Help needed to build youth center Opinion

By Carmen McFadyen

I was fortunate to be raised in a small town in southwestern Kentucky. It was like Coupeville in that it was a small town isolated from large cities. It did, however, provide a safe place to “hang out” with friends. These past 43 years, I have been more fortunate to “grow up” and raise our children here in Coupeville. For most of those 43 years, I have dreamed about, and in the recent past worked toward, providing a safe place for youth of all ages to hang out.

That place is the Boys & Girls Club located right here in the old fire station. It’s not pretty, and it certainly is not big enough to meet the needs of our youth. Sadly, it is definitely not appropriate for our teenagers. The Coupeville Boys & Girls Club provides a multitude of activities and opportunities for kids to learn and explore their world in a safe environment with dedicated employees and volunteers.

The sky is the limit of what the Club could provide, given adequate space. To realize my dream, I have agreed to be the Chair for the Campaign Committee to raise the necessary funds to build a new, larger building to house all the activities the Club has the capability to provide, if only we had the space.

Cecil and Kaye Stuurmans have generously donated two acres of land for the new Club in a great location, only blocks from the current building. Plans have been drawn up, which include a space for both Club activities, and our beloved Gifts From the Heart Food Bank.

It is now up to the citizens of Central Whidbey to provide $1.5 million to build a safe place to support our youth for decades to come. We have raised over $250,000 so far, but we need your help. We are asking you to make a pledge over a five-year time period. With pledges in place, we can begin the exciting part of developing the property and making the building a reality.

If you have a heart for youth and would like to join our campaign committee, feel free to contact me at any time.

— Carmen McFadden is a board member for the Coupeville Boys and Girls Club.