

Basketball court project will turn under-utilized area into community showpiece

The largest project the Howells Community Fund has tackled so far will also be another joint endeavor with the Howells Community Club.

This project addresses one of the most popular requests noted in community surveys that have been conducted in the past -- the desire for better facilities that will benefit Howells' youth and young adults.

After investigating several possibilities, the groups have decided that rather than looking at a series of smaller projects, they could do more good if they pooled their resources and worked on something more significant.

Initially, the groups considered renovating the basketball court in Memorial Park in downtown Howells. The groups looked at the site and considered its location and potential for long-term improvement.

Unfortunately, due to the current condition of the concrete and the position of existing trees in Memorial Park, the area would need extensive site work before construction could begin.

Another location the group began to explore was the currently under-utilized tennis courts located just west of the Howells Ballroom. With some slight modifications, the group learned that the area could be redeveloped into an area that both basketball and tennis players could enjoy and the location would be far enough away from homes so that activity at the courts would be minimally disruptive.

The plan that the groups have developed will convert the east tennis court into a basketball court. The west court would remain unchanged for tennis

usage. The east court will have a new high-impact surface and will be marked/lined with basketball lines. The new court surface will be made up of an interlocking rubberized grid that will be placed over the existing concrete. The new surface offers built-in drainage and resiliency for many years. New basketball rim/backboards will be installed and the lighting at the courts will be improved.

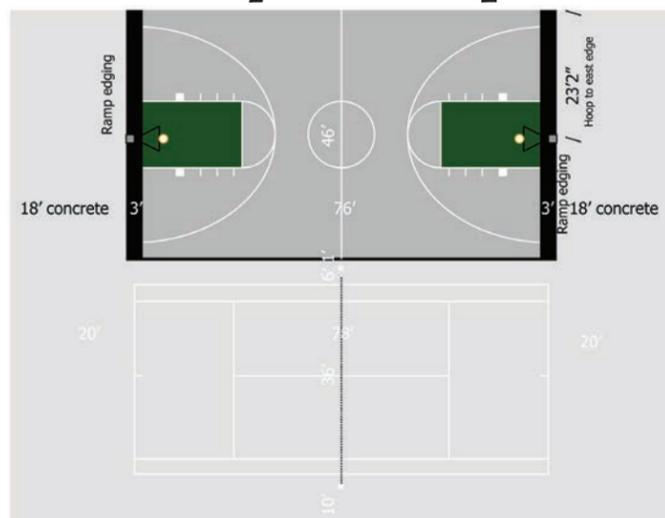
The benefit of the second plan is that the area is more visible and can be utilized more often when there are events at the ballroom. The new court also provides an additional area that can be used by Howells-Dodge students and high school athletes.

Cost for the project is roughly \$25,000. The Howells Community Club has pledged \$8,000 from the BBQ & Brew receipts and the Howells Community Fund has pledged an additional \$8,000 raised through their spring garage sale and investment earnings.

The groups are asking for the public's help to raise the balance of the project cost. Initial work will begin this fall with the remainder of the work concluding in the spring.

When completed, the new basketball court will revive a nearly-forgotten area of Howells and offer local basketball enthusiasts a modern, outdoor area to gather with friends and enjoy the sport they love.

To make a donation to help with funding of the project or for more information about the project, please contact Howells Community Fund President Kent Smith or Howells Community Club President Chris Brester.



Pictured above is a diagram of the basketball/tennis court near the Howells Ballroom. The current tennis court (west) in the lower portion of the diagram will be unchanged. The tennis court on the east side (top of diagram) will be retrofitted with an interlocking rubberized grid that will be placed over the existing concrete.



This photo shows the grid system used to create the new basketball court surface. The Howells court will have a different color scheme

A note from our Chairman

We are pleased to present this 2016 Annual Report. Once again, we want to take time to thank you for your generosity. This year has been a successful year for your fund. We continue to grow in both the endowment and general fund accounts. Your generosity enables more grants to be awarded for many projects within the Howells community.

The Howells Community lost a beloved and dedicated advocate in October of this year. Dorothy Mejskrik loved Howells and dedicated

her life to her family and community. She was part of our Fund Advisory Committee and her passion is an inspiration for us all. We miss her and extend our condolences to the Mejskrik Family.

Thank you for your support and making 2016 a success. Please enjoy this annual report and if you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact any member of the Howells Community Fund.

Sincerely,
Kent Smith, HCF Chairman

Howells Community Fund

P.O. Box 63, Howells, NE 68641



"Roots to Grow"

An Affiliated Fund of the Nebraska Community Foundation

November 2016

HCF members working to preserve the future of Howells

The **Howells Community Fund** was founded in 2013 with a \$50,000 endowment donation from the highly successful 2012 Howells Q125 Celebration. This endowment account continues to grow with other monetary gifts, creating an asset for this community that remains forever.

