

**Dyer-Ives Foundation**  
A Short History

---

**2016**

FILE COPY

Form 710  
TREASURY DEPARTMENT  
Internal Revenue Service  
Revised November, 1935

(Space for use of Collector  
or Bureau)  
RECEIVED

**GIFT TAX**  
**DONEE'S OR TRUSTEE'S INFORMATION RETURN OF GIFTS**  
**Calendar Year 1937**

(TO BE FILED IN DUPLICATE)

Donor's name..... David D. Hunting  
Donor's address..... 355 Plymouth Road, East Grand Rapids, Mich.  
Donee's name..... John Robert Hunting  
Donee's address..... 355 Plymouth Road, East Grand Rapids, Mich.  
Trustee's name..... David D. Hunting and Edgar H. Hunting, Trustees  
Trustee's address..... 355 Plymouth Road, East Grand Rapids, Mich.

Item No.	Description of property received	Date of gift	Approximate value at date of gift
1	924-2/3 shares Metal Office Furniture Co. common stock, \$10 par value, principal office at Grand Rapids, Michigan	2/17/37	\$ 17,938.53
2	444-2/3 shares Stow & Davis Furniture Co. no par common stock, declared value \$1.00 per share, principal office at Grand Rapids, Michigan	2/17/37	961.55
	Under trust indenture dated Feb. 17, 1937		

I hereby give notice of the herein-described property received from the above-named donor, and certify that all the information given herein is correct, to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature.....

Designation.....

Date March 14

1938.

ADDRESS IF DONEE'S EXECUTOR OR ADMINISTRATOR

Initial stock transfer from David Hunting Sr, to John R. Hunting

# A Short History of the Dyer-Ives Foundation / 2016

**F**or more than half a century, the Dyer-Ives Foundation served Grand Rapids with a mission to “build capacity in those grassroots, community-based organizations or related efforts which address issues related to systemic poverty or build a sense of community among residents of the central city.” In the local community Dyer-Ives is remembered for its commitment to basic human rights, respect for the dignity of every person, and its acknowledgement of systems-wide failures that contribute to racism, poverty and inequality. The foundation was grounded in the premise that people have the capacity to develop their own solutions to their own challenges if they are given the tools to do so. The foundation was responsive; where it saw a need, it filled a need. Once it had hold of a good project or an important issue, it worked hard to bring others on board, both funders and fund recipients.

When asked to characterize the work of the Dyer-Ives Foundation over the years, most remember it as innovative, creative and unabashedly tolerant of risk. Throughout its history, the foundation was regularly the first funder of a project, and many of its grants were made to brand-new, very small, and often fragile organizations.

As 2016 drew to a close, so too did the Dyer-Ives Foundation. After a five-year process of spending out all funds, the doors were closed for the last time. This history illustrates the fulfillment of its mission.

**Dyer-Ives Foundation** Honoring Family



Virginia Reno Ives



Grace Dyer Hunting

## Phase I: 1961–1972 The Early Years

*We funded things that the community didn't know it was ready for.*

*– Sophia Gorham Reid*

The first meeting of the John R. Hunting Foundation took place on September 12, 1961. The founding trustees were David Hunting, Sr., Duncan Littlefair, John Hibbard, Allen Hunting, Siegel Judd, Michael Carey, and Lewis Engman. A short time later, feeling somewhat uneasy at having named a foundation for himself at the ripe old age of 31, John renamed it for his two grandmothers, Grace Dyer Hunting and Virginia Reno Ives. Thus the Dyer-Ives Foundation was born.

Because he was spending so much time out of state during these early years, John relied heavily on his staff, his trustees and his “wingman,” John Hibbard, to ensure his vision and purpose were faithfully executed through the foundation’s endeavors. Yet he always maintained an active interest, returning biannually to participate in board meetings.

Pursuant to a deep personal interest in psychology and education, John brought new concepts in education home to Grand Rapids from New York. With the money for office rent and the part-time executive director’s salary coming directly out of John’s pocket, the foundation was able to initiate and incubate two programs, both of which were eventually handed over to local institutions to run for another two decades. The Dyer-Ives Foundation initially focused on the operation of these two small, discrete programs related to educating at-risk youth, in particular, juvenile offenders and high-school drop-outs.

## Kentfields

In 1964 Kentfields Academy was established as the last stop before Boys Training School for young men in Grand Rapids. It was based on Highfields, the original program in New Jersey. Dr. Saul Pilnick was one of the key developers of the concept: addressing juvenile delinquency in residential programs through guided group interaction, using the peer group as the primary change agent. Dr. Pilnick was an important consultant to the Grand Rapids model. John had recruited program supervisor, Reggie Gatling, a former New Jersey car lot attendant, to run the program out of a house on Ransom Street in downtown Grand Rapids. During his two years at the helm, Reggie, who was not formally certified as a teacher, helped his young charges hone the skills they needed to navigate their troubled peer relationships and family lives. John Hibbard, one of Dyer-Ives' longest-standing trustees, remembers Reggie as a chain smoker who was "tough on those kids." The program was based on formation of new social norms and on peer pressure, which meant that students had the power to expel other students who didn't live up to the program's standards to Boys Training School. At the end of two years, it was adopted and run by Kent County Community Services and Juvenile Court for many years. However, the program lost much of its operational dynamic when Mr. Gatling departed, and it was turned basically into a residential program. In 1984 the National Council of Juvenile and Family Courts recognized Kentfields for the value of its work.

