Message from your Chairwoman

Dear Keith County Friends,

For more than 19 years, the Keith County Foundation Fund has served our communities in Keith County. Still, as I draft this annual report message, the past 12 months seems like a century ago. It’s not only for COVID-related reasons, but also for the pace and intensity set by events in that brief time. Even though we continue to stand on the shoulders that came before us, we haven’t had time to look back at the past 12 months. We had several notable “firsts” this past year.

• Thanks in large part to our anonymous donor, the KCFF’s assets reached more than $10 million for the first time.
• Not only did we meet our two-to-one Building Community Capacity grant match in pledges, but we also exceeded it because of amazing donors like you. We’re very proud of and grateful for the number of donors who helped us add more than $750,000 to our endowment.
• For the first time in our fund’s history, we participated in a Keith County data study with rural sociologist Ben Winchester, University of Minnesota Extension, economist Don Macke, Lincoln, and demographer David Drozd, University of Omaha, in partnership with the Nebraska Community Foundation.
• This series of studies allowed us to digest and then share the data with community members in three separate community input and visioning sessions where we invited you to share your five-, 10- and 20-year visions for our area. Some eye-opening facts helped us reframe the big picture.
• We have since committed to focusing on areas, especially housing, early childhood, and curb appeal and revitalization. Keith County Area Development and the Nebraska Public Power District are continuing to facilitate conversations in those specific focus areas.
• We experienced the largest funds we’ve ever granted in one year, a total of $277,650, and we currently have our largest dollar amount in requests for our current granting season, more than $434,000.
• We are seeing our goal for giving youth a voice for change and civic involvement in our community grow into the Youth Inspired Philanthropy project, thanks to the leadership of retired teachers Barb Jeffres and Mary Jensen. This project will begin in January 2021. Check out our website for more details.
• We strengthened partnerships and saw new ones emerge, especially with KCAD, Keith County Chamber of Commerce, NPPD and our affiliated funds network.
• And finally, COVID-19 magnified and widened the existing digital divide. So, we partnered with both of our school systems (Paxton and Ogallala) for the first time to assist in providing increased equity for all students.

And yet, we’ve known that needs will always be greater than the supply. We are reminded of it every granting season – even before the large gift we received last year – and so another first will be happening next June.

The Keith County Big Give committee is currently working to create a special day where each of our community members can have a say in your support for the vast and excellent volunteer work done in Keith County. The gap between the grant request this year and our ability to fund them – a total of $156,370 – indicates the number of fantastic ideas people have for making Keith County a better place to live, work and raise families.

Big Give will provide $40,000 of matching funds to charitable organizations that create and fund their projects. Big Give will bring these organizations together to promote their individual projects to the community. In a 24-hour period on June 12, anyone can donate to these projects and the funds raised will be matched with $40,000 from KCFF. Organizations must meet certain criteria to qualify (more details will be available later).

(Continued on Page 2)
The Big Give will Provide a Big Opportunity

By Ken Snyder

The Keith County Foundation Fund will provide $40,000 of funds to match funds raised by a charitable organization for Keith County projects through a new fundraising event called the Big Give.

The Big Give offers an opportunity for charitable organizations in Keith County to raise money in a unified effort. Eligible organizations can pool their resources for effective advertising and fundraising. Together we can create enthusiasm in the community for charitable giving.

The Big Give Committee will contract with a company that specializes in supporting big give events. They will provide an online giving platform to promote the overall event. This website will have links to the project that each organization is promoting. The Big Give website will be capable of receiving credit card donations and tracking cash donations so that a donor can easily give to the project of their choice. They can also divide their gift among many projects.

Leading up to the June 12 event, each organization will promote its own project. Then, on June 12, the community is invited to 24 hours of giving. Cash donations will be collected at various sites throughout the county. Online donations will be accepted. All donors will be given receipts for tax purposes.

Big Give events have been held all across Nebraska. The Albion community is in its sixth year of big giving events. Last year, Albion generated over $400,000. North Platte, Lexington and Gothenburg all have events that are very popular. But, Phelps County stands out. Last year, Phelps County donors generated $890,000 for their community.

Our expectations are modest for our first year, but the Keith County Foundation Fund is jumpstarting this event with $40,000 of matching funds.

In addition, KCFF will pay all of the overall expenses, advertising for the event and cost for the online platform.

Participating organizations will pay their expenses to create their webpage or website. They are free to do as much or as little promotion as they want.

