

Donations

2018 & 2019 Donations made in memory and honor of:

Adrian Barta
Frank Blazek
Leander Brester
Lumier & Doris Brester
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Betty Cech
Evelyn Coufal
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Theodore & Susan Williams
Dan & Chris Wisnieski
Keith & LeAnn Wisnieski
Mindi Wolf
Mr. & Mrs. Gerald Zieg

Thank You

...for caring and donating to the Howells Community Fund. You are helping to make Howells a great place to live, work and enjoy. Some donations are not listed on this page due to anonymous donations. The HCF respects your private donations and anonymity and will never post those contributions. Our apologies if any names were inadvertently overlooked.

Dan & Brenda Martin

“Loving where they live.”



Dorothy and Chris Mejstrik

There was never any doubt how Chris and Dorothy Mejstrik felt about Howells. It showed in everything they did. “Mom and dad understood the importance of community, but also understood without the people, there is no community,” said Bryan Mejstrik, one of their sons. “And that’s one thing that makes Howells special — the support and kindness of the people of the community.” Their children — Bryan, his sister, Megan, and a brother,

Jordan — have fond memories of their late parents, saying they were very loving and “did a great job of modeling what it means to work hard and be a good person.”

Perhaps one of things that sticks out most is their involvement in the community. Chris was a volunteer firefighter when the three siblings were growing up, and also was on the Howells’ village board and board of education, serving as the president of the latter for numerous years. He also operated Northeast Nebraska Automation — a company started by his father, Walter, in the 1970s.

Dorothy Mejstrik served on the parish council, library foundation, community club and was a founding member of the Howells Community Fund.

“When Howells started hosting the BBQ and Brew, mom was

involved and on committees. She was part of the inaugural group for the community fund, which has done many great things for the community,” Megan said.

Written in her own words, Dorothy urged Howells to take part in a challenge grant opportunity that indicated if the community raised \$500,000 in four years, Howells would receive a \$250,000 grant from the Sherwood Foundation.

“This is the safety net that communities like ours use and can continue to use to make those necessary improvements and to keep Howells viable and attractive to youth to come back to live.”

She wrote that the Howells Community Fund had already benefited the community in numerous ways, including assistance to the fire/rescue squad, the Howells Ballroom, schools, 4-H Club start-up, parks and signs. “We can do so much more but need your help in building this endowment,” Dorothy wrote. “Your roots started here. Please help us continue to grow.”

Megan Mejstrik said her mom was always planning for the future. Sadly, Chris and Dorothy will not see all of the dreams they had for Howells come to fruition. In 2014, Chris died, and then two years later, Dorothy died.

After their mom died, the Mejstrik children wanted to honor their mom’s legacy by continuing to be part of the community fund, and to see Howells continue to thrive.

“As strongly as I feel about Howells, I still realize there are ways to make it a better place to live and raise a family. The Howells Community Fund gives a community strong roots for growth and accomplishing goals it may have,” Bryan said, adding that he knows their mom would be happy with what they’re doing.



Billie Wisnieski

Billie Wisnieski is a founding member and treasurer of the Howells Community Fund. Gifts from her parents’ estate gave an early boost to the Fund’s unrestricted endowment campaign. Billie’s estate plan also includes the Howells Community Fund as a beneficiary.

Billie explained her motivation. “It all comes back to stewardship of your hometown. You have to step up, to set the example, because if you are not willing to give back, how can you ask others to do so.”



Kathy Heard

Kathy Heard was a Howells Q125 committee member and worked with a team to raise funds to pay for the celebration in June 2012.

With nearly \$50,000 of those funds remaining after bills were paid, Heard approached the group in Howells with the idea of starting a foundation. Heard said the creation of a community fund leaves a legacy that honors and respects the past, as well as benefits Howells in its future endeavors.

Now, with the fund in place, Heard said she and her husband have opted to leave legacy gifts — a donation to the foundation for the benefit of Howells — in their wills.



Front: Brittin and Axton. Back: Jordan, Becky and Blake.

Jordan Brabec, agricultural education teacher/FFA advisor at Howells-Dodge Consolidated Schools, said what he loves most about his community is the great people who live here! The diversity of our residents makes our town unique because we are able to function like a bigger city but do not have to contend with traffic, crowds, noise and cramped areas.