## ITM Academy

At the same time that Kentfields was established, the "I Teach Me" Program, modeled after another New York-inspired idea, was started in the garage of the Sheldon Complex. The program was given its name by Raymond Tardy, the director of the complex. Two Calvin College students, Jim Heynen and Wally VanEtte, were co-directors of this program. Dedicated to providing an education for the city's high-school drop-outs, the ITM project employed a behavioral modification approach to encourage kids to complete their degrees in an alternative high school setting. Interestingly, John Hunting was approached by Grand Rapids Public Schools to take over the program the day after Martin Luther King, Jr. was killed. Russ Harmelink then assumed the instructional responsibilities, and the program was renamed the Walbridge Academy. The Grand Rapids Public Schools operated the program for another twenty years.

Both programs were brought to John's attention by Dr. Charles Slack, a psychologist he met while studying psychodrama in New York City. At the time Dr. Slack was the youngest associate professor ever at Harvard. He was brilliant and interested in new developments in the areas of education and social change.

Dr. Slack also recommended John as a consultant in psychodrama and role playing to Westinghouse Learning Corporation in the '70's. Following a consultation, they offered John a job which he turned down after acknowledging the enormous compliment. John was forever grateful to Dr. Slack for the contribution he made to John's life.

## The Dyer-Ives Poetry Contest

In 1968, the Dyer-Ives Annual Kent County Poetry Competition was established as the Foundation's third operating program. Initiated by poet James Allen at the urging of his friend John Hunting, the competition sought to encourage excellence in writing and provide recognition for local work of high quality. Cash prizes were awarded to the authors of first, second and third place poems in three separate age divisions. The Foundation endowed the contest and turned it over to the Grand Rapids Public Library to operate starting in 2017.

## Establishing The Council of Michigan Foundations

Supporting alternative education was only one of the foundation's early program activities. John was also committed to promoting coordination among local foundations. At this time most foundations were contributing solely to their preferred causes, working independently in silos. Along with the "Big Three" foundations in Michigan at the time—Kresge, Kellogg and Mott—John supported increased collaboration. Initially the group was a loose confederacy of organizations that kept each other abreast of changing government regulations, worked to avoid duplicative efforts, and tried to encourage new philanthropists.

The impetus for the formation of the Council of Michigan Foundations grew from the investigation by Congress of the foundation field. The Kellogg Foundation, under the direction of the estimable Dr. Russell Mawby, became concerned that Congress would be forcing divestment, and the majority of the Kellogg company stock was held by the Kellogg Foundation.

Dr. Mawby appointed his assistant, Leonard White, to help develop the Council. He and Sophia Gorham, the first executive director of the Dyer-Ives Foundation, hit it off so well that when the Council of Michigan Foundations was formed, Sophia became its first executive director and ran both programs out of her office. "I always got a kick out of saying that CMF was formed by the 'Big Four' – Kellogg, Kresge, Mott and the Dyer-Ives Foundation," recalled John Hunting.



## Shifting to a Grant-Making Mode

Dyer-Ives began shifting into a more public-facing grant-making mode in the mid-60's. Recognizing that the credibility of the work could only be ensured by direct involvement of those on the ground, a contributions committee, which later became the board of trustees, was established in 1966 to facilitate effective and efficient distribution of funds and to reduce the burden on the original trustees. On-the-ground committee members, experts in their own fields and with roots in the very communities that Dyer-Ives served, were called upon to assume decision-making roles about grants and projects. As a result, Dyer-Ives leadership began to reflect diversity in age, race, ethnicity, religious affiliation, and educational background unprecedented among Michigan foundations of the time.

Grants made in the late-60's into the early 70's demonstrated a further shift and a growing interest in a wider array of community issues. As social issues became more fervently debated by the community at large, the foundation began to increase its support of small, grassroots organizations which were addressing social problems right at the roots—in the communities which were most greatly affected by them.

There was a grant to investigate strategies to increase the number of minority-owned businesses in the city, one to study the attitudes of Grand Rapids police officers towards black residents (a photo of which ended up on the front cover of Look Magazine), and one to immerse prospective teachers in the lives of black families. In 1970 Dyer-Ives funded a city planner for the express purpose of improving riverbank development and engaging in downtown-specific planning. That same year it funded a GVSU Urban Institute study of surface transportation in the US, with an eye toward improving public transportation in the city. A Sigsbee School community group's efforts to slow "white flight" was an early indicator of the foundation's long-time support of efforts to stabilize and revitalize Grand Rapids' central-city neighborhoods.

