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Editorial

A Viewpoint

So, Where's Your Money Going?

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It's probably considered a bit rude to walk up to someone and say, "So, who's going benefit from your lifetime of hard work when you die?"

But, maybe it's a question we should all start asking, if only ourselves.

Social science researchers tell us that in the next 50 years, the largest mass of wealth in history will transfer from the World War II generation to Baby Boomers, then from Baby Boomers to the next generation. This transfer is estimated at \$41 trillion nationwide.

In the next few years, the wealth transfer estimate for Republic County is \$134,674,125. Yep, that's \$134 million. Not bad for a rural county that's supposedly fallen on hard times.

The Republic County Community Foundation points out that if just five percent of that amount would be directed toward local charities, \$6,733,706 could be realized for community endowments and local projects.

One relentless fact dogs me as I cover government meetings these days: the money just isn't there. Federal funds are cut. State funds have dried up. And local property owners have borne all the extra burden they can stand.

Our only real hope for the future is private investment--truthfully, doing what we do a lot of already--taking care of our own, for now, and for the future.

We've already seen programs go away in our schools due to budget cuts. A private endowment to a school district could help generate funds to save those programs and enrich the curriculum. Hospital equipment needs to be updated and replaced. An endowment could help meet those needs. The Food Bank continues to serve an increasing number of residents. An estate bequest can make that program stable in the future. The needs countywide are numerous.

Whether you have assets of \$1,000 or \$1 million, none of us want to see what we've worked hard for all our lives wasted. No amount directed to our future is ever too small when it touches the life of someone else for the good.

For more information on the Republic County Community Foundation, go to www.republiccountycf.org, or contact chairman Tim Gottschalk, Belleville.