How fortunate all of us living in the Arlington community are to have such a safe and wonderful place for our kids to hang out at that provides positive experiences and support, from before and after school programs to organized sports for all ages. This place is the Arlington Boys and Girls Club.

Today, the Boys and Girls Club needs our support. The Club has been the backbone of the community serving kids for the last 40 years, 22 of those years at the current location by the airport. The current reality is the club is at capacity and desperately needs additional space to keep pace with the demand on the facility and our growing community.

When we moved our family and business to Arlington in 1990, both of our daughters now 28 and 25 years old, had a place to participate in volleyball, T-ball, and later softball, at a time when the Arlington population was 4,600. Today the population is 18,000. Understandably, the need is upon us to increase the capacity of the facility just as we had to do with Arlington High School. Just visit the club after school or on a weekend, and one can see the overflow of kids and parents. The gym, along with the lack of teen space and a computer lab is not adequate to support the current or future demand, not to mention the ball fields. The club is currently serving over 2,000 kids and there are days when over 600 kids attend.

It’s time to step up and give back by supporting the current campaign underway to raise $1.5m to double the size of the Club. Plans call for another gymnasium, expanded teen center, a computer lab, and game and community meeting space. We all need to preserve this essential resource, by raising the funds, donating materials or donating your services so the Boys and Girls Club can continue to support youth in Arlington, Darrington, Lakewood, north Marysville and Stanwood.

As community members, parents, and grandparents we all owe a lot to the early involvement and vision of past key individuals of our community for their foresight and involvement to make sure we had a Boys and Girls Club. Through donated time and labor over the last 40 years these individuals made sure we had the facilities needed to support the kids of our community. Now it’s our turn to pay it forward for this generation of kids and those yet to come.

Randy Bellon
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