Because of John's interest in theater, one grant paid for a professional actor to play the lead role in the Civic Theater production of *Raisin in the Sun*." (James Earl Jones was interested but he cancelled to make a movie in Africa.)

Throughout the 70's and beyond Dyer-Ives funded local efforts to respond to emerging environmental concerns, including awards to the Michigan chapter of the Sierra Club and the West Michigan Environmental Action Council, as well as support for "Recycle Unlimited," a Calvin College project of engineering students aimed at developing efficiencies for recycling glass bottles and metal cans.

## Phase II: 1973–1999 The Middle Years

*We only had a little to give and they were small grants, but we did a lot with them.*

*– Judy Hooker*

As the 1960's turned into the 1970's the demographics of Grand Rapids were in flux. Increasing racial tensions caused many white families to flee to the suburbs, leaving central city neighborhoods to those who could not afford to make the move. The draining of the city's neighborhoods directly affected the city's budget; lower income tax revenues meant less capacity to invest in city infrastructure. Schools were suffering the decrease in tax base as well as in the number of students. The Urban Renewal movement made plans to demolish wide swaths of downtown and nearby neighborhoods for parking garages and multi-story buildings. Perhaps the most mourned victim of this time was the old City Hall which John, Judy Hooker and many others tried unsuccessfully to preserve.

Although the City Hall was lost, John became interested in the preservation movement and helped save several endangered historic buildings downtown (such as the Ledyard Building), and he led the charge to rescue the historic Sixth Street Bridge from demolition.

During this era almost every central-city neighborhood in Grand Rapids received funding from the Dyer-Ives Foundation. Some grants were for new projects and programs, and others helped to supplement staff salaries or to get a new association off the ground. Dyer-Ives saw these groups as crucial instruments for the stabilization of the core of the city, and it recognized their potential role in inducing new or continued investment by residents and property owners alike.

While its support for neighborhood associations was always robust, the foundation continued to look for opportunities to invest in work that benefited marginalized community members. In 1973 a grant to Project Rehab supplemented the salary of an outreach coordinator to provide drug counseling and education to kids in the streets and in schools. The foundation awarded a grant to the Latin-American Council to survey the socioeconomic conditions of the Latino population in Kent County. In 1974 Planned Parenthood was awarded support for its Rape Crisis Team, and in 1978 the Battered Women's Program at the YWCA was given start-up funding to provide counseling, agency referrals and a shelter for abused women. Legal Aid received an award in 1979 to develop a handbook of basic information for women re-entering society from a jail term. That same year Grand Rapids Junior College was paid to publish a guide to educate the community on the concept of flexible working hours. Other organizations that were provided with organizational start-up or new program funds during the 70's and early 80's include the Fair Housing Center, Guiding Light Mission, the Citizens Committee for Criminal Justice, the Grand Valley American Indian Lodge, Senior Neighbors, West Michigan Gleaners and an "entirely new concept"—hospice care.

In the 1980's Dyer-Ives joined a collaborative effort around the emergence of a new threat: the AIDS virus. In 1990 local foundations worked together again to devise solutions to the problem of widespread homelessness, and in the 2000's they established a coordinated effort on foreclosure response.

## Phase III: 1999–2009 Expansion

*We did what we thought was right for all foundations to be doing.*

*– Beth Goebel*

When Steelcase went public John gave an additional \$7 million to the Dyer-Ives Foundation. (He also gave considerably more to the Beldon Fund which was John's much larger environmental foundation housed in Washington DC and later in New York City. The \$100 million dollar fund completed its own ten-year spend-out period in 2009. Information about this foundation can be obtained at [www.beldon.org](http://www.beldon.org).) Not only did this allow the foundation to begin making somewhat larger grants, it motivated them to invest more deeply in capacity-building support for small, fragile nonprofits. After a period of planning, in 1999 the foundation created and staffed the Neighborhood Initiative Program, hiring Lee Nelson Weber as program director.

As residents were forming neighborhood associations throughout the city in the late '70s and early '80s, Dyer-Ives had continually supported those efforts. An experienced community organizer and fair housing advocate, Lee brought new expertise and commitment to the Neighborhood Initiative Program. With this program Dyer-Ives not only helped to facilitate round-tables and training for neighborhood leaders, it provided funds for on-going operations and programs. Offering training sessions in fiscal responsibility, board development, community organizing, volunteer management, fund-raising and computer skills, the foundation encouraged organizational engagement by awarding financial support to neighborhood associations just for participating.

Many individuals who benefited from these early trainings went on to lead higher-profile nonprofits in Grand Rapids such as Neighborhood Ventures, Healthy Homes Coalition, and the West Michigan Environmental Action Council as well as to implement neighborhood improvement plans and projects such as the renovation of the Fulton Street Farmers Market.

