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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Former Lemhi County resident donates \$4 million to support local students and community organizations**

The Idaho Community Foundation is excited to announce the creation of a \$3.5 million charitable giving fund and an additional \$500,000 scholarship, both established by Nep Lynch, a Montana native who lived in Salmon for decades.

The Nep and Mary Ellen Lynch Fund and the Nep and Mary Ellen Lynch CTE Scholarship will provide about \$160,000 every year, which will:

- Support generations of students through the Idaho Career & Technical Education Foundation for trade school scholarships.
- Provide Forever Idaho grants to community organizations in Lemhi County and throughout Idaho. Forever Idaho is an Idaho Community Foundation grant program.
- Give scholarships to graduates of Salmon High School and those attending community colleges.
- Provide maintenance at the newly opened Lynch Center athletic facility in Salmon, and more.

Both funds are endowed, so the support will last forever and will likely grow over time through investment earnings.

Nep Lynch – full name Neptune Alexander Lynch, IX – is 96 and grew up on a cattle ranch outside of Plains, Mont., about 74 miles northwest of Missoula near the Idaho border.

He dedicated his career to the professional technical trades. Much of it was spent in lumber, where he worked every job possible at logging camps and lumber mills, eventually owning mills in Montana and Idaho.

“I’ve probably had 15 jobs in my lifetime and none of them were ever easy,” Nep said.

He married his high school sweetheart Mary Ellen Livingston the summer after he graduated from high school. While Nep was working his way up the ladder at logging camps and mills, Mary Ellen worked as a camp cook. It was a challenging life, and they were a strong team.

“It makes you wonder how many women would do that. I think most would probably hit the road if they had to move into a shack and not have any facilities,” Nep said.

The Lynches moved to Salmon in the mid-1950s to build and run a bowling alley with a friend. A few months after the bowling alley opened, Nep realized running the business didn’t suit him and he returned to lumber, though the family stayed in Salmon.

In recent years, Nep, who lives much of the year in Missoula, has donated to many community organizations he cares about.

“At my age you can’t take it with you. Having lived in the area for 50 years, I like the area and I like Salmon. I want to help out,” Nep said.

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The Idaho Community Foundation connects Idahoans to a generous statewide network through the power of collective giving. Our grantmaking, community impact work and charitable advising services have strengthened nonprofits, schools and communities in every Idaho county for more than 30 years. We believe that shared philanthropy is more powerful than giving alone. For more information, visit: [www.idahocf.org](http://www.idahocf.org).