

# Shickley Comm. Foundation reaches milestone

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## Little town has big ambition...

In April of this year, the Shickley Community Foundation Fund announced its semi-annual grant awards. This local foundation provided nearly \$7,000 in funding to 10 area nonprofits. Folks in this town of about 350 are getting used to the demonstration of support and community pride. What makes this last round of grant-making special is that the Fund has now surpassed the \$100,000 mark in community reinvestment, the majority of that occurring in the last 10 years.

Most of those grants have been made from earnings on the Fund's endowment account... a permanent fund whose principal assets continue to grow year after year. This means that money will be available to support community improvement for generations to come.

Even more remarkable is the broad-based involvement of people who are happy to give back to their hometown. According to Richard Walter, a volunteer committee member of the Shickley Community Foundation Fund, half of the 300 households in the local school district are contributors to the fund.

"For Shickley to pass the \$100,000 mark in giving this quick says something about the community pride

here," Walter said.

It stretches the imagination to think what Nebraska would look like if half of its citizens contributed to a community fund like Shickley.

The Shickley Community Foundation was organized as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in 1991. In December of 2001, the Shickley Community Foundation became an affiliated fund of the Nebraska Community Foundation (NCF). That's when the Fund Advisory Committee developed a plan to ramp up its efforts. The goal was to build

encouraged them to do more.

Today, the Shickley Community Foundation Fund has nearly \$400,000 permanently endowed, plus additional accounts for swimming pool, cemetery improvements, scholarships, library, fire department and religious organizations. In addition, seven planned gifts are in place that will provide at least \$1.5 million in the future. The Fund has just completed a new action planning process facilitated by the Nebraska Community Foundation. New, ambitious goals have been set for the

next three years and beyond.

This success, and the passion behind it, begs the question: How is this little town able to raise so much money?

"Shickley has been good to us" is the reason given by most donors contributing to the Fund. The Fund recognizes all donors equally, regardless of

Purpose/Organization	Total Amount
Community Development.....	\$27,084
School .....	\$23,970
Youth Programs .....	\$12,896
Cultural and Social Welfare.....	\$29,680
Fillmore County CASA.....	\$2,600
Fillmore County Development Corporation .....	\$1,150
Fillmore County Ag. Society .....	\$250
Fillmore County Head Start .....	\$200
Fillmore County Hospital Auxiliary .....	\$1,300
Fillmore County Hospital Renovation .....	\$2,250
Fillmore County Women in Ag. Economics.....	\$600
<b>GRAND TOTAL .....</b>	<b>\$101,980</b>

a robust permanent endowment and encourage people to give back in the form of legacy gifts through estate planning.

The first step was to secure a challenge grant. The Wilkins family of Geneva pledged \$105,000 over three years if the community could match the gift. Volunteers went to work, talking to their friends and neighbors about the importance of building a permanent source of charitable investment for their hometown. In less than three years, the Fund had built an unrestricted endowment of more than \$250,000. Reaching their goal only

the amount of the gift.

"All of our committee members are very pro-Shickley," said local chairman Dan Miller. Committee members include farmers, business owners, homemakers, employees and school officials who are a cross section of the community. They regularly take advantage of the training sessions, leadership summits and technical assistance provided by NCF.

Joe Kamler, the local fund's treasurer, said people in Shickley love their hometown and take a great deal  
\*See Shickley Foundation on pg. 10B

surer, said people in Shickley love their hometown and take a great deal of pride in its accomplishments. He also is quick to point out that the Shickley Community Foundation Fund is not the only active group in town. The fire department, Shickley Booster Club, Shickley Parents Association and all the churches raise funds and are involved in community improvement. Thanks to many ambitious volunteers and a community full of generous donors, Shickley should be a great place to call home far into the future.

The Shickley Community Foundation Fund Advisory Committee includes: Dan Miller, Chair; Richard Walter,

1st Vice Chair; Deb Johnson, 2nd Vice Chair; Joe Kamler, Treasurer; Kelly Dowdy, Secretary; Mike Jaberg, Sherri Schlegel, Janice Spurling, Loydeen Stengel, Doug Straight, Marge Swartzendruber and Troy Thomas.