This program led to the next phase of Dyer-Ives Neighborhood Initiative work: promoting increased collaboration and funding neighborhood-based projects that demonstrated partnerships with others. Projects born out of this effort include East Hills' Center of the Universe and West Grand Neighborhood's Turner Gateway Project. These examples illustrate what can be accomplished by developers, city planners, and neighborhood residents working in tandem. While cooperative efforts between developers and neighborhood associations were slowly evolving, Dyer-Ives wanted to take the process a step further—to empower neighborhood associations in new ways: first, by providing them with accurate, up-to-date data and secondly, by enabling them to plan for resident-endorsed re-development and giving them access to the tools to enforce those plans. Working together with other foundations and Grand Valley State University, the foundation helped to establish a clearinghouse of neighborhood-centric data useful for urban planning, grant-writing, and project development within the Community Research Institute. Today the Community Research Institute at Grand Valley State University continues to “empower communities with research and data,” giving residents access to information in a single, accessible, and simple format.

During this time of strong neighborhood focus, Dyer-Ives also funded programs to coach teenage parents, efforts to inform the community about drug and alcohol residential treatment programs, telephones for the homeless, workshops and counseling for families experiencing crises, establishment of a family-to-family child care exchange system for emotionally impaired children, and a seminar to train area care workers to address racial, ethnic and cultural issues from a human service perspective. Most of these grants were in amounts of \$2,500 to \$6,000, but their impact was significant.

## Phase IV: 2010–2016 The Final Years

*We wanted to put people interested in change together with the resources to make change.*

*– Lee Nelson Weber*

**A**fter rigorous planning for its spend-out phase, the board approved two approaches for directing final grants: 1) strengthening neighborhoods throughout Grand Rapids through a collaborative process to create a growth and development plan known as an Area Specific Plan (ASP) or by supporting a project from an existing plan such as Green Grand Rapids, and 2) providing tools intended to help an organization achieve a level of sophistication sufficient to sustain program impact in the absence of future Dyer-Ives funding, including:

- Nonprofit capacity-building services to address board governance, resource development, marketing, planning, and special events
- Expert grant writing assistance
- Expansion of efforts to collect, disseminate, and apply local community data using the peer network and best practices of the National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership
- Utilization of MetroEdge data, Market Area Profiles, and related data to strengthen neighborhood economies

Dyer-Ives had long helped to support the deep and thorough engagement of the Grand Rapids community in the creation of the City of Grand Rapids' new Master Plan. Published in 2002, the Plan provided neighborhood associations with a powerful new tool for driving positive change: the Area Specific Plan. Recognizing that every neighborhood has its unique identity, Dyer-Ives strongly encouraged each neighborhood, particularly those central-city ones under pressure from new investment, to create an Area Specific Plan.

The funding of ASP's was intended to help those with few resources and little power (central-city residents and neighborhood associations) create new relationships and garner influence among those with many resources and much power (developers and city officials). By definition ASP creation requires a deeply collaborative effort between residents, business owners, city representatives, developers and local institutions such as schools, colleges, and hospitals, in hopes of empowering residents to determine the future of their neighborhood.

But while several organizations were able to take advantage of both the ASP and neighborhood project funding, it soon became apparent that the Dyer-Ives Spend-Out Plan had unforeseen limitations: not all neighborhoods saw the need for Area Specific or other in-depth plans. In 2013 Dyer-Ives added a third category to its spend-out grant-making called "opportunity grants." Similar to earlier Dyer-Ives grants, these grants were awarded to organizations which worked within the Foundation's traditional fields of interest: poverty, racism and social isolation.

## The Legacy

*The staff and trustees loved working with John because they felt empowered, respected and encouraged to take risks.*  
– Linda Patterson

## Getting Start-ups off the Ground

To Linda Patterson, Dyer-Ives' fourth and final executive director, the most important thing that the foundation has accomplished over the years is the support of marginal groups and fragile organizations that would not otherwise have had access to the kind of funding needed to get their work off the ground. Many residents have benefited from the work of organizations like the Women's Resource Center, Project Rehab and the Healthy Homes Coalition—organizations that Dyer-Ives supported early on.

## Building Capacity by Giving More Than Money

John Hunting recognized the value and importance of non-financial support; he felt that providing training, connecting groups and individuals, and giving activists access to equipment, technology, and information was equally as important as giving away money. In particular, Dyer-Ives executive directors have always worked closely with the people doing the work, helping them to connect to similar organizations for mutual benefit or to other potential donors for increased fund-development. Dyer-Ives staff members have been mentors, guides, task-masters and cheerleaders; they have built relationships with and between grantees that will long outlast the foundation itself. In fact, any successes of the Dyer-Ives Foundation can be largely attributed to the four talented executive directors who ran the Foundation for over 50 years.

## Simplifying the Process

The Dyer-Ives application process was a huge encourager to grantees. Each grantee who approached the foundation did not encounter the formal inquiry-application-interview cycle typical to most foundations. After an initial phone conversation to determine a potential project's fit with the foundation's giving guidelines, applicants had an opportunity to meet with the director or program officer to talk through their project. Then after advice, guidance and refinements, trustees received the final proposal along with a staff summary of the request. Finally, each grantee met with the entire board of trustees to present their request, answer questions and take suggestions. This process gave both groups an opportunity to meet face-to-face, to share the stories behind the faces, and to connect with each other in ways that benefited both.