With the decline in population in many small towns, I hope that Howells can buck that trend and find ways to keep graduates, appeal to outsiders and attract new businesses to our small community.

The Norfolk Daily News and the Nebraska Community Foundation recently published a series of articles spotlighting individuals who have made a significant impact in their community—including the Mejstriks, Brabecs, and Heard.

These stories can be read in their entirety on our website: www.helpinghowells.org

Howells Community Fund

P.O. Box 63 – Howells, NE 68641



An Affiliated Fund of the Nebraska Community Foundation

November 2019

Howells Community Fund Members

Jeff Wegner, Chair
Kathy Heard, Vice-Chair
Billie Wisnieski, Treasurer
Austin Coufal, Secretary
Jordan Brabec
Donna Brester
Gary Brester
Joan Mastny
Marilyn Sindelar
Cheryl Sudbeck
Pat Jakubowski, *Honorary FAC Member*
Kent Smith, *Honorary FAC Member*

Our Vision

Howells is a caring, thriving community with varied educational, social, recreational, and economic opportunities and services. Our vibrant quality of life provides a lasting legacy for all generations calling Howells home.

Our Mission

To create a lasting impact by inspiring the generosity of our community: past, present and future.

Our Values

We are a hardworking team driven to support our community’s future while encouraging success and fun.

We are a trusted family, proud of where we are and where we are going.

We are dedicated to reaching out to our community with integrity, positive encouragement and compassion.

We are open to working with all people, organizations, and groups to encourage diversity and progressive goals.



NEBRASKA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

P.O. Box 83107 • Lincoln, NE 68501

Ph: (402) 323-7330

info@nebcommfound.org

Find us on Facebook at Howells Community Fund

HCF Challenge Grant

Members of the Howells Community Fund have great news to share! Chairperson Jeff Wegner and Vice Chair Kathy Heard detailed the exciting news that the HCF has received a 2-to-1 matching grant from Susan Buffet’s Sherwood Foundation. Around 200 Howells area residents braved the cold air and snow packed roads Sunday evening, February 24, 2019, to hear about this awesome opportunity for our little community.

If Howells can raise \$500,000 in 4 years, the Sherwood Foundation, through the “Building Community Capacity in Rural Nebraska” initiative, will add \$250,000 as a gift to the HCF Endowment Account. This unrestricted endowment is an important tool to keep Howells growing and thriving for today’s residents and for many generations to come. The account is essentially a life savings for the future of Howells. Now almost 3 years into that 4-year grant period, the Howells team has received donations or pledges for over 3/4 of the necessary \$500,000! The deadline to receive the maximum match goal of \$250,000 is December 31, 2020. Imagine what a \$750,000 boost in the endowment can mean for Howells!

We need everyone’s help to reach and exceed this goal! Your contribution is a “forever” gift because the principal in the endowment account is never spent, but remains to provide a steady stream of earnings revenue for future community needs. What a legacy we are building together for our community and the surrounding area!

For each \$50,000 in donations that the HCF has already deposited into the Howells Endowment Account, the Sherwood Foundation has matched \$25,000. Howells is extremely fortunate to have been selected for this opportunity. Five communities, which are all affiliated with the Nebraska Community Foundation, were selected during this third round of the grant.

It should be noted that with the beginning balance (prior to the grant), the endowment account should reach well over \$850,000 following the 2020 deadline. Using 4.5% earnings return on that balance per year, the HCF will have approximately \$39,000 available to grant BACK to the community of Howells each year for projects and dreams. If the return is higher than the 4.5% granted out, the earnings above that percentage are returned to the account to increase the endowment balance. Just imagine what incredible things we can accomplish in Howells with an extra \$30,000+ every year – forever!

If you would like to learn more about what the Sherwood Matching Grant Challenge can do for Howells contact any HCF member. Members include Jeff Wegner, Joan Mastny, Billie Wisnieski, Jordan Brabec, Austin Coufal, Donna Brester, Marilyn Sindelar, Cheryl Sudbeck, Gary Brester, and Kathy Heard.

Class Challenge

It started in the summer of 2018 when the Class of 1983 gathered for their 35-year class reunion. After spending the evening reminiscing with old friends, the classmates decided to make a donation to the Howells Community Fund endowment account in memory of their deceased classmate, Jeff Dirkschneider.

