



## THE LEGACY CIRCLE



THANK YOU GATHERING

JULY 10, 2022  
HILLSIDE WATERFRONT HOTEL  
EPHRAIM





## THE LEGACY CIRCLE

Welcome to what has become an annual thank you gathering where the Executive and Development Committees of the Birch Creek Board of Trustees, together with Executive Director Mona Christensen and her staff, honor the members of our Legacy Circle!

In 2003, the board of Birch Creek Music Performance Center broadened their process of forward planning when they initiated legacy giving as a means to sustain Birch Creek's excellent educational programming far into the future.

### HONORING OUR PAST, SECURING OUR FUTURE

We have always been grateful for, and seek to honor, those individuals and their families who have included Birch Creek in their estate plans. Because of the generosity of our host and Legacy Circle member Diane Taillon, Birch Creek is able to present the fourth annual thank you gathering for Legacy Circle members, invited guests, and featured faculty. Tonight, we recognize their commitment to Birch Creek's missions and our shared values.



*Philanthropy and social change work are at their best  
when they are driven by your values and connected to what  
you care about most.*

*—Charles Bronfman*

## IN THEIR OWN WORDS

In this booklet, we present the stories of Legacy Circle members—their personal reasons for making a decision to continue their philanthropy into the future. By stepping forward, they encourage others to do the same. Their stories are the result of interviews and have appeared in our newsletters, brochures and concert program books since 2009.

## GUARDIANS OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

Each year, we try to add a new story or two to the collection. All members are listed below, and those with a ● by their names have stories included in this booklet. For keeping the music alive, we thank them all.

## LEGACY CIRCLE MEMBERS

Anonymous

Priscilla and Anthony Beadell

W. Gerald and Jane Berg

● Carla Byrnes and Sara Oswald

● Sam and Vicky Carmen

● Dave and Mona Christensen

Peter and Myra Cristall

● Frances Dutton

● Virginia T. Eades

● Miriam Erickson

Cecilia Van de Kamp Freund

Lucille Grams Trust\*

● Joan Guasta

● Vicki Peterson Jenks

● Steve and Jackie Kane

Stephen and Wendy Kase

Irene Daniell Kress

Revocable Trust\*

Henry and Dorothy Kuettner

Endowment Fund\*

Marguerite L. Lembke and Lillian A.  
Lembke Revocable Trust\*

● Anthony and Judith Licata

● Charlotte Lukes

Fred Mann and Charles Beasley

● Mary Moster and Louis Williams\*

Fredric and Christi Moritz

● Thomas and Susan Regan

Estate of Ernell F. Rothe\*

Ben Schenker Trust\*

Cynthia Stiehl

Diane Taillon

● Bill\* and Marti Thompson

Steven and Patricia Vickman

Ursula Walser Trust\*

Sarah E. Wright Charitable Trust\*

*\*Deceased*

● *Story*

IN HER OWN WORDS—  
CARLA BYRNES

*“I have always believed in ‘paying it forward.’”*



*At Create Wisconsin's Arts Day in Madison in 2017, Carla Byrnes met with Door County's elected representatives.*

The first time I came to Birch Creek, I immediately knew that it was a special place. It has family meaning for me: when I listen to swing, my father is with me in spirit. He would have loved the Birch Creek jazz sessions.

The mentoring aspect of Birch Creek's educational programs struck a chord. Through my work with gifted and talented students in small rural schools, I saw firsthand that quality mentoring relationships have powerful positive effects on young people in a variety of personal, academic, and professional achievements.

Ultimately, mentoring connects Birch Creek's students to personal growth and development, and social and economic opportunities.

For me, belonging to the Birch Creek Legacy Circle supports my lifelong belief in 'paying it forward.' Theater and music were critical to my personal growth; it follows that I would want to leave some part of myself behind—some part of myself to carry forward Birch Creek's music and mentoring traditions.

—Carla Byrnes, 2017

## IN THEIR OWN WORDS— SAM AND VICKY CARMEN

*“We love being able to be a small part of carrying on the vision of Jim and Fran Dutton.”*



*Sam and Vicky Carmen are pictured at the 2019 Birch Creek Legacy Circle Thank You Gathering.*

In 2007, when we had both retired and moved to Door County, we attended our first Birch Creek concert as curious music fans of big band music; we were enthralled. In the summer of 2008, our neighbors invited us to come with them to a meeting of the Birch Creek Associates and learn about volunteering opportunities. We were hooked.