Understanding how crucial its support could be to small organizations with tight budgets, Dyer-Ives always did its level best to ensure that no applicant had to wait more than a month to meet with the board. The grantee also received the board's decision the same day.

## Recruiting Diverse Community-Based Trustees

Another way in which the foundation was unique was its approach to recruiting its trustees. At the outset Dyer-Ives was like any other foundation in that its board was constituted of friends and family members of its founder. That began to change, however, not long after the foundation's inception. Soon the board selected the very folks who were doing the work the foundation aspired to support: a diverse group of stakeholders who were working and living in the very communities that Dyer-Ives wanted to serve.

The foundation was proud of the diversity of its board members. Not only did they represent a variety of economic and geographic backgrounds, but they included people with various racial and ethnic backgrounds, persons with disabilities and different sexual orientations. These different perspectives, along with knowledge of community needs and existing programs, added deep understanding and empathy to the grant making process. Hopefully, other foundations will take note.

## Drawing Others to the Work

It wasn't only those who would benefit from its contributions that Dyer-Ives sought to engage. Many Dyer-Ives trustees were people of wealth and influence who, through the work of the foundation, were introduced to entirely different communities. They were not only introduced; they were drawn in. John Hibbard served for many years as a board member of the Urban League. Judy Hooker served as a board member for WMEAC and United Way. Sophia Gorham Reid went on to spend her career organizing foundation collaborations in her new home state of California. Jim Heynen took his experiences from Dyer-Ives both as an employee (ITM Academy) and as a trustee to form his own international consulting firm. Through their work with Dyer-Ives, they had been exposed to a new way of seeing the world, a new way of helping people help themselves, a new way of working together to solve problems.

## Aiming for Systems-Level Change

While the Dyer-Ives Foundation had a tremendous impact on individuals, small groups and the Grand Rapids community, it also tried to effect systems-level change through the support of small, fragile organizations working against or outside of the system.

An example is the Dyer-Ives Neighborhood Initiative project which provided board member training, grant-writing support and access to data so that grassroots organizers could identify, define and pursue those projects which were most needed in their communities rather than have programs imposed on them by outsiders. Dyer-Ives did not just seed organizations; it seeded new attitudes. In this way, as John says, "a small foundation can have a lot of impact beyond merely giving away money."



## Influencing and Encouraging Progressive Philanthropy

According to Sophia Gorham Reid, the first Dyer-Ives Executive Director and the first employee of the Council of Michigan Foundations, John was also interested in transparency. Says Sophia, “We were the first foundation in Grand Rapids to publicize what we were doing anywhere other than the society pages.” John advocated for the publication of annual reports which described grants awarded, disclosed the foundation’s financial status, and included a statement from John regarding the direction in which the foundation was headed. Many foundations have since followed suit; they tell their stories in a way that influences others to get into the foundation process.

As liberal and progressive an organization as Dyer-Ives was, it was respected and often emulated by its peers. The foundation liked to be the first funder of any worthy project, and “a Dyer-Ives grant was like a Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval,” according to Linda Patterson. Dyer-Ives was a catalyst. Early on and throughout its history, it dealt with the real problems of real people rather than giving to more traditional institutions such as hospitals, colleges, and museums.

## Accepting Setbacks

John understood that innovative philanthropy does not come without setbacks, and he felt that without some failures, “you’re not doing your job.” He was not only willing to take risks that other funders and philanthropists would not tolerate, he encouraged them. He believed that “if you’re not taking risks you’re missing good opportunities to make change.” No other local foundation has probably made so many small grants to so many small organizations, many of which went on to obtain larger and larger grants and eventually to become self-sustaining. And of course many didn’t. “One hopes the former exceeds the later.”

## Spending it All

Intentionally spending out its corpus is an unusual strategy for a foundation to adopt, but the foundation’s president and founder had a sound rationale for taking this approach. Believing that spending out would concentrate the resources of the foundation for maximum, timely impact and prevent “mission drift” after his departure, John had always planned to expend the foundation’s resources within his lifetime. Spending out the foundation’s assets required careful consideration in order to ensure that funded projects had the greatest impact while simultaneously building the organizational capacity of grantees and ensuring their ability to sustain themselves in a world without Dyer-Ives. As a result of such thorough planning, the foundation left dozens of small, local, place-based organizations on a solid footing for future growth and long-term sustainability, even as it brought its own work to a close.

## The Directors

John Hunting relied heavily on his four successive executive directors, each of whom brought a different flavor to the work of the Dyer-Ives Foundation and each of whom in turn was heavily influenced, both professionally and personally, by their relationships with John.



November 1997, John Hunting with the four Dyer-Ives Executive Directors at the Council of Michigan Foundations Annual Meeting in Grand Rapids.