The Endowment Account is a “forever savings account,” being built with donations to create a legacy for Howells for many generations to come.

At the 2019 Howells and Howells-Dodge High Alumni Banquet, the donation idea was expanded upon even further. This time, the Class of 1979 issued a challenge to other honored classes to make a donation to the Howells Community Fund. The challenge extended through the month of June. When all donations were counted at the end of the month, the winners were: 1st: 1979 \$2,345.00; 2nd: 2009 \$2,145.00 and 3rd: 1974 \$547.00. The total amount collected was \$6,322.00. With the matching grant from the Sherwood Foundation, that amount became \$9,483.00

Thanks to everyone who donated. What a fun way to give back to our community.



Nearly 150 attend Holiday Home Tour on November 25

The Howells Community Fund sponsored a Holiday Home Tour in November, 2018, as a fundraiser. Not only Howells locals attended to take the tour and support the community, but many guests arrived from Schuyler, Clarkson, Leigh, North Bend, and a number of other communities in the surrounding area!

Our visitors were treated to cookies, coffee and cocoa at the Tour Headquarters in the Owl Café, where they could purchase tickets. Tour brochures featured a map with directions to each pictured location. Homes in Howells included Craig and Molly Coufal, Justin and Christi Mastny, and Don and Denise Cech. Rural locations included the homes of Alan and Cristi Krupka and Kevin and Chris Brester. Man caves included Tom's Auto owned by Tom Langhorst, several tractors owned by the Richard Coufal Sr. family, and the truck shop at the farm of Jerry and Kathy Heard. All the hosts welcomed their tour guests between the hours of 3-7 p.m. Hosts agreed that, while the preparations were sometimes stressful, the tour was a great incentive to finish projects around their house!

Several potential hosts have already offered their homes for the next tour. Based on the success of this event, the HCF is planning to offer it again in the future. It is an awesome opportunity to showcase the welcoming nature of Howells!

Door prizes were drawn at the end of the evening and awarded to those who returned their completed tour tickets to the Owl.

The Howells Historical Museum was also open that afternoon from 2-5 and welcomed many guests including quite a few that had never before toured the museum.



Home Hosts received cookie trays from the HCF



Kevin and Chris Brester and family showcased a massive Christmas Village collection.



Tom Langhorst of Tom's Auto showed off his collection of "petroliana".

Golf Outing



The third annual Howells alumni golf tournament was held June 1 at the Club 91 Golf Course in Leigh. It was a best ball tournament and was well attended by HHS golfers, spouses, and friends of alumni. Lunch was served by the Howells Community Fund and prizes were given.

In 2020, the event will move to the Friday evening of Alumni weekend and will also include a scavenger hunt.

Garage Sale raised over \$3,000

The Howells Community Fund (HCF) sponsored their annual Community Garage Sale early this year on Saturday, April 13, at the Howells Ballroom. Howells area residents generously cleaned out their homes, garages and storage areas to drop off donations in the week prior to the sale. A large team of volunteers came each day to sort, price and organize items for the garage sale.

"We are always amazed at the amount of items we get," said HCF member Joan Mastny. When the sale closed Saturday at noon, the garage sale had raised over \$3,000 for Howells Community projects. The unsold items were donated to the Salvation Army, some holiday decorations went to a local nursing home, and some pieces went to a veteran's thrift store. In previous years, the funds went to the upgraded basketball court and the playground equipment project.

Mailboxes for graduating seniors at H-D



The Howells Community Fund gave each of the Howells-Dodge graduating seniors a Jaguar green mailbox with the HDC Jaguar printed on the side. Their intentions were for the students to use them at their graduation parties for their cards. Their hopes are that as these students set up roots, they will return to Howells or Dodge after college and use the mailboxes at their homes. Pictured in the front row from left: Howells Community Fund member and Senior Class Sponsor Jordan Brabec, Bridget Praest, Grace Dvorak, Catherine Kempf, McKenna Klosen, Chloe Pieper, Howells Community Fund members Kathy Heard and Austin Coufal. Middle row: Desirae Haase, Lupe Curiel, Ashley Smith, Jessi Brester, Erin Prusa, Tonya Brester, Hannah Bayer, Mitchell Yosten, Carter Jensen, Mike Balsley, Trysten Garcia, and Cole Stewart. Back row: Chad Young, Trevor Good, Brad Kratochvil, Lane Hegemann, Josh Brester, Dylan Horejsi, Matt Cada, Kade Hegemann and Seth Cech.



