

Vail Interfaith Chapel fundraising campaign receives \$1M donation

Betsy and George Wiegers are longtime residents, philanthropists

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Raising money for good causes comes with a good bit of waiting, nervousness and moments of exhilaration. The campaign for the Vail Interfaith Chapel recently had one of those exhilarating moments.

The committee running the chapel's current \$10 million fundraising campaign announced this week that longtime residents Betsy and George Wiegers had given a \$1 million gift to the campaign.

"This is huge. This one donation is 10% of our goal," said Rev. Tim Wilbanks, who is the president of the chapel's board of directors.

Rev. Carl Walker, a member of the chapel's fundraising committee, said he was "overwhelmed" by the donation. "Now we're on our way," he added.

The Wiegers' donation brings the total amount raised so far to \$2.1 million.

In a statement, Betsy Wiegers said the donation was to aid a community institution.

"As a focal point of the community and an important piece of our history, the Vail Interfaith Chapel is Vail's heart and soul," Betsy said. "It is not only our faith center but our community center, serving thousands every year who need mental health support services, food and emergency shelter. George and I want to ensure that it remains in place for generations to come."



SPECIAL TO THE DAILY

Betsy, left, and George Wiegers recently donated \$1 million to the Vail Interfaith Chapel's \$10 million capital campaign.

THE CAMPAIGN

The Vail Interfaith Chapel's current capital campaign has a goal of \$10 million for projects including:

- ▶ A new roof
- ▶ Resurfacing the parking lot
- ▶ Replacing the heating and ventilation system
- ▶ Create a reserve for future needs

Learn more at vailchapel.com.

GIVING INSPIRES GIVING

That large donation might also be the inspiration for more giving.

"We all know this is a very legitimate, worthy cause, but many people will say 'It's not legitimate until you get to Point X,'" Wilbanks said. "We got close to 'Point X' in one day."

Betsy and George Wiegers have a long history of philanthropy in the Vail Valley and elsewhere.

The Vail Valley Foundation named the Wiegers that organization's 2019 Citizens of the Year.

In an email, Vail Valley Foundation President Mike Imhof wrote:

"Over several decades now, the generosity of spirit, volunteerism and transformative philanthropy of Betsy and George Wiegers has lifted up so many nonprofit organizations and causes, and elevated the quality of life for all who live, work or visit our beautiful valley. This is one of many reasons why Betsy and George, both together and at times recognized separately, have been honored by many over the years for their support. Their recent and very generous gift to the Vail Chapel project is a further testament to their philanthropic leadership and dedication to this community."

'LEADERSHIP IN PHILANTHROPY'

Betsy Wiegers is a longtime patron of the Bravo! Vail Music Festival.

Festival director Caitlin Murray called the Wiegers "incredible philanthropists," both in the Vail Valley and

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Ophthalmologist, dermatologist join Colorado Mountain Medical

Daily staff report
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Colorado Mountain Medical, a partner of Vail Health, has added two new specialists to its service line offerings. Dr. Morgan Godin, an ophthalmologist, and Dr. Kelly Morrissey Williams, a dermatologist, join CMM as the most recent additions to an ever-expanding team.

"We are excited to expand our offerings at Colorado Mountain Medical with the addition of Dr. Godin and Dr. Williams," said Dr. Brooks Bock, CEO of CMM, in a news release. "We are constantly looking for gap areas in our service and ways to help increase access to higher-quality care for our local patients and adding additional providers allows us to fill those gaps."

Originally from North Carolina, Dr. Godin practices comprehensive ophthalmology at Colorado Mountain Medical.