First Row: Judy Hooker, John Hunting, Sophia Gorham Reid

Second Row: Linda Patterson, Beth Goebel



## Sophia Gorham Reid 1962–1975

*John was a powerful influence in my life, for sure.*

Sophia came to work for John Hunting through the recommendation of the staff at Fountain Street Church. Expecting to be fulfilling a traditional secretarial role, she did anything but. Remembers Sophia, “John was not very traditional.”

Sophia worked for Dyer-Ives in the heyday of the Kentfields and I Teach Me programs which she recalls as being less public and mostly operational. She contends that the success of those two programs convinced the community that novel approaches could work and were worth pursuing. After that, Dyer-Ives’ grant-making became more public and geared toward supporting ideas generated by others, those that John liked to call “spark plugs.” “He was always interested in what was new,” says Sophia.

When Sophia left Dyer-Ives and moved to California, she continued to build upon the skills she learned as Dyer-Ives Executive Director (not secretary!) She organized a statewide foundation network in California, similar to the one she helped to birth in Michigan at John’s urging. She also ran the Hugh O’Brien Youth Leadership Program for a while. John and Sophia still exchange birthday cards (and/or poems).

## Judy Hooker 1975–1983

*John put that community spirit in me.*

Judy remembers John Hunting as a good friend—to her and to her entire family. Judy and John met through their efforts to save Grand Rapids’ old City Hall in 1969. When Sophia moved to California, John asked Judy if she would step in. Though the Dyer-Ives endowment during her tenure was small, Judy felt that the impact of the foundation was disproportionately large. By funding new, start-up organizations, Dyer-Ives was able to incubate many of those groups which are integral to the Grand Rapids of today: Project Rehab, West Michigan Environmental Action Council, many neighborhood associations, and the Council of Michigan Foundations.

Judy also served as a Council of Michigan Foundations board member. There she was able to observe firsthand the influence that Dyer-Ives had in the foundation community. She explains, “John had a voice in that foundation world, especially among the big guns. He persuaded them to give to more progressive causes.”

It was Judy who oversaw ACORN (Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now), a neighborhood organizing and advocacy program intended to strengthen and unify neighborhoods in the City. She knew it was succeeding when John received a call from the Assistant City Manager to complain.

Like Sophia, Judy only left Dyer-Ives employment because she had begun to spend so much time out of state, traveling with her husband. Also like Sophia, Judy remembers John’s poetry. It was a family tradition for the Hookers and the Huntings to exchange poems as gifts during the holidays—one that continues to this day.

## Beth Goebel 1983–1997

*Community means so much to John.*

The foundation's third executive director, Beth Goebel, had served as a Dyer-Ives trustee for a time, recruited by John's father and trusted adviser, David Hunting, Sr. She had been a fund-raising consultant and knew her way around the foundation world. Beth felt that Dyer-Ives was unique among foundations as the "go-to place for creative grants funding little projects and helping to seed organizations to do impactful work." Beth was director during a time of new investment in the city; she remembers "so much building was going on at the time—the YMCA and YWCA, Meijer Gardens, Amway, the Steelcase Pyramid." All of that seemed to engender a new spirit of civic engagement.

The foundation seized on this public sentiment to help fuel its push for downtown and central-city revitalization. Thus began the serious commitment to neighborhood work. One "spark plug" Beth remembers particularly well was Mary Angelo of the Roosevelt Park Neighborhood Association. Beth felt that Mary personified the kind of leadership needed to ensure the small, creative grants favored by Dyer-Ives were successful. She says, "The challenge was always to find the leadership not only to get things started, but to see them through." In addition to supporting her work financially, the Dyer-Ives Foundation facilitated the introduction of Mary to another philanthropist, Peter Cook. The Cook Foundation in turn funded two significant projects in Peter's childhood neighborhood: the Cook Arts Center and the Cook Library Center. This is a perfect illustration of John's contention that building relationships and brokering connections were equally as important as simply providing the money to get things done.

## Linda Patterson 1997–2016

*John felt that every generation should be responsible for cleaning up its own messes.*

Of all the four Dyer-Ives Executive Directors, Linda had perhaps the most challenging assignment: that of ushering the foundation through its final days. Linda became the director shortly before the public offering and subsequent sale of John's Steelcase stock, which significantly increased the foundation's endowment in 1999. She experienced both aspects of the foundation's work: the small, creative grants to fragile organizations as well as larger grants to well-established nonprofits, especially during the spend-out phase. Which did she prefer? "The small grants were more fun. They were more innovative, and they meant so much more to groups whose need was so great."

As a former Council of Michigan Foundations staffer, Linda took over the directorship of Dyer-Ives out of a desire to return to the Grand Rapids community and an admiration for the grassroots nature of the foundation's approach. She brought a wealth of expertise to the foundation regarding traditional foundation grant-making, but she was grateful for the addition of Lee Weber to the Dyer-Ives staff to help with neighborhood organization development and community-based planning and programs. Together Linda and Lee provided "a lot of consultation and advice to help organizations get to a point where they could even receive a grant." Both worked to bring a thoroughly strategic approach to Dyer-Ives grant-making and to ensure each investment had the greatest possible impact. Working in tandem the two shepherded the foundation through its final spend-out and closing of the books.