Members of the Howells Community Fund are, front row, from left: Austin Coufal, Donna Brester, Joan Mastny, Kathy Heard and Marilyn Sindelar. Back row: Cheryl Sudbeck, Jordan Brabec, Billie Wisnieski, Gary Brester and Jeff Wegner.

Peer Learning Workshop



June 2019 – Foundation members and guests tour Howells by trolley.

It was Howells' turn to shine when they hosted communities from the Nebraska Community Foundation network on June 27 & 28, 2019.

The Howells Community Fund team welcomed members of the Keith County, Imperial, Stuart and Columbus foundation groups on Thursday late morning at the Benedictine Conference Center near Schuyler. Following lunch the 5 groups joined in a "peer learning" workshop lead by members of the NCF Staff. About 45 people attended the trainings, including representatives from the Nebraska Community Foundation and the Peter Kiewitt Foundation.

The five community fund groups have been meeting for the past years, first in Columbus 2016, then in Stuart in 2017, Imperial in 2018, and Howells, in June of 2019. Next year's peer learning trainings will be held 300 miles away in Keith County, Nebraska. Members of each group have dedicated their time, talents and treasures to build unrestricted endowment "savings" accounts to benefit the future of their community. The trainings have been an important part of that commitment.

The common bond between these 5 groups is that they are all Round 3 Community Recipients of the Sherwood Challenge Grant. Each community will be granted \$250,000 in matching funds from Susan Buffet's Sherwood Foundation, if they can raise \$500,000 in local donations by the end of December, 2020. Each group shares their ideas, the challenges or hurdles they have faced, and the excitement of growing towards their goals. Howells was especially excited to share their great news about the gift from our Alumni Committee and the Alumni Class Challenge and how that helped to gain momentum for the endowment.

Thursday evening, the Howells Fund hosted a dinner at St. John's Catholic Community Center for all the guests from the NCF communities. Many invited community guests, including donors and faithful volunteers who have helped our Fund along the way, were also in attendance. The evening began with two trolleys touring through Howells, with high points and businesses pointed out by our narrators, Scott Polacek and Wayne Molacek. Scott and Wayne have hosted historical tours since the 2012 Q125 in Howells. Both are members of the Howells Historical Society Board. Local people and HCF board members on each trolley added a little "color commentary" to the tours. Howells looked great for our guests, with welcoming flags flying and lawns mowed, and we were so proud to show off our community!

The evening progressed with appetizers, drinks handled by the Grain Bin, a wonderful meal catered by Terri Belina and her crew, and introductions all around the room. Jeff Yost, President and CEO of the Nebraska Community Foundation, gave a short message. Entertainment was provided by Howells & Midland graduate Abby Coday and two of her college friends who presented several musical numbers.

After the evening and more visiting, the NCF guests returned to the Benedictine for their overnight stay and Friday morning meetings.

Please update Alumni information

The HCF is working to create a database of addresses and contact information for all alumni and "friends of Howells," including former teachers and residents of the area.

We are gathering class lists and would really appreciate e-mail and address updates. These addresses will be used for community newsletters and updates. The addition of e-mail addresses will help to cut postage costs.

Alumni class lists or any address updates can be sent to Marilyn Sindelar at mrsjoy@megavision.com. Thank you for your help!

Wanted!

Looking for donors to put us over the top and beyond our \$500,000 goal! Contact any

Howells Community Fund member:
 Kathy Heard ... (402) 380-8290
 Joan Mastny ... (402) 750-7639
 Jeff Wegner ... (402) 380-4270
 Jordan Brabec ... (402) 649-1576
 Gary Brester ... (402) 833-8061
 Billie Wisnieski ... (402) 380-7635
 Donna (Jerome) Brester ... (402) 649-7947
 Marilyn Sindelar ... (402) 750-7401
 Austin Coufal ... (402) 380-4862
 Cheryl Sudbeck ... (402) 910-1603

Howells Community Fund,
 PO Box 63, Howells, NE 68641

Thanks to our Donors & Volunteers

We want to thank all of our donors and volunteers who always come through for us when we call for help! Whether it be for working at our annual garage sale or for donating or serving food at our visioning sessions or the Senior Citizens lunch. Sometimes, these simple things mean the most.

