

## The FIRST Executive Director of the Endowment Foundation,



In 2000, when Joan Hendricks was hired to write a job description for a new position being created by the Boys & Girls Clubs Endowment Foundation, she didn't realize she was writing a job description for *her* next job. Years earlier, Joan had a professional grant writing business; in the 90's she was hired on many occasions to write grants for the Boys & Girls Clubs of Yellowstone County, and in the process, established a friendship with the Club team and board of directors.



Joan Hendricks

When the Club received some significant bequests and grant funds, the board was inspired to grow the Club's endowment to ensure the longevity of the Club. This led the board to establish a separate 501 (c) (3) fundraising arm (endowment foundation) of the Club. To run this newly created foundation, the board needed to hire an executive director (ED) and turned to Joan for her professional assistance to create a job description for the position. As Joan wrote the description she thought, "I might like that job. During the time the job was posted, I kept coming back to it." After four months when the job was not filled, Joan applied and was hired for the position, becoming the first Executive Director of the Boys & Girls Clubs Endowment Foundation.

Joan held this position for six years. "This time was some of the most memorable and rewarding years of my professional career," Joan shared. During this time, many things grew. The number of Clubs grew from 1 to 3, the number of Club members and Club staff grew exponentially, meaning funds needed to "grow" to support all the expansion.



Joan with her kids and  
husband

To ensure the future of the Clubs and to support growth, in 2004, the Endowment Foundation embarked on a substantial endowment campaign to raise five million dollars through the Campaign for Youth. Joan credits the endowment and club board of directors' commitment to the success of the campaign. "One thing I was

always proud of was the way the two boards came together during the quiet phase of the campaign with 100% giving participation to provide 15% – 20% of the campaign goal. You have to have that to have a successful campaign,” Joan said. Not only did the board commit financially, but also committed their time.

When the campaign reached over 50% of goal, thanks to an extremely generous gift from the Charles M. Bair Family Trust (Alberta Bair) and a couple bequests, it was announced to the community. “We did some really fun things to pull the community into the campaign and our vision. We had weekly photos in the Billings Gazette with one of our donors participating in fun activities alongside Club kids,” Joan explained. “We also did a 1,000 Kids March. Kids from the elementary schools in the Heights marched all the way to Castle Rock Middle School holding signs and shouting, *we want a Club*. The March was Jim Gainan’s idea. He is a phenomenal marketing extraordinaire and was very generous with his time supporting the Club.”



Joan and the grandkids



Joan with her husband Eric

The Endowment Foundation did reach their five million dollar goal. Consequently, Joan had resigned just before that time. She was instrumental in helping facilitate many positive changes during her career with the Endowment Foundation. “Mike Marnin, the CEO of the Clubs, and I worked so well together. He was a wonderful CEO. Very impressive with his forethought and strategies.

We were one of the only Clubs in the nation that put Clubs in the schools. When we opened the Lockwood Clubhouse in 2002 it was immediately recognized nationally,” said Joan. In fact, during Joan’s last year, she was recognized at the national Boys & Girls Clubs conference with the marketing award (\$5,000 to the Club) for the Campaign for Youth materials and the

## The FIRST Executive Director of the Endowment Foundation,

CELEBRATING  
**50**  
YEARS  
SERVING OUR YOUTH

  
**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS**  
OF YELLOWSTONE COUNTY

solicitation award (\$7,000 to the Club) for fundraising solicitation. Also, that year one of the Endowment Foundation board members, Mark Sorlie, won the raffle for a new van for the Club.

“My time as the executive director of the Endowment Foundation was so successful because of the professionalism of the staff. They understood the importance of an endowment and helped with everything I asked them to do,” Joan shared. “Ultimately it comes down to the donors. They made my time at the Club special. Every dollar that was donated was used well. It was never confusing what we were raising money for and why.”

Joan really enjoyed her time raising support for the Clubs. “I had a completely blessed life, with great parents and I never had to worry about food. I feel every child deserves that love, support and to never have to worry about food. When families are struggling, the Clubs are truly a lifeline. It provides kids with a fair chance. The Clubs truly save lives,” explained Joan.



Enjoying vacation in  
far-away lands