



Whatcom Community  
Foundation

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## NEWS RELEASE

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Whatcom Community Foundation

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: An Elegant Solution: Local Sportsmen's Foundation Assets Move to New Home - Pitts Sportsmen's Foundation transfers fund to continue their work.**

Upon dissolution and sale of the Bellingham Sportsmen's Club in the early 1990's, some of the surviving members decided to use the remaining assets to start a private foundation. They wanted to support the outdoor spirit that established the Sportsmen's Club. As a long time Club supporter, Mr. Wilburn Pitts name was selected for the Foundation, to honor him for his outstanding service. This was the beginning of the Bellingham-based Pitts Sportsmen's Foundation, established to support "Fish and wildlife preservation and education of youth in Whatcom County."

But according to secretary/treasurer Donald Young, as the years went on, many of the founding partners passed away, and running the private foundation became burdensome. Mr. Young often had to spend considerable volunteer time managing the Foundation.

In December of 2010, the Board of Directors closed the private foundation and transferred its approximately \$300,000 in assets to the Whatcom Community Foundation. "It's an honor to help continue the work of philanthropists like the founders of the Pitts Sportsmen's Foundation. They're outdoor enthusiasts who want their support of local conservation efforts and youth education related to fishing and hunting continue. Some of the founders were responsible for creating the youth hunter safety training that became the standard for Washington State. This is a new field of giving for the community foundation; we're grateful to be able to offer it. We hope that more outdoorsmen and women will consider making gifts to support the Pitts Sportsmen's Fund, as current gifts or as part of their estate planning."

Ingram related the gift to a national trend, "Philanthropists start private foundations because they want to support things they care about. Many are frustrated by the demands and costs associated with maintaining an independent private foundation. As a result, an increasing number of private foundations across the country are gifting their assets to their local community foundations. Some, like the Pitts' board, choose to establish a field of interest fund, and let the community foundation handle the entire grant process. Others opt for a donor-advised fund, which make grants based on donors' recommendations. Some have been spurred by tough economic times: community foundations can often provide services for thousands of dollars less than maintaining a private foundation -- a factor

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that has taken on increased importance given the economic climate over the last few years. Also, since all the funds are pooled together we can achieve even more for the benefit of our community.”

Young looks forward to having the Whatcom Community Foundation manage all record-keeping and the grants process so that he can enjoy the rest of his retirement while the funds continue to benefit conservation and youth education throughout Whatcom County. "We all agreed that it was impractical to continue it," says Mr. Young. The retired directors plan to continue their involvement on a more personal level with their favorite fishing and outdoor organizations and area schools, knowing that their funds are in good hands.

Later this month, funding will be available through the Whatcom Community Foundation for fish and wildlife preservation and education of youth in Whatcom County.

*Whatcom Community Foundation, a 501(c)(3) Federal Nonprofit organization, connects people who care with causes that matter. Since its inception in 1996, the Foundation has awarded more than \$8.5 million in grants to a wide variety of charitable and educational activities in Whatcom County.*