future. To all of you who financially support the American ideal of education for all, my deep and abiding gratitude for opening your hearts and bank accounts to help educate tomorrow's heads of households, business owners, voters, and policy makers.

**Prefer e-mail?** If you would prefer to receive *First Monday* electronically, please contact administrative assistant Shannon Behounek ([sbehounek@msubillings.edu](mailto:sbehounek@msubillings.edu)).

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*First Monday* is provided to the supporters of the Montana State University-Billings Foundation to advance the cause of philanthropy.

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