The popcorn stand became our “thing” and Bob Koehler, our mentor. It was the perfect alignment of our passion for music, education and young people. Our volunteer commitment continued to grow. Birch Creek was the place we made new friends who shared the same interests and commitment.

A few years later another of our neighbors introduced me to the idea of volunteering for a subcommittee that led to an invitation to join the board.

Music education was formational for both of us. The importance of ensuring that future generations could have the opportunity to have their lives shaped by music as ours had been is so important to us. What better way to do it than becoming members of Birch Creek’s Legacy Circle?

We love being able to be a small part of carrying on the vision of Jim and Fran Dutton, transforming lives. We love the traditions and the beautiful setting. We love the commitment of the staff, faculty and volunteers, and opportunities for young people to have a unique and perhaps life changing experiences.

—Sam and Vicky Carmen, 2021

## IN THEIR OWN WORDS— DAVE AND MONA CHRISTENSEN

*“It was an easy decision to list Birch Creek in our estate plans.”*

There were a few times in our marriage when we found ourselves thinking about “life after” family matters. Like many others, significant and poignant life events trigger thoughts of estate planning and what the future holds for our family’s legacy when we are both gone. In our case it was important that the plans would mirror the principles and the values we espouse as a family, and that our son was also fully aware of the decision-making process.



*Dave and Mona Christensen share the joy of Birch Creek music with their families and wide range of friends in the music community.*

It was music that brought us together in 1979 and today it is still the thread that is woven in our daily lives. Because of Birch Creek’s commitment to future generations of music students, performance-based music education along with excellence in teaching and performance, it was an easy decision to list Birch Creek in our estate plans.

Birch Creek has been a tremendous gift to our family. Only minutes from our home, it has brought us such joy, invigorating creativity, passion, and the richness of personal relationships with incredible people who value the same things we do. It is an honor for us to give back to Birch Creek.

—Dave and Mona Christensen, 2022

*As Birch Creek’s Executive Director, Mona Christensen has firsthand knowledge of the enduring value of a Birch Creek education. She and Dave understand what membership in the Legacy Circle means to Birch Creek’s future.*

## IN HER OWN WORDS— FRAN DUTTON

*“Birch Creek was my husband’s dream, and it’s been continuing as he envisioned it. I want to make sure it keeps going that way.”*

So many people have benefited from Birch Creek. I get letters (and many people I know get letters) from former students who say that Birch Creek has changed their lives. Some decided that music was where they wanted to be and they became very successful at it.

If Birch Creek helps students decide that they want to go into music, those are great opportunities.

To ensure annual support of a student scholarship in Jim’s name, I contribute to the James Dutton Scholarship sub-fund in the Endowment.

I believe in what Birch Creek is doing.

It was my husband’s dream, and it’s been continuing as he envisioned it. I want to make sure it keeps going that way.

—Fran Dutton, 2016



*Fran Dutton greets faculty and concertgoers at the Annual Jim Dutton Memorial Concert at Birch Creek.*

*Fran Dutton perhaps knows more about the impact Birch Creek has on students’ lives than anyone. She and her husband, Jim Dutton, co-founded Birch Creek in 1976.*



IN HER OWN WORDS—  
VIRGINIA T. EADES

*“Being a part of The Legacy Circle means being a real part of the continuation of Birch Creek.”*

During all the many years of fluctuation and change in the levels of standards in the “outside world,” Birch Creek has always maintained and embodied a solid standard of excellence.

Because of Birch Creek’s dedicated, caring, and often humorous faculty, the fledgling musicians positively ‘catch fire,’ taking great pride in rising to the high expectations of their teachers to become poised and polished performers. To hear and to watch this happen is a thrilling experience and leaves an indelible imprint on all of us.

In addition to membership in Birch Creek’s Legacy Circle, Alan and I established the Brian T. Hynes and Barry J. Hynes Scholarship in the Endowment, giving scholarship support for the promising young musicians who attend Birch Creek.

