

YOUR contribution made a *Difference*

An update for our contributors

When you stepped up to help us share stories of success you may not have fully realized how your investment of time and resources would help foster sustainable rural communities in North Central Washington. Since 2008 more than 2,000 people have joined you in this quest enabling us to share stories that enhance a sense of belonging, inspire action and build community. Here are a few examples of how your contributions are helping to connect people, place and possibility.

PROGRAM -- *Gathering Our Voice*
Honors Contributions Across NCW



Mike McKee; his dad, Faye McKee; and Dan Jackson.

“Everyone has regrets about not asking their parents more questions and when they’re gone, they’re gone,” said Mike McKee. “We’re left with fragments. We go on and pull those fragments out - many photographs but very little voice. And it is the one thing that is so deep in us – the voice

of our parents and our grandparents. It’s more meaningful than a photo.”

Wenatchee World readers also benefit from interviews IRIS has been collecting for the past 8 years. “I always read and enjoy the column,” Pearl Wolfe said. “As someone who didn’t grow up here these stories help ground me – help me feel more at home.”

Thanks to contributors like you, we’ve completed more than 240 recorded interviews with individuals and organizations adding knowledge of past successes to the toolbox of today, honoring individuals, inspiring action, and building community along the way. Half of these have been transcribed by volunteers and 52 interviews have been highlighted in Gathering Our Voice columns in The Wenatchee World. See www.gatheringourvoice.org.



Listening Post at Paddler’s Point.
Kim George photo.

PROGRAM -- Listening Post Network Enhances Sense of Place

Starting in 2012 IRIS has been working with partners to share excerpts of Gathering Our Voice interviews through the Listening Post Network, a digital storytelling system that enables visitors to access stories through their cell phones and smart phone/tablets. “The system works great for us,” Skip Johnson with the Wenatchee Row & Paddle Club said. “It allows us to easily reach a lot of people with information about who we are and why we’re there.”

Thanks to contributors like you, more than 1,000 people have accessed stories about 8 sites in NCW over the past two years strengthening connections to this place through the audio and web-based platforms provided by the Listening Post Network. New sites in the coming year will include the Apple Capital Loop Trail in Wenatchee and the Quincy Valley Museum.

See www.gatheringourvoice.org/listening-post.

PROGRAM -- Success Summit
Connects Communities



Doug Woodrow and students at 2013 Success Summit.

“It’s so important that we hear each other,” a 2013 Summit attendee said noting the diversity of ages, occupations, cultures and communities participating in this annual celebration of success in NCW. Each year

people comment on how energizing and empowering it is to connect with people who share their passion for rural communities. And, many of these connections lead to action. “Over half-a-dozen projects I’m pursuing directly benefited from connections at the Summit,” one participant commented. “We are working on an 8th grade community celebration as a result of the kids being involved in the Summit,” middle school teacher Doug Woodrow said. To see student-produced videos about the Okanogan Middle School’s *Lock It In* project visit www.irisncw.org.

Thanks to contributors like you, 500 NCW residents have participated in summits where 138 success stories have been highlighted between 2009 and 2013. We’re now working with communities and partners to schedule Success Summits through 2020.



Listening Post at Historic Douglas Church.

STRUCTURE -- Strengthening Our Capacity



Second floor directory at The Wenatchee World.

“Communities succeed because people work together,” said Wenatchee World publisher Rufus Woods. “That’s the fundamental American value that IRIS celebrates and that we support.” Each year nearly 100 volunteers and partners work together with IRIS to deliver programs, fundraise and govern the non-profit organization.

Thanks to contributors like you, IRIS has increased our capacity to meet our mission by building a board with diverse skills that is increasingly representative of the region. We’ve also moved our office into The Wenatchee World – an environment that is conducive to building partnerships with those who share our goals.

The good news in this update is made possible through your support. On behalf of the board, the staff, the volunteers and the community we serve, we thank you for your commitment to IRIS. If you have questions or comments, call IRIS Coordinator, Nancy Warner, at 509-881-1812.

IRIS Board Members

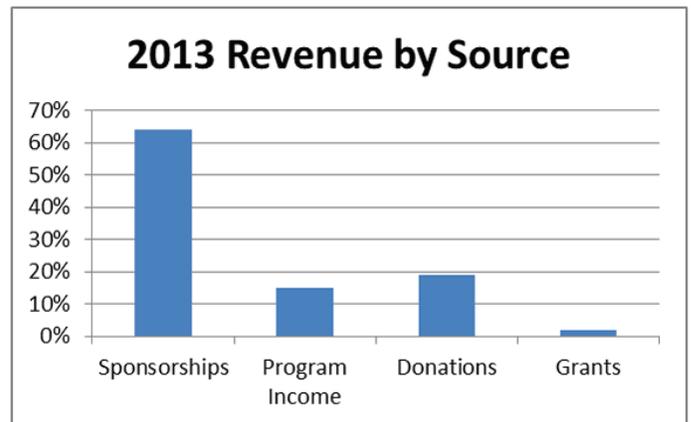
Darby Hammond, Wenatchee
Marcia Henkle, East Wenatchee
Erin Munding, Omak
Mike Rickel, Cashmere
George Thornton, Oroville
Darold Wax, Wenatchee
Bonnie Waude, Manson
Mike Yale, East Wenatchee

Our Mission - fostering sustainable rural communities in North Central Washington by gathering and sharing success stories that enhance a sense of belonging, inspire action, and build community. We believe that thriving communities in a healthy environment create success. Visit www.irisncw.org to review our 2014-2016 strategic plan.

FINANCE -- Becoming a Sustainable Organization

“With rural connections of my own, I appreciate the value of the land and being mindful of the generations to come by caring for the resources,” said IRIS board member Darold Wax. “I’m committed to working with others to insure that we conserve and build on our assets as we plan for a brighter tomorrow.”

“IRIS provides a venue for rural communities to make the connections and build the relationships that promote business development,” said Lisa Parks, Executive Director, Port of Douglas County.



Thanks to contributors like you, IRIS has become a more sustainable organization by reducing our reliance on grants and diversifying our funding base. In 2013 IRIS revenues were 64% sponsorships, 15% program income, and 19 % donations and 2% grants for special projects.