For all those little and big ways you have pitched in to help, we thank you! Being affiliated with The Nebraska Community Foundation has taught us so much. One of the very first things we learned is that donations can come in the form of Time, Talent and/or Treasure. Each is a valued piece of the "teamwork" and each is needed to make the dream work.

You have no idea how much your help and support has meant to us. We want you to know that you are all greatly appreciated. Thank you for believing in Howells and its future.

"Feed Your Dreams" Breakfast



Around 200 people came out to support the HCF's first "Feed Your Dreams" breakfast on Sunday morning, August 18, 2019. At left, HCF member Austin Coufal works on French toast in the ballroom kitchen.

"Soup for Seniors"



January of 2019 marked the 4th year that HCF members gathered at the Owl Café to make and deliver "Soup for Seniors." At right, HCF member Joan Mastny also delivered a hug to JoAnn Hegemann in Howells.

Howells Community Fund Endowment & General Fund Balance Sheets

2018

Beginning balance, January 1, 2018 \$265,947.80
 Donations/Income \$113,840.75
 Expenditures (includes grant payouts) [\$50,762.64]
 Ending balance, December 31, 2018 \$329,025.91

2019

Beginning balance, January 1, 2019 \$329,025.91
 Donations/Income as of August 31, 2019 ... \$53,351.51
 Expenditures (includes grant payouts) [\$11,518.80]

Ending balance as of August 31, 2019 \$370,858.62*
 *This is actual funds in the bank and does not include pledges yet to be realized.

Giving Back with Gifts of Grain and Livestock

When it comes to charitable giving, think beyond cash. There are lots of out-of-the-box, tax-wise ways to give back to the hometown you love that don't involve writing a check.

For instance, Nebraska farmers and ranchers in communities like Diller, Shickley, Chambers, Stuart, Stratton, and Atkinson are saving significantly on their taxes by contributing commodities like corn or cattle to their local community foundation fund. Byron, a community of just 83, built a million-dollar community center thanks in large part to generous gifts of grain from community members.

The Howells Community Fund, an affiliated fund of Nebraska Community Foundation, is ready and well-equipped to accept gifts of grain and livestock to benefit the community's unrestricted endowment. The endowment acts like a savings account for the future of Howells – investment earnings provide a steady stream of revenue to fund projects and programs today, 50 years from now, and forever.

Instead of selling the commodity, the producer transfers ownership of the livestock or grain directly to Nebraska Community Foundation for the benefit of the Howells Community Fund. The producer can then claim all of their production costs as deductible expenses for income tax purposes. When a producer transfers legal ownership to a charity, like the Howells Community Fund, before it is sold, the producer will not have taxable income from a sale, thus minimizing taxes. Tax savings may be realized on federal income tax, state income tax, and self-employment tax, depending on the producer's specific circumstances.

It is important to first check with your professional advisor to determine whether a contribution of grain or livestock is appropriate for your tax situation. It is also important that you notify Nebraska Community Foundation in advance of making your gift of commodities to the Howells Community Fund, as there are specific (but simple) procedures that must be followed. Gift of Grain forms are available through members of the Fund Advisory Committee as well as through the local co-op.

You can visit Nebraska Community Foundation's Gift Planning website – www.ncfgift.org – for details on the benefits and process of making a charitable gift of grain or livestock, as well as other out-of-the-box giving methods beyond cash. Nebraska Community Foundation is also always available to point you in the right direction at (402) 323-7330 or info@necommfund.org.

Howells Community Fund

Yes, I would like to support my community and invest in our future!

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Gifts of any size are needed and appreciated!

Enclosed is my tax-deductible gift in the amount of \$ _____

Please use my contribution for the:

- General Fund
 Endowment Fund (*Your gift will be matched by the Sherwood Grant*)
 Memorial — In Honor of: _____

(How you would like the name shown)

Gift of Grain
 To donate bushels of grain to the Howells Community Fund please contact Les Long, Controller, Nebraska Community Foundation, 402-323-7330

Please make checks payable to:
 NCF-FBO Howells Community Fund • PO Box 63 • Howells, NE 68641

For more information or to make a donation visit:
www.helpinghowells.org