For Alan and me, being part of The Legacy Circle and Endowment means being a real part of the continuation of Birch Creek and of this life-changing experience for deserving young musicians of the future.

—Virginia T. Eades, 2012



*Virginia and Alan Eades welcome Legacy Circle members to the 2017 celebration they hosted in their home.*

IN HER OWN WORDS—  
MIRIAM ERICKSON

*“It has always been about the students.”*



*Miriam Erickson, with her daughter and volunteer Jeanne Barnard and granddaughter Ann Birnschein, a Birch Creek alumna and volunteer.*

Miriam’s involvement with Birch Creek began in the organization’s early years through annual giving and concert attendance. Quickly, her participation grew. She is a member of The Associates, Birch Creek’s volunteer group; Past President of the Board of Trustees; a Legacy Circle member and through the Endowment sponsors the Howard and Miriam Erickson Jazz I Drum Faculty

Chair honoring Bob Chmel.

“I always loved the multi-generational involvement at Birch Creek, which can be seen in my own family. It makes Birch Creek a true part of the Door County community.” Her daughter, Jeanne Barnard, is a volunteer and parent of a Birch Creek alumna: Jeanne’s daughter, Ann Birnschein, was a Birch Creek jazz student and for many years, a member of The Associates.

“The quality of education at Birch Creek is so remarkable. As a lifetime educator, it is a thrill to see high school students perform at such high levels. Because the learning atmosphere is inclusive, competitiveness in musicianship is not between other students but within each student. They strive to be the best they can be,” Miriam explains. “It has always been about the students. My love of education makes planning for Birch Creek’s future a natural step for me.”

—Miriam Erickson, 2017

## IN HER OWN WORDS— JOAN GUASTA

*“I love seeing the change in students, and I want that to continue.”*



*Joan Guasta welcomes The Associates to Juniper Hall in the Miller Music Center.*

Joan Guasta has been enriched by the harmony that music brings to the human condition. She treasures music. “Music brings people together, and I think being part of a music group is not just an inspirational force, but it also demonstrates commitment.”

That is why Joan is so drawn to Birch Creek. She sees committed faculty who return year after year to perform wonderful music while mentoring promising students.

“I love Birch Creek because of the students. They leave as different people after two weeks. They are inspired, confident and more accepting of other students,” she reflects. “I love seeing them change, and I want that to continue long into the future.” Joan has also established a sub-fund in the Birch Creek Endowment.

Joan has served as past president of The Associates and is currently a member of the Development Committee of the Board of Trustees. As a member of the Legacy Circle, she sees the value of belonging to a group that has included Birch Creek in their estate plans.

Joan feels that separately, her bequest may be insignificant in the big scheme of things, but when coupled with the legacies of others, it will make a meaningful difference. “Every penny we give is a penny Birch Creek didn’t have before, and it adds up.”

—Joan Guasta, 2018

## IN HER OWN WORDS— VICKI PETERSON JENKS

*“Birch Creek—A Legacy of Music, Heart, Soul, and Humanity”*

Door County. Sailing, fishing, and swimming in the Bay of Green Bay and Lake Michigan. A fish boil for the first time. Hiking Cave Point and picking buckets of cherries in July. Or so I thought back in 1978.

After picking those ubiquitous buckets of cherries, my husband and I stopped with my in-laws in Sturgeon Bay to have dinner on our way home. As we were leaving, I saw a poster that intrigued me, advertising a two week stay at a place called Birch Creek to study with the incredible world-class percussionist, Gordon Stout! A percussionist myself, I wondered how I could possibly pass that up? So, I registered posthaste, met Jim and Fran Dutton, stayed in their A-frame house across from Birch Creek, worked diligently in both marimba classes and orchestra, and fell in love with the ambience of Birch Creek!

For 44 years, I have melted into the heartbeat of Birch Creek, become part of the closely-knit faculty, developed friends for a lifetime, been transported around the world via the amazing artistry of Birch Creek’s Percussion & Steel Band faculty, learned more from my students than they could ever learn from me, sat around the campfire with “my kids” in the evening, and have had my soul strengthened. Birch Creek is a living legacy I want to see continue.

