ENVISION

NEWS | SEPTEMBER 2, 2026

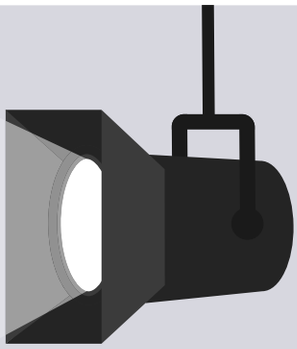
A STRONGER COMMUNITY TOGETHER...

What Makes a Community Rich?

+ A young person surrounded by opportunity.
+ A neighbor with access to what they need.
+ A community generous enough to invest in one another.

This month, we're looking beyond dollars and cents to explore the things that create true community wealth. From opportunity and access to generosity and connection, our stories remind us that a rich community isn't defined by how much it has, but by how much it makes possible for the people who call it home.

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT



Rich in Opportunity

What does it mean for a young person to grow up in a rich community?

Maybe it has less to do with what their family can afford and more to do with what surrounds them: safe places to land, new experiences to try, a good meal when they need one, and adults who believe in who they can become.

That's exactly what the Sandpoint Teen Center is quietly providing for hundreds of local teens. Nearly 1,000 of the roughly 1,800 teens enrolled in our local school district have checked through its doors. On a typical day, the Center feeds 80 to 100 kids, but as lead mentor Karen Gibbs shared during our recent conversation, the food is really just the beginning. Teens find homework help, career exploration, field trips, games, mentors and something increasingly rare: a no-phone space where they actually talk, laugh, make eye contact and connect with one another.

Some of the kids who walk through those doors are experiencing food insecurity. Others simply need somewhere to belong. For some, a Teen Center outing may be the only adventure they experience all summer. And sometimes, what changes a life isn't a grand program at all. It's simply having one caring adult show up consistently enough to make a young person believe something more is possible.

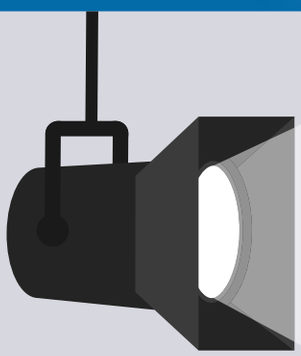
As Karen put it: *"It really only takes one caring adult to change the trajectory for a youth."* Maybe that's one of the best measures of a community's wealth: how many opportunities we create for our kids to discover who they might become.

Hear the full conversation with Karen and discover what's happening inside the Sandpoint Teen Center.

LISTEN TO THE CONVERSATION

Do you have an idea for a community spotlight story? Let us know, we'd love to share it next month!

SUBMIT A SPOTLIGHT STORY



COMMUNITY NEED

Rich In Access

What happens when a broken car becomes a crisis?

In Bonner County, a reliable vehicle can be the difference between getting to work and losing a paycheck. Between making a medical appointment and missing it. Between getting your kids to school, buying groceries, accessing services or suddenly finding yourself stuck.

For many of the people who walk through the EnVision Center's doors, there isn't enough room in the budget for an unexpected $1,000 repair. And when transportation disappears, other pieces of an already-fragile life can begin to unravel quickly. It's one reason transportation continues to show up among the needs of the people we serve.

It has us thinking differently about what access really means. A community can have great jobs, healthcare, food programs and support services, but those resources only work when people can actually reach them. In a rural community like ours, transportation isn't simply a convenience. It's a bridge to opportunity and stability.

That's why we're bringing Bonner County's automotive community together for something new: a bowling tournament that turns friendly competition into help for local neighbors facing critical vehicle repairs. Mechanics, dealerships, parts suppliers, towing companies and other industry partners already keep our community moving every day. Now we're inviting them to come together around the people who need a little help staying on the road.

Because a truly rich community isn't simply one with abundant resources. It's one that works to make sure its neighbors can reach them.

A huge thank you to the local automotive businesses already saying YES to Roll for Repairs!

JOIN ROLL FOR REPAIRS!

Do you know of a need or opportunity in the community?

SUBMIT A COMMUNITY NEED SUGGESTION

COMMUNITY PILLAR

Rich in Generosity

What can a girl from rural Tennessee teach us about building a rich community?

Quite a lot, actually. Dolly Parton grew up one of twelve children in the mountains of East Tennessee, with very little money but an abundance of music, faith, family and big dreams. When success took her far beyond those mountains, she never forgot the place that shaped her.

And perhaps that's what makes her approach to philanthropy so remarkable. Dolly didn't begin by trying to change the world. She started by investing in her own backyard.

