



**Billings Library Foundation's Heritage Garden
Dedicated September 8, 2022
A Short History**

Diane and Mark Gorder were thrilled to envision, fund, and help dedicate the Billings Library Foundation's Heritage Garden—a reminder of the rich heritage of the Yellowstone valley and the Billings community. Visiting the Billings area has been a high priority for the Gorders throughout their marriage beginning with their 1975 wedding at the Billings Lutheran Church followed by their camping/hiking honeymoon in the Bear Tooth Mountains outside of Red Lodge. It was a joy to later introduce their daughters, Kristina and Julianna, to these same hiking spots and to see them continue to prioritize visiting the area in their adult lives.

The garden project was undertaken shortly after the deaths of Diane's Mom, Jean Engle Dimich, and brother, Daniel W. Dimich, Jr. aka Bill, in 2020. (Bill and Diane's Dad, Daniel W. Dimich, Sr, aka Danny, passed away in 2001.) Through Bill's initiatives, Bill, Diane, and their mom had recently been involved with funding a variety of projects for the library that can be found at the book drops, entry foyers, and other parts of the library. The Gorders wanted to continue supporting the library and approached the Library Foundation in 2021 about the possibility of their funding the renovation of the entry garden. The Gorders have native gardens surrounding their home in Minnesota and felt reimagining the entry garden to showcase native plants, bushes, and trees along with boulders reminiscent of the rim rocks could enhance the experience of everyone entering and leaving the library. The Gorders collaborated with The Library Foundation and Jim Foley of Foley Group LLC., in Billings, a leading authority on Native Landscape/Site Design, to execute a design that embodied this vision and was also inclusive of the area's cultural heritage.

Diane, formerly Diane Dimich, had grown up in Billings but spent most of her adult life in the Twin Cities where she met and married Mark, pursued a career as a research nutritionist at the University of Minnesota School of Public Health, raised two daughters with Mark, and more recently volunteered for various non-profits in her community. Mark had grown up in Chicago and the Silicon Valley area of California. He got his undergraduate degree in math from St. Olaf College and his electrical engineering and MBA degrees from the University of Minnesota. Mark had always dreamt of starting a

business and started his career in the Twin Cities area. Diane and Mark were a perfect match from the very beginning because both sides of Diane's family were steeped in entrepreneurship.

Pursuing his entrepreneurial dream, Mark co-founded a company in a garage shop in 1977. Under his leadership as President and CEO, the St. Paul company, Intricon, now has global operations in the U. S, Europe and Asia, has over 900 employees, and produces life critical class III medical products for a variety of clinical applications. The Gordons believe financial success comes with an obligation to give back to the communities which contributed to that success. They feel fortunate to have been born and raised in the United States of America, a country based on republican democracy and free market capitalism, which attracted their immigrant ancestors and which provided a fertile environment for entrepreneurship and self-reliance founded on the principle that anyone with a strong work ethic and the willingness to take risks can achieve remarkable success. The Heritage Garden is a direct result of this philosophy and commitment. Their wish is that those coming to the library and walking past the entrance garden will be reminded of the heritage of their families, the peoples of the Yellowstone valley, and the legacies represented.