The investment income from the endowment fund is returned to Howells yearly to provide grants to improve the community. As the endowment grows, so do the size of grants available. Our ultimate goal is to build endowment funds creating an investment base which would yield benefits for this community lasting well beyond our lifetimes to fuel the dreams for the future of Howells.

To date our projects have included a speaker system used at the Ballroom, bathroom improvements at the east park shelter and new park benches. We have also worked with other local

organizations to help provide new lockers for the Howells Volunteer Fire and Rescue, computers for a local school, and a new Howells sign on Hwy 32. We are currently developing a plan with the Village to update our community parks.

HCF goals include teaming with other local organizations to address the needs of our community and working to identify and support projects, programs and people.

Our **Mission Statement** is simple: "Creating a lasting impact by inspiring the generosity of our community; past, present and future."

We are encouraging everyone to make a habit of using their time, talents and treasures to give back to the community that has been an important part of their lives. We are using philanthropy today as a tool for building a prosperous future for Howells.

The **Howells Community Fund** is honored to be an affiliate

of the **Nebraska Community Foundation** and take part in their many statewide opportunities and investment options. For more information on the NCF

and its many affiliates visit www.nebcommfound.org or talk to any of the current Howells Community Fund members.



HCF members are, front (from left): Kent Smith, Kathy Heard, Jordan Brabec and Joan Mastny. Back: Billie Wisnieski, Cheryl Sudbeck, Jeff Wegner and Kathy Pickhinke. Not pictured: Gary Brester.

We will honor Dorothy's memory by carrying on her legacy of service to the community of Howells

The Howells Community Fund (HCF) lost one of its most valued members in October when Dorothy Mejskrik passed away after a brief but courageous battle with cancer.

Dorothy was one of the founding members of the HCF and was currently serving as the group's treasurer.

The void left by Dorothy's passing will be felt not only within the Howells Community Fund, but throughout the community of Howells as well. Dorothy and her husband, Chris, were staunch supporters of Howells and spent the last few years of their lives making philanthropic contributions to a variety of local organizations. (Chris passed away in October, 2014.)

Although managing her family's business, Northeast Nebraska Automation, consumed a great deal

of her time after the death of Chris, Dorothy always selflessly donated her free time to the projects she was passionate about. The Howells Community Fund is fortunate that Dorothy chose the HCF as one of those projects.

Dorothy may have been a native of West Point and didn't call Howells home until her marriage to Chris in 1979, but she became one of Howells' most enthusiastic cheerleaders. She never missed an opportunity to promote Howells in conversations with friends and business associates.

Dorothy was an active member



in many local organizations, holding offices in the Howells Community Club and Howells Public Library Foundation as well as the HCF. Not satisfied with being merely a member of an organization, Dorothy jumped in and was always an active participant in each organization's activities including the annual BBQ & Brew, the Community Garage Sale and the Maple Creek Market. She was a member of St. John Nepomucene Catholic Church where she was an EMHC, Altar Society member and served on the Parish Council. She was an avid reader and loved her book club. Dorothy could be found walking with "granddog" Remy and especially enjoyed spending time with her granddaughter, Scout.

Dorothy is survived by her three children and their families: Megan and Thad Huenemann of Lincoln

and their daughter, Scout; Jordan and Mikayla Mejskrik and Bryan Mejskrik, all of Howells; sisters, Barb Johnson of Cudahy, Wis., and Julie Cole of Lincoln; brothers, Art (Linda) Johnson of Enterprise, Ala., Ed Johnson of Vancouver, Canada, Ken (Robin) Johnson of Spring Branch, Texas, and Norbert Johnson of Omaha; father-in-law, Walter Mejskrik of Lincoln; and several nieces and nephews.

The members of the Howells Community Fund will sorely miss Dorothy, but we will continue to invest our time, talents and treasure to make Howells a community we can be proud to call home. Our pledge to her family is to honor her memory by carrying on her legacy of service to Howells, our home.

The Howells Community Fund and the Howells Community Club are asking for contributions to help fund the new basketball court project. If you would like to make a donation, please fill out the form below:

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

If you would like your donation to be in memory or in honor of someone, please note that person's name below: _____

Please mail your contribution to:
Basketball Project, % Howells Community Fund, PO Box 63, Howells, NE 68641

UNL Innocents bring lunch to local seniors

12 members enjoy morning spent in Howells

The Howells Community Fund hosted 12 members of the Innocents Society in February for a service project they call the IVAN – Innocents Volunteering Across Nebraska. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln students carried on the group's tradition of stopping at 13 different towns throughout the state of Nebraska to undertake 13 different service projects in three days.

The Innocents Society, founded in 1903, is the UNL Chancellor's Senior Honorary. Every spring 13 juniors are selected for membership based on their unparalleled leadership, selfless service and superior academic excellence.

The group contacted the Howells Community Fund in December of 2015 looking for a project they could do here in Howells. Fund members thought of many things to work on, but most were outdoor painting or freshen-up tasks around the community. This would not work with February weather concerns.