# Dyer-Ives Foundation Board Members

1961–2016	John R. Hunting	1990–1996	Michael J. Robinson
1961–2016	John D. Hibbard, Jr.	1991–1997	Margaret Sellers Walker
1961–1970	David Hunting, Sr. *	1992–1998	Levi Rickert (also 2011–16)
1961–1970	Duncan Littlefair *	1993–1999	Dotti Clune (also 2011–16)
1961–1970	Allen Hunting	1995–2001	Julia A. Guevara (also 2011–16)
1961–1970	Siegel Judd *	1995–2001	Chuck Assenco
1961–1970	Lewis Engman *	1997–2002	Beverly A. Drake
1961–1974	Sophia Gorham Reid	1997–2002	George K. Heartwell
1961–1974	Michael Carey *	1997–2016	Linda B. Patterson
1961–1978	Helen J. Hunting	1998–2001	Marshall Chavez
1961–1981	Marilyn C. Hunting	1999–2016	Lee Nelson Weber
1970–2016	R. Malcolm Cumming	2000–2006	Carol L. Townsend
1974–1981	Calvin Jeter *	2001–2007	George Bayard III
1975–2016	Susan C. Cobb	2001–2007	Debra K. Muller *
1975–1983	Judith S. Hooker	2001–2007	Mary Banghart-Therrien
1976–1983	Gilbert Davis	2001–2007	Jose Reyna (also 2011–16)
1978–2016	David E. Jensen	2002–2008	Alice Kennedy
1978–1984	Mary Alice Williams	2002–2008	David Schroeder
1978–1985	Rosemary Murphy	2002–2008	Paul Haan (also 2011–16)
1979–1981	Buck Matthews	2003–2009	Bradford Mathis
1980–1986	Charles Calati, Jr.	2005–2016	Jocelyn Dettloff
1982–1990	A. James Heynen	2007–2016	Rosalynn Bliss
1982–1997	Beth Goebel	2008–2011	Simone Jonaitis
1984–1977	Joan Wolf	2008–2016	Steeve O. Buckridge
1984–1990	Linda Samuelson	2008–2016	Carl Kelly
1985–1990	Anita Watson-Phillips	2010–2016	Andy Guy
1986–1992	Maureen Dreher	2010–2016	Darel Ross, II
1987–1993	Rev. Roger VanHarn	2010–2016	Carlos Sanchez
1988–1994	Ruth Kelly	2010–2016	Betty Zylstra
1990–1996	Elizabeth G. Dole		

\* Deceased

*Dyer-Ives Foundation Board Members*



June 16, 2016, Closing Celebration Dinner with past and present board members and staff.

First Row: Jocelyn Dettloff, John Hibbard, Beth Goebel, John Hunting, Judy Hooker, Mal Cumming, Sue Cobb and Dave Jensen

Second Row: Linda Patterson, Steeve Buckridge, Betty Zylstra, Lee Nelson Weber, Paul Haan, George Bayard, Julia Guevara, Jim Heynen, Darel Ross, Dotti Clune, Carlos Sanchez, Gil Davis, Christine Stephens Krieger, Carl Kelly, and Linda Samuelson

# Epilogue

*“The party’s over”  
As that old song goes,  
“The party’s over”  
The doors have to close.*

*We had a grand run,  
50 years or so.  
But “the party’s over”  
And now it’s time to go.*

*Sophia and Judy  
First answered the call,  
Then came Beth, Linda and Lee,  
And all had a ball.*

*John Hibbard was there  
From beginning to end.  
Building the board –  
Never failing to attend.*

*Thanks also to Sue,  
David Jenson and Mal,  
Whose admirable efforts  
Kept us all out of jail.*

*We had a fine board  
That was truly diverse.  
Compared to Dyer-Ives,  
All others were worse.*

*After 50 great years  
Time to end the cruise  
“The party’s over” –  
Bring on the booze.*

by John R. Hunting

# Philanthropic Pearls of Wisdom or...

## Hunting's Helpful Hints for Fearless and Forceful Philanthropy

- 1 Get a good **LAWYER** you can **TRUST** (e.g. do not rely on the old family retainer).
- 2 Be as **POLITICAL** as you can be (both philanthropically and personally) – within limits of the law.
- 3 Fund **ADVOCACY** organizations if you want to create **CHANGE** in the world.
- 4 Fund **INNOVATIVE** organizations (small foundations can be especially effective here).
- 5 Fund **GENERAL SUPPORT** grants (grantees cannot survive on “special projects” grants alone).
- 6 Fund **MULTI-YEAR** grants (devoutly desired by grantees – gives them relative security).
- 7 Constantly **EVALUATE** your foundation's impact. (Do an “anonymous survey” to see how your foundation is **REALLY** doing).
- 8 Make reasonably **QUICK FUNDING DECISIONS**: don't leave the grantees twisting in the wind.
- 9 Your best investment is in **STAFF** (yours and your grantees) so don't be cheap on salaries.
- 10 Promote **COLLABORATION** with other foundations and with your grantees.

