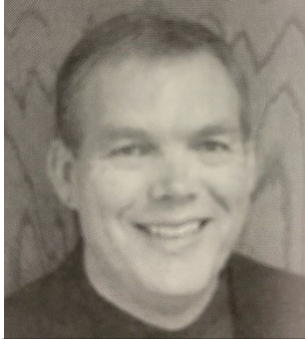


GUIDED THE BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS ON THE PATH TOWARD SUCCESS

CELEBRATING
50
YEARS
SERVING OUR YOUTH



Tim Janiak – picture
taken from a 2002
Endowment
Newsletter

This year is the Boys & Girls Clubs of Yellowstone County's Golden Anniversary. This is a big milestone in the history of the organization and one that is credited to a number of important individuals who dedicated their time, ideas and efforts to help the Boys & Girls Club reach this momentous year! One of those individuals is Tim Janiak.

When I first reached out to Tim and requested a time to visit about his involvement with the Boys & Girls Clubs of Yellowstone County, his response was, "I would be willing to visit with you, however, I am not sure that the things which I was involved in are all that noteworthy." Now,

having visited with him, I am struck by how noteworthy Janiak's involvement was with the Club. Janiak played a supporting role in two of the organization's milestone moments and although he may not admit it, he helped establish the Club's structure that we still rely on today.

Janiak first learned about the Boys & Girls Clubs of Yellowstone County through Earl Kunn, who was at that time, serving on the Club's Board of Directors and as the "Tee It Up For Kids" Golf Tournament chairperson. Janiak recalls, "I was an easy recruit. I was looking to get involved in something. For me, I was needing to connect with a cause. I was looking to commit to something on a deeper level and feel as though I was making a difference. From the very first tour, I liked what I saw at the Boys & Girls Clubs." Smiling, he shares, "I think Earl's real motive was to recruit someone to step into his role as chairman of the golf tournament. Which, I did shortly after joining the Board of Directors. It was a fun event and we were able to grow that event, almost too much one year because the pace of play was at a crawl. We learned a lot that year." Pondering Janiak continues, "One of the epiphanies I had about the organization was at the Club's National convention. I remember sitting through the meetings and gathering this strong sense that the organization is really what they say they are. The National organization was committed to serving local Clubs. They were set up to provide programming, pass-through funding and creating awareness for the

movement. It was good to see and it strengthened my belief in the mission of the organization.”

As Janiak reminisced on his time with the Club, two milestones shined bright in his memory. One was the transition of leadership, when Gordon Eldredge, longtime Chief Executive Officer, retired. Janiak shared how he can remember feeling a mix of emotions; nervous for the next steps not knowing who they would find to fill Gordon’s shoes and excited for future possibilities. “Leadership transitions can make or break an organization and we were fortunate to have had a Board of Directors who had a larger vision for the Club and who as a whole were committed to making it happen.” Janiak continued, “through the years, Club expenses and budgeting was hard and I think many of us feared the leadership transition could make it worse. But, that wasn’t the case. The Billings community was generous in support of the Club financially and we were able to recruit outstanding, strong board members to help us through the changes. Somehow as I think about all of this and learn about the highlights from today’s Club, it seems as though the Billings Community has remained committed to making the Club happen now for 50 years!”

The second milestone during Janiak’s service was the expansion of services. “The Board of Directors wanted to serve more kids, but we knew we were adding financial responsibility to the Club by expanding. That is when we started reaching out to build more partnerships” says Janiak. “I and others spearheaded conversations with Eileen Johnson, Lockwood Superintendent at the time. Johnson was an immediate advocate of the Clubs. She saw the potential a Clubhouse location on campus had for the students in Lockwood. It was her advocacy, collaboration and leadership that helped make it possible. Johnson encouraged the Lockwood School board to partner with the Club and created the School-based Clubhouse arrangement that still exists between Lockwood and the Boys & Girls Club today.” Janiak continues, “after the Lockwood model was established, it was easier for the superintendent of School District 2 and school board members to see the benefits of working together. Do not get me wrong, the partnerships did not occur overnight, it took time and it was reliant on multiple people, no individual was singularly responsible for the School- Club arrangements. It took some schmoozing and a collective voice advocating for the kids to get it agreed on and to make it happen.”

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Tim and Gail Janiak, Sailing

Once the partnerships were built, the next step for the Board of Directors was to figure out a new formula for the funding. The Board of Directors focused on the fundraising plan through grants and eventually brought on a full time staff member to help secure the revenue needed; which ultimately led to the ‘Campaign for Youth’ Capital Campaign. The big fear, Janiak said was, “struggling to fund what we had and how do we step out of that, serve more kids and be successful. Having a partnership with both Lockwood and School District 2 helped lessen the need for facility funds and making a deal with the Endowment Foundation

helped with payroll. As an organization we pushed the idea and we were fortunate enough to have two School Districts, Board of Directors, instrumental funders and community members that could see the benefits of the Club program. Without them it couldn’t happen.”

Tim Janiak shared his knowledge, leadership, time and passion with the organization and for this, we are thankful. Janiak’s involvement during two very important moments in the organization’s history is beyond noteworthy and guided the Boys & Girls Clubs on a path toward success.