Food Bank director gets the Fish Award

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June Munski-Feenan honored for starting and running the best food bank in the state

North Valley Food Bank executive director June Munski-Feenan was presented with the Fish Award by the Whitefish Community Foundation at its eighth annual grants awards event.

Munski-Feenan, who started the Food Bank about 27 years ago, was recognized for her outstanding service to the community. In her usual modesty, Munski-Feenan said others in the community deserved the award more than her.

"Eighty-one years ago, God dropped off a little girl at a ranch near the State Mill..."
north of the Blue Moon, and I've been giving them heck ever since," Munski-
Feenan said.

The Fish Award was established in 2004 to honor an organization or individual
who has made a substantial and significant contribution to bettering the
Whitefish community. The award was last given in 2005 to Carolyn Pitman, the
current executive director of the Whitefish Theatre Company.

The Food Bank, which also received three grants during the event held Nov. 6
at the O'Shaughnessy Center, needs more space and is considering moving
from its present location downtown, Munski-Feenan said. The Food Bank is
also considering making thuringer of all the mountain lions Fish, Wildlife and
Parks has hanging in Kalispell to feed people hard-hit by the economic
downturn.

More than 150 people attended the event, and more than $113,000 in grant
funds were dispersed to 30 Whitefish area nonprofit organizations. The
Foundation's mission is dedicated to fostering philanthropy, building
endowments, and helping donors and nonprofits benefit our community.

Since its inception in 2000, the Foundation has provided more than $2 million in
funding to area nonprofits. This year alone, the Foundation has granted more
than $300,000 through its Grants Fund and Donor-Advised Funds.

The awarded organizations applied for grants for programs and services they
render in the community of Whitefish. All organizations are nonprofit
organizations, and all applications were thoroughly reviewed by the
Foundation's Grants Committee. Applications for the 2009 grant cycle will be
available in early April.

"In these challenging economic times, it's more important than ever that the
Foundation remains strong and able to help local charities through hard times
as well as good," said Linda Engh-Grady, the Foundation's first-ever executive
director.

"Our endowment fund was $800,000, now it's a little less," said Paul
Johannsen, the Foundation's board president, who MC'd the event.

The Foundation is a leader in building a legacy of generosity to support local
nonprofit organizations by fostering health, human services, education,
environment, sports, recreation, art and culture.

Individuals interested in making a contribution can contact executive director
Linda Engh-Grady at 863-1781 or by e-mailing
Linda@whitefishcommunityfoundation.org or by stopping by their office at 214
Second Street West, in Whitefish.

Nonprofit organizations that received grants this year included:
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Flathead County -- operating expenses
DREAM Adaptive Recreation, Inc. -- operating expenses and equipment
Flathead County 9-1-1 Foundation, Inc. -- protective equipment
Flathead County Search and Rescue Association, Inc. -- radio equipment
Flathead Shelter Friends -- operating expenses
Flathead Spay and Neuter Task Force, Inc. -- new autoclave
Flathead Youth Home -- capital campaign
The Glacier Institute -- operating expenses
Glacier Nordic Club -- operating equipment and new lights for course
Great Northern Veterans Peace Park Foundation -- fencing
Habitat for Humanity of the Flathead Valley -- operating expenses and Whitefish houses
Intermountain: Calling All Angels -- operating expenses
Montana Animal Rescue League -- operating expenses
Muldown Elementary School (Special Services) -- structure learning program
N. C. Foundation -- mental health counseling
North Valley Food Bank, Inc. -- operating expenses and concrete resurfacing/shelving
North Valley Hospital Foundation -- patient transfer system
North Valley Music School -- operating expenses and music technology software/hardware
Olney-Bissell School -- playground equipment
Shepherd's Hand Clinic -- operating expenses
Stumptown Art Studio and Ceramics Annex -- outdoor classroom and storage facility
The Wave -- subsidized membership program
Whitefish CARE -- operating expenses
Whitefish Figure Skating Club -- operating expenses
Whitefish Lake Institute -- operating expenses
Whitefish Middle School - auditorium renovation
Whitefish Rotary Charitable Fund, Inc. --Christmas program
Whitefish School District Band Program -- music stands
Whitefish Shines! -- operating expenses
Whitefish Theatre Company -- PA system and lighting