June 19, 2015

Dear Melinda,

I'd always intended to formally write a pledge letter, but I'll use any excuse to put off any kind of actual writing. I also thought the verbal commitment I made 5 years ago to Warren was sufficient.

I'm writing one now because I feel we are all so indebted to you, Warren and Bill for not only originating the idea but for planning the various programs that engage us all throughout the year. Yes, it was a good idea to use the formation as a potential spur to others in similar financial situations to set aside a majority of their wealth for philanthropy. That was a beginning, the recruitment. What to me is so fulfilling is that because of your efforts that fraternity has become a learning organization—our annual meetings each year have grown in substance and engagement. It's been evolving by the diversity of its membership, by the care for curating the program that you've led in these few years, and by the good spirits you engender. It's great to learn about the work of others, their techniques, their passions and their deep knowledge of their interests. As you know I've always wanted to share the operational costs of the organization and the retreats, but... since you demurred, all I can do is thank you for your generosity in making this so much more than a dry pledge—particularly, I came away this year not only having learned a lot, but the delight of seeing so much ambition put towards helping others. I don't think there's another group like it anywhere—a room full of very complex personalities—of drive and aspiration—of ego and curiosity—all engaged in wanting to help solve problems for others, to make the world a fairer better place, world expansive or narrow, and all to the public good.

I don't know if you contemplated at the beginning, beyond the initial pledge, what benefits and inspiration you would be bringing to all these fairly isolated individuals in their own castles—but I can tell you for one, and I'm sure speaking for many others, that Diane and I are lucky and grateful you've stepped outside your own glorious philanthropy to give us a forum for so very much more than we could ever accomplish on our own.

Sincerely,

Barry Diller