It has yet to be determined exactly how the matching funds will be distributed. Likely, they will be given in proportion to the amount of funds donated to each project.

It is also likely that there will be a maximum amount given to any one project.

We still have many questions to answer before the event. Fortunately, we have six months in which to make preparations. We will involve participating organizations in many parts of the planning.

It is important to us that the full amount of each donation goes to the designated project with no handling fees. No deductions will be made for processing fees. That expense will be paid by KCFF unless the donor specifies they wish to pay it themselves.

We intend that every gift be tax deductible. That requires us to follow many IRS guidelines and will cause restrictions on which projects are eligible. All 501(c)(3) organizations are eligible. Government organizations, such as schools, villages and fire departments, are eligible. If an organization is not a 501(c)(3) designated organization, it may be possible for them to partner with another organization that is eligible such as a village or city or county. This has yet to be determined.

One Day with just One Goal

by Mike Petko

Does anyone know what two words come together to create the word “Community?”

The answer is Common plus Unity.

Those two words also best describe the culture here in Ogallala.

The Big Give will bring our community together to strengthen our presence and to prepare for our future. It also gives individuals, like me, the opportunity to help finance the project of their choice.

Whatever your passion is, whatever your vision is, this is an opportunity for you to finance that project through virtually any charitable organization.

KCFF is in the process of recruiting many of these charitable entities so that we may advance your cause through them.

Essentially, we are asking which of these organizations want more dollars!

The KCFF has also decided to be part of the Big Give in a meaningful way. We will lead the way with what we’re calling “The First 40.”

This means that, in order to get things kicked off and as a motivator to get this project started quickly on Big Give day, the KCFF is going to match all funds in June 12 up to $40,000.

The Big Give only happens one day per year – one day to help our favorite organizations show the Common Unity we have here in our Keith County community.
Planned Giving Workshop
By Ken Snyder

This article should start off with a lovely description of a local family whose generous lives and generous intentions resulted in a gift that changed this community. Keith County has a wonderful story like that, but I will not tell it. Last year we received an $8,000,000 gift and it rocked charitable grant making in Keith County. But, because the donor chose to be anonymous, we won’t give a name, won’t describe the life well lived and won’t tell what led to an enormous gift. The donor’s desire to be anonymous is sacred to KCFF, but I can tell you that that person’s planned gift resulted in an $8,000,000 deposit in the KCFF Unrestricted Endowment Fund. The payout from that gift helped the Kathy Lute Library, the Splash Pad, the Keith County Housing Development Corp., the Youth Inspired Philanthropy Project, CASA and many more projects. It will continue to make Keith County a Better Place to Work, Live, Raise Families and Prosper into the future for as long as we can imagine.

Obviously, this planned gift has made a tremendous difference for Keith County. It is a game changer. It is equally obvious that other planned gifts can have a large impact. It is easier for most of us to make a gift of assets at a time when they are no longer essential to our lives. That is the essence of a “Planned Gift.”

On October 6th KCFF and Perkins County Community Foundation Fund met with professional financial advisors from the area. Emily Sulzle, Assistant Director of Gift Planning with Nebraska Community Foundation, conducted the program on our behalf.

The goal of the meeting was to make it easier for everyone to make planned gifts to any charitable organization in Keith County. Charitable gifts benefit the whole community regardless of whether they are made to churches, schools, civic organizations or to KCFF.

Emily Sulzle said “The beauty of a planned gift is that it can be created to be convenient for the giver.” For instance, one can time a gift to be triggered by an event like the sale of property which makes cash available; or a milestone in life which lessens the financial needs like, when your children reach a certain age and one’s need for a life insurance policy is changed.

Emily described many ways that people find convenient to make planned gifts.

IRAs – Some of the rules governing taxes on IRAs have changed. They are now a less advantageous way to pass assets to loved ones. You may want to designate part of your IRA to a charity dear to your heart and use other more tax-friendly assets to provide for your family. Any amount inherited by the charity avoids any tax.

Wills – Making a gift by a will is one of the easiest ways to make a planned gift. Your financial advisor can help you include language in your will or trust specifying a gift be made to family, friends or charitable organization (KCFF or others).

- One can gift a specific dollar amount or asset.
- One can gift a percentage of your estate.
- One can gift from the balance or residue of your estate.
- One can make a beneficiary designation of certain assets.

Beneficiary Designation Gifts – You can designate a charitable organization as a beneficiary of a retirement, investment or bank account or your life insurance policy.

Many other gifting tools were described, Charitable Gift Annuity, Charitable Remainder Unitrust, and Charitable Lead Trust among them.