—Blessings, Vicki Peterson Jenks, 2022  
Percussion Faculty Artist



*Vicki Peterson Jenks introduces the Percussion & Steel Band Session Student Ensemble at an outdoor concert in 2021.*

## IN THEIR OWN WORDS— STEVE AND JACKIE KANE

*“We want to give back to our communities.”*

Steve and Jackie Kane believe in arts literacy as a part of healthy communities, and that a broad and diverse education builds a stronger society.

They see education at Birch Creek as part of arts literacy, and a marvel because of its focus on teaching.

The two-to-one student-to-faculty ratio is unlike any other educational model the Kanes have experienced. “It is clear,”

Steve expressed, “that the renowned faculty imparts their love for music to their students, and that the students attending Birch Creek really want to learn. It takes dedication from both.”

In short, Steve and Jackie Kane believe in Birch Creek’s mission. This is even more evident by their generous gifts naming *The Steve and Jackie Kane Executive Director Chair* and *The Jackie and Steve Kane Gazebo*.

As Legacy Circle members, they share their resources from a genuine motive to help others. “We have had many opportunities in our lives. Now that we are retired, we want to concentrate on giving back to the communities in which we live,” Steve indicated. “We are glad to make this commitment, but the truth is, anyone can plan a legacy gift.”



*Jackie and Steve Kane after a concert in Juniper Hall in the Miller Music Center at Birch Creek.*

—Steve and Jackie Kane, 2018

## IN THEIR OWN WORDS— ANTHONY AND JUDITH LICATA

*“We have enjoyed Birch Creek concerts for more than 20 years.”*



*Tony and Judy Licata are pictured at the Legacy Circle Thank You Gathering in 2019.*

Judy and Tony Licata’s philanthropy at Birch Creek includes their membership in the Legacy Circle and their establishment of the Anthony and Judith Licata Jazz I Lab Band Director Chair in the Birch Creek Endowment. They support legacy and endowment giving because they feel that Birch Creek’s educational mission is an exceptional cause. “We have been enjoying Birch Creek concerts for more than twenty

years,” Judy told us, “first as vacationers and weekend visitors to Door County and then as summer-long residents.”

The Licatas have seen, in Birch Creek concerts, the results of a remarkable Birch Creek education. “We have never seen kids perform at such high levels and have so much fun while they’re doing it,” Tony remarked. “We love seeing where they come from each year and are pleased to see that local students are represented along with those who come from other parts of the country.” The couple is inspired and impressed by the high-quality faculty at Birch Creek who return year after year.

Judy and Tony know that planned gifts ensure Birch Creek’s future, as well as help students through scholarship assistance. Judy sums up their commitment: “We are fortunate that we are in a position where we can help those causes that we enjoy.”

—Judy and Tony Licata, 2019

## IN HER OWN WORDS— CHARLOTTE LUKES

*“I want to know that this terrific music performance center will continue.”*

My husband, Roy, and I attended Birch Creek concerts for more than 30 years. We have seen the program continue to grow in excellence.

The highly professional faculty and the gifted students make this a truly special summer music academy. It is rewarding to see former students return as teaching assistants and eventually become faculty members.

I want to know that this terrific music performance center will continue to inspire talented young musicians, and the audiences, for a long time. That is why I have joined The Legacy Circle and included Birch Creek Music Performance Center in my will.



*Charlotte Lukes takes a moment to chat  
with 2021 Concertmaster Marcia  
Henry Liebenow*

—Charlotte Lukes, 2013

*Since Roy’s passing in 2016, Charlotte has continued her support of Birch Creek in every facet of the organization, from the Legacy Circle, Board of Trustees, and Associates to naming the Charlotte Lukes Concertmaster Chair in the Lifetime for Education Fund of the Endowment.*



## IN THEIR OWN WORDS— MARY MOSTER

*“Most gratifying was to watch the students grow and blossom in their performances from one summer to the next.”*

My husband, Lou Williams, and I discovered Birch Creek much as we discovered so many other treasures of Door County. A friend recommended that we attend a concert on a steamy summer evening. We loved the whole experience of listening to Big Band music in the historic Dutton Barn.

