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Valley County Grants from Wozab Trust Near \$300,000

Ord—With \$42,460 in 2005 grants announced at a special celebration last week, the Valley County Community Foundation has now awarded \$294,089 to area organizations from the Wozab Trust. The grants are awarded from the interest income from a \$1.2 million bequest made by John and Alyce Wozab in 1998. A permanent endowment was set up by the Valley County Foundation, through their affiliation with the Nebraska Community Foundation.

The Valley County communities of Arcadia, Ord, Elyria and North Loup are among the 28 recipients of the 2005 grants, including five pledges totaling \$7,500. In the six years of the Trust's operation, a total of 155 grants have been made.

The pledges are a new program for the Wozab grants this year, according to Steve Sintek, a director of the Valley County Community Foundation. "These were awarded to ambitious projects that might not be able to be completed in the present year, but were worthy of consideration. Our hope is by recognizing these projects with a pledge it will generate additional community awareness, energy and giving, to see the projects to completion," Sintek said.

The Valley County Economic Development Board was one of three groups to receive the largest grants, of \$5,000. The grant will support the County's Hometown Competitiveness program, which focuses on strategic leadership, philanthropy, youth attraction and entrepreneurship development for both transfers of businesses, and establishment and growth of new businesses.

The HTC program for Nebraska was piloted in Valley County in 2003. It received the 2004 Innovative Program Award from the international Community Development Society and is one of six finalists for one the Entrepreneurial Development Systems grants from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

The Valley County HTC program was also featured in a USA Today article on Feb. 9 with a headline, "Hometown competitiveness drives new rural development strategy." Valley County economic development director Bethanne Kunz was quoted in the article.

Also receiving \$5,000 grants were Senior Classics of Valley County, the senior center at Ord, to replace an inefficient heating/cooling system and the Valley County Health Systems for a laptop and power point projector system and other education and program supplies.

As in the past, the grants will support girls and boys little league ball programs. Several fire departments received funding for clean air systems used for both fires and hazardous gases and church groups received money to support youth rallies and retreats. 4-H clubs received funds for community beautification projects.

There were 33 grant requests for a total of \$90,798.30.

Because of the \$1.2 million gift from the Wozabs in 1998, the Valley County Foundation Fund is able to award the grants to local groups dedicated to improving the quality of life in Valley County. The Valley County Foundation can receive tax-deductible gifts to support additional community betterment projects.

Foundation board member Bob Sevenker said the Valley County Foundation grants committee attempts to award grants to projects that they feel the Wozabs would have supported. Each year, the committee has received more grant requests than it is able to award. Maximum grant awards have been \$5,000.

“We are hoping other current and former Valley County residents will discover the tremendous legacy John and Alyce Wozab have left to Valley County, and will leave their own legacy in future years. The good work resulting from these grants will help encourage others to give back to their hometown,” said Jeff Yost, President and CEO of the Nebraska Community Foundation.

The Nebraska Community Foundation is a non-profit, charitable organization that provides financial management, strategic development and education/training services to communities, organizations and donors throughout Nebraska. It was incorporated in August 1993 and received its 501(C)(3) charitable foundation status from the Internal Revenue Service in 1994. It accepted its first affiliated funds in 1994 and now has over 165 affiliated funds, including 69 community-based funds that are working to build permanent endowments similar to that of the Wozab Trust.

Cash grants:

- Trying Our Best 4-H Club at Ord, \$250.
- North Loup American Legion #285, \$860.
- Ord Girls’ Softball, \$750.
- American Legion Post #251, Arcadia, \$750.
- Senior Classics of Valley County at Ord, \$5,000
- Ord Baseball Program, \$600.
- Ord Livestock 4-H Club, \$200.
- TeamMates of Ord, \$300.

- RKD 4-H Club, \$250
- Arcadia Baseball/Softball, \$1,000
- Ord Pee-Wee Wrestling Club, \$250.
- North Loup Volunteer Fire Department, \$2,250.
- Ord Evangelical Free Church/Youth Rally, \$1,000.
- St. John's Lutheran Church/Carnival, \$500.
- Ord Volunteer Fire Department, \$2,250.
- Arcadia United Methodist Church/River Rally, \$1,000.
- Valley County Economic Development, \$5,000.
- Arcadia Veteran's Wall, \$1,000.
- Arcadia Volunteer Fire Department, \$2,250.
- Loup Valley Ag Society, \$2,500
- Valley County Health Systems, \$5,000.
- The Gathering Place at Arcadia, \$1,500.
- Arcadia Township Library, \$500.

The pledges:

- Elyria Community Improvement, \$2,500.
- Ord Flag Pole Project, \$1,000.
- Aule's Lake Trail/City of Ord, \$1,000.
- Valley County Historical Society, \$2,000.
- Park Board/City of Ord, \$1,000.

For more information, please contact Valley County Foundation directors Steve Sintek at 308-496-4791, Bob Sevenker at 308-728-3371 or any other Valley County supervisor.