So they came up with the plan to deliver lunches to senior citizens in and around Howells. Starting with a base list from the monthly Community Potluck Lunch, they built the delivery list to over 80 people.

With the help of Russ and Kathy Pickhinke and cook, Joyce Pickhinke of the Owl Café, a meal menu was decided on and food ordered and prepared.

Early on the morning of February 20th, Fund members and family volunteers gathered at the Owl to make sandwiches to include in the meal boxes. The 12 UNL students arrived around 9:30 a.m. and after introductions, they immediately started packing the boxes and pitched in to help.



Kent Smith, left, and two members of the UNL Innocents Society delivered a meal to Arlene Kersten.



Twelve Innocents Society members met Community Fund members at the Owl Cafe to assemble the meals before they were delivered.

Cars were packed with food, loaded with teams of Fund members and students, and headed out in all directions in a scramble to strike while the soup was hot. It was a great time to learn about the students and their backgrounds.

It was also a learning opportunity for them as most of the students were from Omaha and Lincoln. It was great for them to hear about the benefits of living in a small town, and a few myths about Nebraska and agriculture were hopefully dispelled. They all really enjoyed meeting the

people on their delivery routes.

The teams regrouped at the Owl for a pizza lunch and were bubbling with stories about the Howells community and the people they had visited. It was a great morning with fun memories, but they soon had to load up their van and move on to their next stop and their next week-end service project.

The Howells Community Fund would like to thank all those who welcomed this team of students to their homes! It was a great opportunity to show off Howells!

Community Garage Sale nets more than \$2,700



Howells residents again generously donated their gently used items for the annual HCF Community Garage Sale held in April. The wide variety of items always brings a large group of shoppers to the sale.

The Howells Community Fund (HCF) sponsored their annual Community Garage Sale on Saturday, April 16, in the Howells Ballroom. Residents of Howells cleaned out their homes, garages and storage areas and dropped off their gently used donations at the Ballroom from April 12-15.

A large team of volunteers were on hand each evening to sort and price items in preparation for the garage sale on Saturday.

By the time the sale closed on Saturday afternoon, Howells residents helped raise more than \$2,700 for the Howells Community Fund.

The unsold clothing items were donated to the Orphan Grain Train and all remaining items were donated to the Salvation Army.

The proceeds from the garage sale will be used for a community project. Howells Community Fund members met last week to review the garage sale and discuss possible ideas. The group has selected one major project – the new basketball court near the Howells Ballroom. See Page 4 of this newsletter for more information.

Coloring Book provides unique photo album of Howells sites

The Howells Community Fund and the Howells Community Club worked together to produce a coloring book featuring points of interest in Howells.

Photos of the Howells churches, schools, parks and museum, as well as other significant areas of town, were turned into drawings that could be “colored.”

The coloring book is a unique photo album of all the things that make Howells “home” for both current and past residents.

The book was distributed at the Howells High School Alumni Banquet and additional copies are available from Community Fund and Community Club members.



Cover Photo: Fr. Leo Rigatuso

Inside Photos: Christy Mastny



The Howells Community Fund donated \$250 to the Top Shot 4-H club. The new group will use the funds to purchase targets, bows and arrows. Present to receive the check were, front row, from left: Grant Perrin, Gage Stutzman, Cole Grovijohn, Austin Hegemann and Caleb Perrin. Back row: HCF Chairman Kent Smith and 4-H club leader Levi Stutzman.

Maple Creek Market shoppers enjoy fall goodies and crafts

The Howells Community Fund kicked off the fall season with the Maple Creek Market, being held in conjunction with the Howells Community Club's annual BBQ & Brew on Saturday, Sept. 10, in the park near the Howells Ballroom.

Vendors set up from 7:00-9:00 a.m. and booths were open to shoppers from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Organizers sought vendors who wanted to sell their craft items, rescued and repurposed items, produce, food or home-based business products. Booth fee is \$30 for a 15' x 20' booth or \$50 for two adjoining booths. Electricity at the booth site was available for an additional charge.

The Maple Creek Market was held next to the BBQ & Brew activities. Market shoppers were encouraged to stroll through the booths and then go next door to the BBQ to enjoy appetizers offered by grilling contestants, children's bounce houses and the BBQ rib meal that was served beginning at 5:00 p.m.

There was an entry fee charged for the BBQ & Brew that covered the all-you-can-eat evening meal and appetizers served throughout the afternoon.



Need a Christmas gift idea? How about a personalized mailbox

Jaguar green mailboxes are for sale through the Howells Community Fund. The mailboxes can be personalized with either the Howells-Dodge Jaguar logo or a farm scene. The purchaser may also add a last name to the design. Prices range from \$42.80 without the name added to \$48.15 with the name.



New sign guides motorists to Howells

Through the cooperative efforts of the Howells Community Fund and the Howells Community Club, a new sign points the way to Howells on the corner of Highway 32 and 2nd Road north of Howells. The new, highly-visible sign replaces and older, wooden sign at that intersection.