



# A FAMILY *Affair*

WHEN IT COMES TO PHILANTHROPY,  
THE DIXONS KNOW THAT CHARITY  
BEGINS AT HOME.

**When the Naples Children & Education Foundation (NCEF) launched its Friends of the Foundation (FF) support committee this summer, the goal was to start “passing the baton” to a new generation of philanthropists. For Jim Dixon, co-chair of the NCEF grant committee, the committee’s goal makes good business sense.**

**THE LOVE OF FINE WINE IS A DIXON FAMILY TRADITION THAT BEGAN WITH LAURA’S FATHER.**

“In business you have to look at your succession plan,” says Dixon, president of Haynes Corporation, a manufacturer of fuel injectors and other parts for diesel locomotives. “You have to have the youth in place and ready to fill our shoes. If you look at charities, they have a lot of people who go emeritus. So how do you bridge that gap?”

Jim and his wife Laura, Haynes’ CEO, are putting together a succession plan that will give their children and other longtime employees more responsibility within the next five years. In the same way, Jim explains, NCEF wants the next generation of philanthropists to get to know the organization and to expand their support opportunities.

Expanding involvement in charitable endeavors is a family affair for the Dixons. Their 33-year-old daughter,

Brandie Dixon LaFond, chairs the new committee, which hopes to raise \$100,000 during the 2013-2014 season by hosting a series of events and monthly happy hours. The goal, says Brandie, is to keep the cost of involvement low enough to attract younger professionals and to “make it easy to be involved.” The Dixons’ son Scott, age 29, also is heavily involved in community charity work, both personally and on behalf of Haynes, such as the Wounded Warrior Project.



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## FAMILY TRADITIONS

Both NCEF (see page 65) and the Dixons are on the right path, according to a recent study by Indiana University's Women's Philanthropy Institute. Charities that nurture future generations of donors stand to benefit greatly—and parental influence is key. For example, children whose parents talk to them about giving are 20 percent more likely to give than those whose parents don't. In a survey of wealthy donors, more than a third said they learned charitable values from parents and other family members. For donors 18 to 32 years old, one half responded in this way.



Both Brandie, owner of Naples Wine Collection, and Scott, who handles purchasing at Haynes, learned from their parents early-on the value of giving back. Not long after the family moved to Naples in 1989, Laura got involved with Youth Haven's wine auction (the Dixons already were wine collectors). The kids' hands-on exposure to charity started with school fundraisers.

Says Brandie, "One year when we were selling something to raise funds in school, at St. Elizabeth Seaton, mom and dad decided to buy all their corporate gifts from us!" When the Dixon kids won bikes for their top sales numbers, they donated them to Youth Haven.

The Dixon children's involvement increased as they got older. "When they were in high school, we had them go to events and pinch-hit for us if we were busy with something else," Jim recalls. "We would say, 'Here's your budget for this auction,' for example." The emphasis was on the giving, not on the event, however.

Laura explains, "We always give a budget, because we feel if you're gonna go, then take your wallet." The family's devotion to giving back stems from awareness of their good fortune. "When Jim and I bought our first house in 1974, it cost \$7,700 dollars," says Laura, who recalls cringing at the fixer-upper. "We didn't have

anything. We built this business from zero, and we remember how it was." That memory has translated into a true love of giving—which has in turn brought them new opportunities.

When the American Red Cross approached the Dixons about acquiring Haynes Corporation's 800-number (HELP NOW), the Dixons, who had been offered as much as \$100,000 by various charities, made the decision to give the number away. After the Oklahoma City bombing shocked the world just a few months later, Red Cross administrators called to thank the Dixons; the new, easy-to-remember 800 number had helped the organization raise millions in the wake of the disaster.

**SHORTLY AFTER MOVING TO NAPLES, THE DIXONS, PICTURED DURING THE EARLY '90s, GOT INVOLVED WITH LOCAL CHARITIES.**

## ISSUES VS. INSTITUTIONS

Large-scale donors who are members of Generation X (born in 1964 to 1980) or of the millennial generation, also known as Generation Y (born in 1981 to 2000), will have a huge influence on efforts to improve local communities and solve global problems over the next several decades. However, their focus on issues over institutions is a key generational difference, according to the recent study "Next Gen Donors: Respecting Legacy, Revolutionizing Philanthropy."

## GETTING PERSONAL

Brandie and Scott learned to appreciate the things and opportunities they have been afforded both from watching their parents and by working at the family business from an early age. As a youngster, Scott mowed the plant's five acres of grass on a regular basis. Later, he worked on the manufacturing

Jim Dixon's role as chairman of the NCEF grant committee, he reviews applicant criteria and project effectiveness, which involves getting out into the community and checking-in with grant recipients to monitor progress. Scott has worked on NCEF's Mobile Vision Program, which screens Collier County children for vision problems and

*"We built this business from zero and we remember how it was."*

floor alongside many of the same people he works with today. Both Scott and Brandie attended college and worked for other companies before returning to Naples and to the family business. Today all four Dixons work together, live near each other, and take-on multiple philanthropic roles—as individuals, as a family and on behalf of the family business.

These days, their deep involvement in some of Naples' most glamorous events has brought the whole family a perspective they feel is better-grounded in reality. In

provides prescription eyeglasses. "When you think Naples, you think millionaires, but when you really get into the organizations and see the need, it's greater than we see on a day-to-day basis."

"Our parents have really instilled in us that it's important to give back," says Brandie, who recently chaired the 2013 American Cancer Society Bucket List Bash, which raised a record \$505,000 in one night. "And because of them, when we have kids, we know that we will be doing the same types of things." ❄

**IN 1994, SEN. BOB AND ELIZABETH DOLE THANKED THE DIXONS IN PERSON FOR THEIR GENEROSITY.**



## Passing the Baton

Families looking to share their charitable involvement with their children or begin the transition of philanthropic responsibility have several options, say local financial experts. Holding a family meeting, where each family member presents a charity for consideration is one option, says Lynn A. Ferraina with Ciccarella Advisory Services, Inc. "The meetings help to involve the younger family members in the research of worthwhile charities and instills the importance of philanthropy within the family structure."

Such communication about specific philanthropic goals ensures a greater likelihood of success in passing-on philanthropic legacies, says Kim Dillon, an attorney at Quarles & Brady, LLP. "It's important to involve your children in your philanthropy before it's time to handover the reins," she explains, so that they understand both your commitment and your passion. This might mean allowing children to observe board meetings and evaluate grantees to become familiar with the charitable mission. Another option is a donor-advised fund, says Dillon. "It's a good solution for a family that is philanthropically minded and really enjoys the giving piece but isn't as interested in the administration piece."