## Four General Comments for Individual Funders

- 1 Get control of your money **ASAP** (there are organizations and individuals who can help you do this).
- 2 Update your will (**NOW**).
- 3 If you are on a foundation board, **DO YOUR HOMEWORK** and the money will flow your way.
- 4 Remember that the gifts of time and work are as important as the gift of money.

# Four Reasons Why Foundations Should Spend Out

*First of all, on a purely philosophical basis, I believe all foundations should have a limited term of operation. Let today's donors solve today's problems, and let future donors solve future problems. Also, in too many instances foundations are eventually "captured" by trustees who do not follow the original donor's intent – sometimes for the better, but often for the worse.*

*Secondly, barring a total collapse of the stock market, trillions of dollars will be moving from the "boomer" generation to the younger one. Much of that money will probably be put to work in charitable ways through private foundations. So the future philanthropic well is hardly going to run dry.*

*Thirdly, from a personal point of view, I would like to enjoy the results of my philanthropy during my lifetime.*

*Finally, as a concerned environmentalist, there is another even more important justification for my spending out now. Given the increased destruction of our planet resources by global warming, how can I not give away all of the foundation's assets in the very near future? Time is short. The "tipping point" may not be far off (if it hasn't already been passed).*

*In short: to save money for future spending makes no sense when there may be no future.*

John R. Hunting  
September 21, 2008

# Dyer-Ives Foundation Records

The Dyer-Ives Foundation donated its records to Special Collections and University Archives at Grand Valley State University (Collections@gvsu.edu, (616) 331-2749) through its collaboration with the Johnson Center for Philanthropy.

The records span from 1961 to 2016, and document the philanthropic activities of the Grand Rapids based Dyer-Ives Foundation. The records include grant files, financial records, annual reports, donor history files, and scrapbooks. Additions to the collection are anticipated in 2020/2021 when the most recent grant files and financial records are no longer needed by the organization and its accountants.

For more information about the Dyer-Ives Foundation, visit [dyer-ives.org](http://dyer-ives.org).



# Snapshot Grants Allocation

From 1961 to 1999, the Foundation made small grants averaging \$4,000–\$7,000 to often new and fragile community groups; offering them an opportunity to become an established charitable service. During this period, annual giving averaged about \$60,000 and grants were made from a corpus of approximately \$1.5 million with John Hunting paying office and staff expenses personally. Approximately \$2,050,000 was given away during these 38 years.

Steelcase Corporation stock was the basis of John Hunting's inheritance, and in 1999 when the stock went public, he gave an additional \$7 million to the Foundation. Then from 1999 to 2011, the Foundation assumed its own administrative expenses and gave away approximately \$270,000 a year. During this 12 year period, the Foundation awarded approximately \$3,271,592.

The economic crisis of 2008 took a toll of about \$1.5 million on the Foundation's corpus from which Dyer-Ives didn't have a long enough horizon to recover since it needed to ensure final grant commitments would be secure. Even so, during the final spend-out period, from 2011 to 2016, the Foundation awarded about 100 grants averaging annual giving of approximately \$830,000. Dyer-Ives gave away a total of approximately \$4.15 million during this 5 year period.

The Dyer-Ives Foundation was able to contribute approximately \$9.5 million to the Grand Rapids community over its 55 year history.

# Acknowledgements

*I wish to acknowledge the following individuals who made important contributions to the Dyer-Ives Foundation:*

*My mother and father: **Mary Ives Hunting** and **David Dyer Hunting***

*My brothers who served on the board: **Allen Hunting** and **David Hunting, Jr.***

*My sisters-in-law who served on the board: **Marilyn and Helen Hunting***

*My nieces who served on the board: **Anne Hunting** and **Mary Anne Hunting***

***John Hibbard** who faithfully served as Vice-chairman from the beginning to the end of the foundation*

***Duncan Littlefair** for his inspiration and leadership*

***Dr. Charles Slack** for his inspiration and support of our early programs*

***Mal Cumming** for his years of legal wisdom and note taking*

***Sue Cobb** and **Dave Jensen** for their long term service on the board*

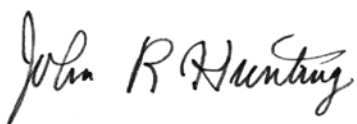
***All of the other board of trustees** through the years*

*Staff members: **Lee Nelson Weber** and **Tyler Nickerson***

*And most importantly, the four exceptional Executive Directors:*

- **Sophia Gorham**
- **Judy Hooker**
- **Beth Goebel**
- **Linda Patterson**

*Thank you all.*



John R. Hunting

*The following individuals should be acknowledged for creating this history:*

*Linda Patterson, Executive Director*

*Kayem Dunn, Project Manager*

*Christine Helms-Maletic, Writer*

*Eva Sitek, Graphic Designer*

*John R. Hunting, Editor*

*Let's consider our world not as  
inherited from our parents,  
but as borrowed from our children.*

Ancient Proverb