Dr. Godin completed her undergraduate degree at Duke University where she graduated summa cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa. She continued on at Duke University School of Medicine where she graduated with honors followed by ophthalmology residency at the renowned Duke Eye Center all in Durham, North Carolina. She was awarded the K. Alexander Dastgheib MD Eye Surgery Award for Excellence in Surgical Skill and Judgment. She then went on to complete a cornea, anterior segment and refractive surgery fellowship at the prestigious Minnesota Eye Consultants in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

During the fellowship, she was awarded the Allina Hospital Outstanding Patient Experience Award. She has published in peer-reviewed journals, written book chapters and review articles and presented at numerous meetings including at the national and international levels. While she is fellowship-trained in the front part of the eye, she practices as a comprehensive ophthalmologist at Colorado Mountain Medical in order to treat a variety of eye conditions affecting all parts of the eye.

For more information about ophthalmology, as this is a new specialty at CMM, please visit: cmmhealth.org/services/ophthalmology.

Dr. Godin played competitive tennis growing up and continues to enjoy the game. She and her husband (who is an orthopedic surgeon at The Steadman Clinic) have one young daughter.

Originally from Maryland, Dr. Kelly Morrissey Williams graduated with honors from Harvard University, where she was awarded the Detur Prize and the John Harvard Scholarship for Academic Achievement.

She attended Case Western Reserve



SPECIAL TO THE DAILY

Originally from North Carolina, Dr. Morgan Godin practices comprehensive ophthalmology at Colorado Mountain Medical.



SPECIAL TO THE DAILY

As a board-certified dermatologist and dermatopathologist with special training in cutaneous oncology, Dr. Kelly Morrissey Williams' primary interest is in the prevention, early detection and treatment of skin cancer.

University School of Medicine in Cleveland, Ohio, where she pursued dermatologic research and was elected into the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Society. During college and medical school, she received three National Institutes of Health Summer Research Fellowships. After completing an internship at Summa Akron City Hospital in Ohio, Dr. Williams completed a combined dermatology residency and cutaneous oncology fellowship at the University of Pennsylvania in 2013.

She was an Assistant Professor in Dermatology at the University of Colorado from July 2013 until June 2014 before pursuing a fellowship in dermatopathology at Tufts Medical Center in Boston, Massachusetts. As a board-certified dermatologist and dermatopathologist with special training in cutaneous oncology, Dr. Williams' primary interest is in the prevention, early detection, and treatment of skin cancer.

Dr. Williams is an avid skier and enjoys hiking and yoga. She and her husband have two young children.

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elsewhere. Murray noted that Betsy Wieggers was instrumental in bringing the New York Philharmonic and other orchestras to the Vail Valley. She's also been involved in Bravo's educational and enrichment programs.

The donation to the chapel campaign is "what leadership in philanthropy looks like," Murray said.

A significant donation early in a campaign "raises its profile, and inspires others to participate," Murray said. The Wieggers have done that "time and time again" for nonprofits in the valley, she added.

Wilbanks said there's no strict timeline for the chapel's campaign, although the committee would like fundraising to be complete this year or in 2022.

But construction on the chapel's parking lot and roof is set to start April 5. The roof is the top priority. The old shake shingle roof can't even be repaired now, Wilbanks said. He added that in 2012 or so, the chapel's directors were told by the company that had long cared for the roof that simply walking on the roof would cause more damage than could be repaired.

Wilbanks said the Wieggers' donation means that work will start on schedule, "full speed ahead," on April 5.

Nonprofit Organizations are a lot like rockstars... except they don't usually have a lot of money in the bank

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Grant applications from certified tax-exempt, nonprofit organizations are now being accepted for the Bessie Minor Swift Foundation. The Foundation accepts grants for programs that emphasize literacy, reading and writing, languages, science and interdisciplinary areas. Applications ranging from \$500 to \$3,000 will be considered. Since 2008, the Bessie Minor Swift Foundation has awarded over \$700,000 to nonprofit groups including schools, libraries, community colleges and small local organizations.

DEADLINES:

Grant Application Deadline:
Saturday, February 15, 2021

Grant Awards Announcement:
Friday, May 1, 2021

APPLICATIONS:

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