If you are interested in exploring a planned gift to KCFF or another charitable organization, you can visit with your professional financial advisor, or contact Emily Sulzle at esulzle@nebcommfound.org. To explore further on your own, go to the NCF website, planned giving section: https://nebcommfound.giftlegacy.com/?pageID=10.
Schilz Farms of Brule recently directed a $2,500 America’s Farmers Grow Communities donation, sponsored by Bayer Fund, to the Kathleen Lute Public Library. The newly completed library will use the funds for audio/visual equipment in the conference room.

“We appreciate the Schilz family for designating the library for this donation,” said Kendra Caskey, library director. “The new high definition computer-based TVs are Apple and Android compatible, and we’re really excited about all the programming opportunities this will open up for our patrons here in Keith County, from children to adults. We’ll be able to cast content directly from a smart phone or laptop on the Wi-Fi. So when we’re doing a class, for example, we can put up a YouTube video with directions on the big screens. We can use them for our children’s Friday movie afternoons. And humanities speakers or meeting hosts can use the screens for PowerPoints and videos.”

Amy Schilz said, “Schilz Farms is happy to support the library and grateful to the Bayer Fund for providing us the opportunity.”

The America’s Farmers Grow Communities program, sponsored by Bayer Fund, partners with farmers to provide grants to local nonprofits to help their communities. Through the program, farmers enroll for the chance to direct a $2,500 donation to a local eligible nonprofit organization of their choice. The America’s Farmers programs have given more than $57 million to rural America since 2010.

2020 KCFF Grant Recipients

By Angie Kolste

What an exciting time for Keith County! The Fund Advisory Committee of the K.C.F.F. was able to more than double the amount of grants given in 2019. This was made possible due to the amazing anonymous gift of $8.3 million and the generosity of so many donors supporting Keith County. We exceeded our two-to-one Building Capacity grant match, which also added more than $750,000 to our unrestricted endowment.

Each year as larger amounts of funding become available, the Fund Advisory Committee will be looking for grant requests with detailed plans in place to insure impact and sustainability.

This year, grant requests totaling more than $434,000 were received. Keeping in mind our mission to make high impact, sustainable grants, the following grants were awarded. These total $280,150.
2020 KCFF GRANT RECIPIENTS

Keith County Housing Development Corp. $80,000
Purchase property in city limits / building incentive

KIKC (Chamber) 8,750
Kids in Keith County event calendar: partnership between ORAC and Keith County Chamber of Commerce

Splash Pad 50,000
Playground project & splash pad

Trails West CASA 3,000
Bonding & restorative center project

Ogallala Women’s Resource Center 1,900
Educational program

Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library of Keith County 3,000
Monthly books for children in Keith County

Youth Inspired Philanthropy Project 10,000
Funding for Youth Philanthropy projects for up to 10 teams

Keith County Senior Center 5,000
Matching grant w/ Connecting Elders (Kitchen Remodel)

Keith County Sheriff’s Office 12,000
Lake Mac Beach Emergency Response ATV

TeamMates of Ogallala 1,000
Project materials for mentors and students

Paxton Volunteer Fire Department 25,500
15 Lead Heart Monitor: 2:1 matching grant

Keith County Communities for Kids (KCC4K) 30,000
Early childhood workforce development scholarships

Ogallala Public Schools (Homework Gap) 5,000
Matching grant to aid schools – virtual learning

Paxton Public Schools (Homework Gap) 5,000
Matching grant to aid schools – virtual learning

Big Give Matching Grants 40,000
Fundraising campaign – bringing together people who care with causes that matter

$280,150

Splash Pad Unity Project

WE ARE VERY CLOSE TO REACH OUR GOAL!

ONLY $30,000 LEFT TO RAISE

1ST ALL INCLUSIVE PLAYGROUND AND SPLASHPAD

Help Make a Difference
Donate Today

PAYABLE: KCFF OR OPSF
602 WEST 1ST. ST.
OGALLALA, NE 69153

What a great opportunity to give a gift of a donation this Christmas!

Keith County Foundation Fund is an affiliated fund of the Nebraska Community Foundation, a Section 501(c)(3) organization.
Charitable giving does not require great wealth

It requires generosity of spirit – the desire to share what you have for the benefit of others. So many of us have a desire to help in other ways – the challenge is how to best realize it.