In 1988, she created the Dollywood Foundation to help children in her home county succeed in school. Inspired by her father, who couldn't read or write, she later launched Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, mailing free books to young children regardless of family income.

What began as one woman's investment in one rural community became something extraordinary. Today, the Imagination Library reaches children across five countries and sends millions of books into homes every month.

But maybe the lesson isn't that we all need to build something that reaches millions. Maybe it's exactly the opposite. Start where you are. Give what you have. Invest in the people and places that made you.

That's philanthropy at its best. It isn't measured only by the size of a check. It's generosity of money, certainly, but also of time, talent, influence and heart. And that's something a girl from the mountains of Tennessee and a community tucked into the mountains of North Idaho have quite a bit in common.

A rich community isn't one where everyone has a lot. It's one where people believe they have something worth giving.

DREAM MORE. LEARN MORE. CARE MORE. BE MORE.

FIND YOUR LOCAL CAUSE

Upcoming Events | WAYS TO CONNECT THIS SEPTEMBER

4–6
Artists' Studio Tour

5th
Hands on History

8th
Back-to-School Party

10–13
10th Annual Panhandle Bluesfest

For more info visit:
ArtInSandpoint.org

10am-2pm
611 Ella

3-5pm | Library
1407 Cedar St.

2888 Freeman Lake
Rd. Oldtown, ID

11th

Hamnet The Movie

7pm | Panida
300 N. First Ave.

11-13

The Lady With All The Answers.

The Hive, 207 N.
First Ave.

12th

SASi's Art Alive

4:45pm Little Panida
300 N. First Ave.

12-13th

Boundary County's Artist Studio Tour

9am-5pm
Boundary Co.

15th

Grand Opening: CTEC

3:30-5:30pm | 410
South Division Ave.

18th

Live Music with Luca Stricgnoli

8pm | The Hive
207 N. First Ave

21st

Volunteer Training for Sandpoint Friendship Station.

10am-2pm
711 Main St.

21st

Sandpoint Idaho Film Fest: Fundraising Party.

5:30-9pm
Matchwood Brewing

24th

End of the Line: A Tribute to the Allman Brothers

7pm | Panida
300 N. First Ave.

25th

SASi Monthly Breakfast Fundraiser

8am | Senior Center
820 Main St.

25th

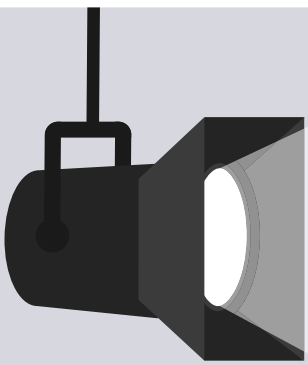
Jim-Isaac Chua Benefit Concert for Habitat for Humanity

7pm | Panida
300 N. First Ave.

30th

SPEAK Documentary Film Screening

7pm | Panida
300 N. First Ave.



ENVISION CENTER MOMENTUM

How is CREC investing in that richness right now?

COMMUNITY RESOURCE ENVISION CENTER

CRECidaho.com

RICH IN ACCESS

THANKS TO OUR AARP COMMUNITY CHALLENGE GRANT AND SOME INCREDIBLE VOLUNTEERS OUR NEW SPOT BUS SHELTER IS TAKING SHAPE!

RICH IN PARTNERSHIP

WE'RE BRINGING OUR AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY TOGETHER FOR A BOWLING TOURNAMENT FUNDRAISER THAT WILL HELP FAMILIES STAY ON THE ROAD!

RICH IN TRADITION

WE'RE HARD AT WORK BUILDING OUR HOMETOWN HOLIDAY TRADITION MONTHS BEFORE THE FIRST ORNAMENT IS HUNG.

RICH IN COLLABORATION

WE'RE BRINGING COMMUNITY LEADERS TOGETHER AROUND A BIGGER VISION FOR SHARED SPACE, RESOURCES, AND IMPACT.

What makes a community rich isn't just what it has. It's how well its people, places and opportunities are connected. Research into community gathering spaces suggests those connections can have economic value too, supporting quality of life, workforce attraction and retention, local activity, and stronger communities.

That's part of why we're thinking so boldly about what's next for the EnVision Center and the HUB.

What if investing in connection is also an investment in Bonner County's economic future?

COME SEE WHAT WE'RE BUILDING

JOIN US FOR A TOUR >

Trading Combat Boots
for a New Mission

LATEST PODCAST

Can a Story Change
a Conversation?

LATEST BLOG POST

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