In time, we got engaged again with Birch Creek. I had just retired from my job in downtown Chicago. Lou had retired a few years earlier. We were both looking for a meaningful commitment as we transitioned into retirement. He found his creative outlet in becoming a wood turner. I answered a call to serve on Birch Creek’s Board of Trustees. That led to a truly fascinating six-year journey as a board member. I watched the organization blossom and rise to meet challenge after challenge.

Most gratifying was to watch the students grow and blossom in their performances from one summer to the next and to see the energy and dedication of the faculty. We had such fun inviting friends to concerts where everyone left with big smiles, tapping toes and happy hearts. That made it an easy decision to become members of the Legacy Circle in 2017. When Lou passed away later that year, it was with all these memories top of mind that I made the decision to name a cello chair in the endowment as a lasting memory to the wonderful times we spent at Birch Creek. It’s been a privilege to be a part of this great organization.



*Mary Moster enjoys the 2018 Valentine’s  
Day Concert in Juniper Hall*

—Mary Moster, 2022



IN HIS OWN WORDS—  
TOM REGAN

*“I was astounded by the quality of the music I heard.”*

At an evening concert at Birch Creek years ago, I was astounded by the quality of the music I heard,

Motivated by the students’ performances, I began what I considered to be my privilege: an annual contribution to Birch Creek.

My gift would provide future young musicians with the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity of learning from and performing with some of today’s best musicians and educators.

I was inspired to think beyond my lifespan when supporting Birch Creek. Therefore, together with my wife, Susan, I have made arrangements to set aside a portion of my trust to go to Birch Creek. By doing so, I hope to keep Birch Creek going—and growing—for young people from all over the United States and beyond through my legacy gift. Please join me in doing the same.

—Tom Regan, 2022



*Tom Regan is pictured at the Legacy Circle celebration event in 2019.*

*In addition to becoming a member of the Legacy Circle, Tom named a room in the Faculty Building in honor of Don Makuen and Charlie Dickson, past presidents of Birch Creek’s volunteer group, The Associates.*

## IN THEIR OWN WORDS— MARTI AND BILL THOMPSON

*“The Legacy Circle sustains the Birch Creek tradition.”*

“Since Bill was 3 years old and sat on the drummer’s lap in his dad’s dance band, music was an important part of his life. As a former percussionist, he wished there had been a Birch Creek as he was growing up. After only two years of drum lessons, his teachers had already taught him everything they knew.”

Through Bill’s enthusiasm and love for music, Marti’s interest in music grew. Both found “love at first sight and sound” when they heard their first concert at Birch Creek in the mid-1980s.



*Marti and Bill Thompson were interviewed as Legacy Circle Members in the summer of 2010.*

“We marvel at the dedication and excellence of the staff and faculty at Birch Creek,” they wrote in 2010. “Their interest in and love for students is exceptional. The faculty exemplifies outstanding experience, professionalism, and musicianship. We feel the Legacy Circle offers us the chance to help sustain the Birch Creek tradition of excellence in music, thereby keeping this music alive for future generations.”

—Marti and Bill Thompson, 2010

*Bill passed away in 2014. Marti continues to uphold their dedication to Birch Creek’s educational and performance mission, and in 2022 made a gift to name the Jazz I trombone faculty chair in honor of Audrey Morrison and in memory of Bill.*

## THANK YOU—

TONIGHT'S HOST      DIANE TAILLON  
HILLSIDE WATERFRONT RESORT, EPHRAIM

### FEATURED SYMPHONY FACULTY PERFORMERS

ALAN SNOW, VIOLIN, CONCERTMASTER  
*with* SONIA MANTELL, CELLO, ASSOCIATE FACULTY

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Diane Taillon



### GUESTS

Members of the Legacy Circle,  
their families and guests  
*Birch Creek Symphony Faculty*  
Ricardo Castañeda, Program Director, Oboe  
Faculty and Chamber Music Retreat Program  
Director  
Taka Matsunaga, Guest Conductor  
Alan Snow, Concertmaster, Violin Faculty  
Sonia Mantell, Cello Associate Faculty

### ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Mona Christensen, Executive Director  
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# BIRCH CREEK

Music Performance Center



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