Lifetime Legacy Endowment Donors since 2003
Memorials & Gifts To Our Legacy

Contributions & Memorials received from July 1, 2020, through November 30, 2020

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**Brune Cemetery Fund**
Draucker Funeral Home, Ogallala
Adams & Swanson Funeral Home, North Platte

**Cliff & Ruth Hermance Scholarship Fund**
Anonymous
United Health Group, Minneapolis, MN

**Collister Park Improvement**
Tin Cactus, LLC
Main Street Meats

**Library General Account**
Bayer Fund, America’s Farmer’s Grow Communities

**General Fund**
Stan & Lynn Roberts
Jerry & Candice Snow

**Legacy Endowment**
Lane & Kerri Anderson, Ogallala
Daryl & Jo Brown, Brule
Chester Dalzell, New York, NY
Dick & Joan Dudden, Venango
Eric Duhaichek, Ogallala
Al & Mary Faesser, Ogallala
Cliff & Shirley Knispel, Ogallala
Bart & Angie Kolste, Ogallala
Mark Perlinger, Paxton
Beverly Pollock, Ogallala
Jim & Deb Prange, Omaha
Susan Schilz, Ogallala
Ken & Chris Snyder, Paxton
21st Century Equipment, Ogallala

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**Pinnacle Bank, Ogallala**
Johnson, Bergmeier, Wolf & Cipperly, PC
Tod Neill Insurance Agency
Margaret Boesiger Living Trust

**In Memory of Justin Beckius**
Teri Elmhauseger, Ogallala
(Legacy Endowment)

**In Memory of Carl & Zada Jensen**
Thomas Jensen, Tucson, AZ
(Genral Fund)

**In Memory of Ruth Johnson**
Terry and Gwen Johnson, Ogallala
(Legacy Endowment)

**In Memory of Linda Lund**
John Lund, Ogallala
(Legacy Endowment)

**In Memory of Wanda Mercer**
Welove Assisted Living, Ogallala
(Legacy Endowment)

**In Memory of Waldo Smith**
Wel-Life of Ogallala
(Legacy Endowment)

**In Memory of Arta Thiem**
Wel-Life of Ogallala
(Legacy Endowment)

**In Memory of Delma Wilson**
Welove Assisted Living, Ogallala
(Legacy Endowment)

**In Memory of Mary Lynn Callen**
John Callen, Nebraska City
(Collister Park Renovation Fund)
Sandy Kehl, Henderson, NV
(Ogallala Regional Arts Council)
(Legacy Endowment Account)
Clark & Eileen Anderson, Lincoln
Sharrel Arterburn, Ogallala
Brad & Bonnie Bauer, Grand Island
Charles & Vickey Callen, Highlands Ranch, CO
Mr/Mrs. Jim Callen, Nebraska City
Max Callen, Hickman
Jeanne Christensen, Grand Island
Gerald Culp, Fort Collins, CO
Janet Hazen, Arthur
John Holscher, Ogallala
Sharon Holyoke, Omaha
Dr. Bart & Angie Kolste, Ogallala
Julie Mahaffy, Loveland, CO
James McQuillan, Elkhorn
Bud and Kim Morrell, Ogallala
Lisa Morris, Centennial, CO
Max Peterson, Ogallala
Dennis & Susan Schilz, Lemoynne
Courtney Schultz, Ogallala
Ken & Chris Snyder, Paxton
Rod & Bar Wolf, Ogallala
Clifford Welsh, Brule
Patricia Wall, Colorado Springs, CO

**In Memory of Wayne Fickes**
(legacy Endowment)
Michelle Schmid, Ogallala
John Foust, Ogallala
Steve & Elizabeth Johnson, Clay Center

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**Keith County Foundation Fund is an affiliated fund of the Nebraska Community Foundation, a Section 501(c)(3) organization.**
The Keith County Community Foundation Fund is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

All monetary gifts are tax deductible.

Mail to: KCFF
P.O. Box 104
Ogallala, NE 69153

KCFF Donation Form

Business/Organization/Group: ________________________________

Name(s): __________________________________________________

Street Address: _____________________________________________

City/State/Zip Code: _________________________________________

Email: ___________________________ Phone: ___________________

☐ I would like to make this donation anonymously.

☐ Optional: This gift is made: _____ In memory of  _____ In honor of

(Name) ____________________________________________________

Keith County Foundation Fund
P.O. Box 104 • Ogallala, NE 69153

Like us on Facebook!
Or visit us on the web at keithcountyfoundation.org
Email: info@keithcountyfoundation.org

Fiscal Year ending – June 30, 2020

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