



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Estate of Bonnie Seastrand Leaves Lasting Legacy to Lunenburg School and Library

LUNENBURG, Vt. – The Alden Balch Memorial Library and Lunenburg Elementary School have each received bequests of more than \$150,000 from the Estate of Bonnie and Arnold (Nils) Seastrand of Fairfield, Connecticut, who passed away on February 16, 2024.



The Seastrands were high school sweethearts who both went to high school in Fairfield, CT. They both had a love for Vermont, in particular. Bonnie attended college in Vermont and her grandparents eventually moved there as well. In the 60's Bonnie and Nils purchased property in Vermont with the intention of building a second home there. They both loved nature and the outdoors and shared a deep connection to the Town of Lunenburg, where the couple owned land for more than 40 years. Known as quiet and thoughtful people, the Seastrands demonstrated their enduring fondness for the community through these generous gifts.

The gift to Lunenburg Elementary School is designated specifically to support scientific education, ensuring that students in the community will have enriched opportunities for learning in the sciences. The gift to the Alden Balch Memorial Library came without restrictions; the Library's Board of Trustees has voted to add the funds to its endowment account, strengthening its ability to serve the community for generations to come.

Mrs. Seastrand also left gifts to several scientific organizations outside of Vermont, reflecting her strong commitment to education and discovery. Her late husband, Nils, was a retired scientist and founder of Seastrand Scientific, as well as creator and owner of Fins & Gills Aquarium and Shipwreck Aquarium in Connecticut. His obituary noted that, "the love for his very special Vermont will stay alive in him forever."

“The Seastrands’ generosity will have a profound and lasting impact on our town,” said Librarian Debbie Thomas. “These gifts honor their love of reading, science, learning and Vermont, and we are deeply grateful.”

School Principal, Tammy MacQueen and her staff are thrilled about this opportunity for the Lunenburg students. Possible uses for the funds include overnight science field trips, expanding the school gardens and greenhouse, growing hydroponic plants in the classrooms, and building a composting station in the cafeteria. “We are so happy about this amazing gift Mrs. Seastrand gave to our school, and we know it will make a huge impact on the education of our students,” stated Mrs. MacQueen. “Many elementary schools do not have the resources to offer robust science experiences and these funds will give our students this opportunity.”

The combined legacy of Bonnie and Nils Seastrand will continue to nurture curiosity, knowledge, and community life in Lunenburg for many years to come.

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