

## **Opinion: Idahoans win with Idaho Gives campaign**

*Originally published April 28, 2026*

Are you ready for the Super Bowl?

Not that Super Bowl. I'm talking about the Idaho Gives campaign, which runs May 4-7. It is the Super Bowl, the Stanley Cup finals and the Olympics for more than 700 nonprofits throughout the Gem State that rely heavily on this campaign to help with their good works.

The MVP trophy is a foregone conclusion. It goes to the Idahoans who put their generosity on full display. Idahoans have donated \$33 million since the campaign started in 2013. Last year, Idahoans contributed a record \$5.1 million to the campaign. The goal this year is \$6 million.

Don't bet against Idaho making that lofty goal.

"Last year, we found that 85% of the nonprofits found at least one new donor," said Evin Bask, senior philanthropic impact director for the Idaho Community Foundation.

Not surprising. The list of nonprofits is like a giant shopping mall for charitable giving. In my year of writing about nonprofits, I have run across so many people doing things to make this state, and world, a better place — and that's just a small sample of what's out there.

I've written about the Women's and Children's Alliance, which helps so many families through the trauma of domestic violence. There are "Angel Wings" in Weiser who transport cancer patients to doctor appointments. Panhandle Special Needs of Sandpoint helps produce "normal living" for people with mental disabilities, and Health Coalition of Teton Valley, which helps people through a variety of mental challenges. I ran across the Village of Hope (Coeur d'Alene), which provides resources for foster families. And I had the honor of talking to real heroes from the Wildlife Firefighters Association and Idaho Mountain Search and Rescue.

Granted, there are some (a very few, actually) that may have controversial political or philosophical leanings. But there are no "eligibility cops" at work here. Leave that to the secretary of state and the IRS to determine what's a nonprofit.

For the charity shopper, Bask said, "There are all sorts of flavors out there, and it's up to donors to determine the causes they want to support."

Colin Mannex, executive director of Moscow's Kenworthy Performing Arts Center, is one who appreciates what Idaho Gives provides.

“As the most active historic theater in Idaho, we’re proud to celebrate 100 years of movies and live arts. Idaho Gives has been a very important part of our annual programming for almost a decade,” he said.

“Idaho Gives affords an unparalleled opportunity to reach folks spanning ages and various interests who all share the same desire to preserve the arts and cultural scene in Moscow,” he said. “When we hit the giving season, we go all out with special community programs that appeal to different audiences each night.”

This year, KPAC is opening with a staged reading of "Our Town" (May 4) and closing with a "Groove for Good" jazz concert to benefit local nonprofits (May 7).

With grassroots support, he said: “We’re constantly chipping away at essential upgrades like a new sound system, new popcorn machine and a complete marquee restoration. Next up, we’re going to install a wall-to-wall 40-foot screen and a 4K projector that will provide the best old-school moviegoing experience in the Intermountain Northwest.”

That’s one example of how Idaho Gives has contributed to the quality of life in the Gem State. Bask, in her work, sees many other examples.

“The nonprofit sector does so much to make Idaho a great place to live. We keep saying that you can’t go more than a city block to see the impacts from the nonprofit sector – whether you are skiing at Bogus, going to the Morrison Center, or walking downtown and seeing people housed in shelters,” she said.

“Our nonprofits are filling some critical gaps in our community, and Idaho is a greater place to live because of that.”

She certainly hits the mark there.

**Chuck Malloy**, an Idaho native and long-time journalist and columnist, is a volunteer writer with the Idaho Community Foundation’s Nonprofit Center. He may be reached at [ctmalloy@outlook.com](mailto:ctmalloy@outlook.com).