

THE BCF EDGE

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THE BALTIMORE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER

SCHAEFER TO BCF: DO IT NOW—AND FOREVER!

\$1.4 MILLION ADDED TO WILLIAM DONALD SCHAEFER
CIVIC FUND FROM THE GOVERNOR'S ESTATE

William Donald Schaefer, the dedicated "Do it now!" public servant known for his love for all things Baltimore, is still getting it done. In 2008, he established a fund at BCF to support quality-of-life projects that make local communities healthier and more appealing. This summer, \$1.4 million in assets from his estate were transferred to the William Donald Schaefer Civic Fund at BCF, securing his charitable legacy.

The Fund honors the late mayor/governor/comptroller and perpetuates his lifelong support for the city's neighborhoods. The bolstered Fund now totals close to \$2 million in a permanent endowment and will yield more than \$80,000 each year for neighborhood grants. Nothing would have pleased him more.

A COLORFUL, COMMITTED PUBLIC SERVANT

As mayor of Baltimore, probably his favorite role as a long-time public servant, Schaefer waged war on potholes and garbage-strewn streets. He championed revitalizing the Inner Harbor as an engine of economic growth. He was a driving force behind the



Kristine Bais

BCF Neighborhoods Committee Chair Stu Simms and Board Chair Ray Bank accept the gift from Governor Schaefer's estate from the Governor's personal representatives, Lainy Lebow Sachs and Zelig Robinson.

National Aquarium and once, to win a bet, famously jumped into its seal pool wearing a ridiculous old-fashioned swimsuit with a rubber ducky tucked under his arm. He would do just about anything to promote his beloved city. His civic passion, however, was neighborhood improvement.

During his stint as mayor, Schaefer would roam the city's streets, making copious notes about items that required attention. Then he would pass the notes to aides with the admonition: "Do it now!"

He knew that small improvements had a disproportionate impact on the residents' daily lives, and he had no patience for poor maintenance.

Pressing his friends and city leaders for support, Schaefer established a Civic Fund and created an advisory board to respond to requests for small but significant neighborhood projects—a flagpole, perhaps, or paint for a community center or plants for an urban garden in an empty lot. The grants never exceeded *continued on back*

\$1,000, but they all had potential for positive impact, and he would doggedly follow up to make certain that the work had been completed to his satisfaction.

THE SCHAEFER LEGACY: NEIGHBORHOOD GRANTS

When Schaefer established his Fund at BCF in 2008, he seeded it with leftover campaign funds as well as money from his original Civic Fund. After he moved to Charlestown Retirement Community, he donated his townhouse to BCF so that proceeds from the sale could help increase the Fund. He invited others to contribute to the Fund to make certain there would always be resources for neighborhood projects.

Schaefer was delighted to designate the income from his Fund to help sustain BCF's highly regarded Neighborhood Grants Program, after learning that the program provides support for the same kinds of improvements that he had long championed. Since 2000, more than \$2 million has been distributed to scores of neighborhoods that are working to make their communities stronger, more cohesive, and more beautiful.

Remarking on the purpose of the Schaefer Civic Fund, BCF President Tom Wilcox observed, "As mayor, Schaefer made it a priority to help residents complete community projects to make their neighborhoods stronger. BCF is proud to carry on the legacy of Governor Schaefer through our Neighborhood Grants Program, which for more than 20 years has helped neighborhoods in Baltimore



William Donald Schaefer

City and County tackle projects that make their environments better for families and businesses."

This summer, BCF announced the 2012 recipients of the Neighborhood Grants Program. Grants totaling \$137,880 were awarded to 28 community improvement projects, including:

- An artist in residence at a Waverly neighborhood arts center for after-school visual arts programming.
- An "outdoor kitchen" cooking series at the Charles North Cooperative Garden involving local restaurants and residents.
- The Creative Alliance's Great Big Halloween Parade and pre-parade lantern-making workshops in Highlandtown.

- Reclaiming and beautifying a vacant lot in Franklin Square.
- Plans for the free Arts in the Park Festival involving Garwyn Oaks residents.
- A leadership development program for Barclay residents.
- Improving public safety in Northeast Baltimore by organizing a National Night Out Against Crime.
- A beautification project and community block party in Madison East End.
- Intergenerational painted-screen workshops in Highlandtown.
- Plans for the first annual Catonsville Clean and Green Harvest Festival.

A LASTING IMPRESSION

It is impossible to say how Governor Schaefer will be viewed in decades to come, but this man, who lived modestly, will surely be remembered for his generous inclination to help Baltimore neighborhoods. As his notable eccentricities fade from memory, his endowed BCF fund will keep supporting the aspirations of residents who see what needs to be done and feel an irresistible impulse to "Do it now!"

