

Matching Donations Offered for Windham Endowment

by Barbara O'Brien

This is an excellent time to make a donation to the Windham Endowment for Community Advancement. However much money someone chooses to donate to the non-profit organization, that amount will be matched by a local resident up to a total of \$20,000.

The person making the offer of the matching grant wants to remain anonymous, but has established the fund in the memory of the late Stephen O. Anderson. Monies raised will be used to advance work being done by the local non-profit WIRE organization, a group working to develop alternative and renewable energy sources.

According to those who knew him well, Steve Anderson had several passions in his life – technology, conservation, and teaching. They say his interest in technology was ahead of his time. It started in college in the late 1960s when he studied computers, long before Computer Science existed as a course of study, and it continued for the rest of his life. His lifelong interest in conservation deepened when he discovered fishing in his 40s; he felt that preserving nature was something that everyone should make a part of his or her life.

It was Steve's teaching, however, that brought all of these interests together. While he was never employed as a teacher, he was a natural at explaining, encouraging, and cheering people on, and this was best shown by his relationship with his younger brother of 15 years, Bruce Anderson. Steve had a profound impact on Bruce, especially during his teenage years; Steve tutored him, advised him, and helped shape his educational choices. Bruce says that Steve gave him direction and encouraged him to follow his dreams, particularly to pursue science as a career and get a Ph.D. Bruce credits Steve with making him the man he today.

When Steve passed away in June at the age of 62 from metastasized cancer, his personal passions for technology, nature, and teaching were cut short. Those passions, however, will continue in efforts by other people and programs, one of which is WIRE—the Windham Initiative for Renewable Energy. WIRE combines all of Steve's interests in a single program and, for that reason, a matching challenge grant has been created to help fund WIRE'S work.

Diane Carpenter, spokesperson for the Windham Endowment, said that supporting WIRE captures the essence of Steve Anderson. "In a sense, WIRE will let Steve continue to teach the next generation of scientists and environmentalists, as it carries on his passion for technology and conservation."

A donation to the Windham Endowment for Community Advancement designated for WIRE, will be matched dollar-for-dollar by the grant and will help the next generation of scientists and conservationists to be their very best and to follow their dreams, Carpenter said.

The matching grant for WIRE began on July 20 and runs through September 20. "Our goal is to raise \$40,000 in 60 days," Carpenter said. "This is an aggressive goal, but one we feel we can attain," she added.

For more information, check out the Website for Windham Endowment for Community Advancement at www.windhamendowment.org.