

Dr. William Alexander (Lex) Blood

Community Activist, Conservationist, Professor Emeritus/Flathead Valley Community College

Lori Curtis

Author, Flathead Watershed Sourcebook

Science & Education Director, Whitefish Lake Institute

A book about the Flathead Watershed is incomplete without mentioning the profound and multidimensional influence that Lex Blood has had—and continues to have—on this bioregion. Like the water that flows through the Watershed, Lex reaches, touches and transforms this place with his presence. He is not just an *idea* man, but one who moves ideas to fruition. He is not just a *thought* man, but one who turns thoughts into passion. And he is not just a *man with a plan*, but one who turns plans into action.

It was an honor and a delight to work with Lex on this project. A student of conservation and an apprentice of the Flathead Watershed could have no finer a mentor than Dr. Lex Blood. And a resident of this exceptional place could have no more respectable a friend.

We have included this much abbreviated outline of Lex's educational and conservation activities to impart the breadth of his involvement in the Flathead Watershed.



*Dr. Blood receiving the Whitefish Lake Institute's 2014 Lifetime Achievement Stewardship Award
(l. to r. Lori Curtis, Chris Ruffato, Mike Koopal, Lex Blood)*

Early 1970's	First coordinator for the Flathead Coalition, board member
Mid 1970's	Staff coordinator for the Flathead Conservation District Served on the Flathead County Planning Board Began full-time teaching at Flathead Valley Community College Subjects: geology, geography and earth sciences
Late 1970's	Founding Steering Committee member for the Flathead Basin Environmental Impact Study (FBEIS) 1978-1983: Period of FBEIS work 1978: Interim Study Area Manager for FBEIS until full-time manager hired 1978-1983: FBEIS Steering Committee member Study resulted in first comprehensive data compilation and coordinated regional biophysical studies of the Flathead Watershed and establishment of the Flathead Basin Commission
1984	Co-founder of the Glacier Institute 1984-1987: President, Ex-officio Executive Director
1996	Founded the Crown of the Continent Ecosystem Education Consortium (COCEEC) 1996-2010: Served as COCEEC Coordinator
1998	Co-founder of The Sustainability Fund (TSF) 1998-Present: Managing Director, Executive Director of TSF
2003	Founder of the Flathead Non-Profit Development Partnership (NPDP)
2006	Receives Flathead Audubon <i>Outstanding Contribution to Conservation Education Award</i>
2008	2008-2010: Steering Committee member Flathead Community of Resource Educators (CORE) Watershed Education Committee Contributing Author/Editor/Reviewer for the <i>Flathead Watershed Sourcebook: A Guide to an Extraordinary Place</i>
2014	Received Whitefish Lake Institute's <i>Lifetime Achievement Stewardship Award</i>

Lex Blood will be recognized by Flathead Audubon at its December meeting for his outstanding contributions to conservation education and his crucial support for and participation in many local projects engaged in the preservation of the Flathead's landscape, environment and wildlife. The presentation of this first FAS Conservation Achievement Recognition of the 2006-07 season will be made by Ben Long.

If you enjoy the mountains, forests and water of the Flathead Valley, you owe a hearty thanks to Dr.

William A. "Lex" Blood, for more than 35 years a Flathead Valley geologist, geographer, educator and conservationist. He is a respected elder of the Flathead conservation community, a mentor and counselor with few peers.

Growing up in New York, Connecticut and Virginia, Lex attended Yale University for two years. After serving with the Marines in Korea, he received a business degree from University of Virginia and a doctorate from the Colorado School of Mines. Finding the corporate mining world and the state of Colorado too confining for his energies, he moved his family to Montana in the early 1970s. He raised four children, built a home and chased errant cattle around Lake Blaine.

Desiring wiser subjects than Herefords, Lex became a teacher at Flathead Valley Community College when it occupied a few buildings in downtown Kalispell. Teaching

Earth Sciences, Lex launched an educational career that spanned decades and continues today.

With Ursula Matson, Lex founded The Glacier Institute outdoor education center, and his geologic field courses remain among its most popular classes. Lex has worn out countless hiking boots on Montana trails, leading geology field trips that, as Lex says, "tell the story behind the landscape." Hundreds of Flathead Valley residents and visitors enjoy a greater appreciation of the Crown of the Continent, thanks to the patient instruction of Dr. Blood. He has presented lectures for the Smithsonian Institute, the UNESCO World Heritage Site Committee and random groups of puzzled tourists.

It is nearly impossible to list all of Lex's many conservation accomplishments. He was a founder or founding board member of Montana Environmental Information Center, Glacier Park Associates, Montana Environmental Education Association, Flathead Forestry Collaborative Project, and Sunrift Center for Sustainable Communities. He directed the Flathead Coalition the FIRST time we fought coalmines in the Canadian Flathead and served on the Flathead County Planning Board well before the current population boom.

Today, Lex is managing director of the Sustainability Fund, which makes grants to conservation and community efforts in the Flathead Valley. He fostered the Crown of the Continent Ecosystem Education Consortium, linking

outdoor educators from Montana, British Columbia and Alberta. He began the Non-Profit Development Partnership, which seeks to support a wide variety of conservation, community and charity groups in the Flathead. Lex is a stalwart of the Flathead Conservation Roundtable. He still roams Montana with rock hammer in hand, conducting geological analyses that help secure cooperative conservation agreements on private land conserved by the Montana Land Reliance, Flathead Land Trust and the Nature Conservancy of Montana.

Lex is married to Judith Pressmar; they live on Kalispell's East Side and enjoy traveling in Montana and abroad. He has three grown sons and a daughter, Lisa Flowers, who is the director of the Boone and Crockett Environmental Education Center near Choteau.

An ardent adventurer and consumer of outdoor gear, Lex's opinion is frequently sought regarding trails, routes and equipment purchases. A photograph of him was once taped to the cash register of Rocky Mountain Outfitter, apparently some kind of good luck charm. He has walked men half his age into the ground. On the down side, he is, admittedly, an impatient bird watcher.

Rumor has it Lex Blood has an email account, but he greatly prefers communicating over a cup of coffee and breakfast, or, better yet, a shot of George Dickel bourbon and a campfire. So, cheers, Lex. The Flathead Valley, along with Flathead Audubon say "thank you."