



Wymore-Blue Springs Area Fund
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Wymore, NE 68466

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WYMORE-BLUE SPRINGS AREA FUND

CLIMBing to a brighter tomorrow.

2023 Annual Newsletter

A LETTER FROM OUR CHAIR

When I reflect on the past year the phrase that comes to mind is “coming together.” Some might think I’m talking about the McCandless Park Project since WBSAF surpassed its fundraising goal, and the inclusive playground will be installed late spring–early summer. However, I’m thinking more about how people of Southern Gage have come together:

- We have experienced the loss of many loved ones who have contributed so much to our communities this year. It is wonderful to have so much support to the family and friends left to mourn by lending an ear, sharing a special memory, or giving a hug when needed.
- Let’s not forget Sam Wymore Days. The day started perfectly with numerous events scheduled throughout but ended abruptly when severe weather struck. Citizens, farmers, and utility companies from surrounding towns came to our aid without hesitation to return to some normalcy.
- Barneston organized a successful town celebration bringing all ages together. Plans are being made for next year. Blue Springs had its annual celebration with a car show. At McCandless Park, birthdays were celebrated and ballgames were played utilizing the new concession stand and restrooms.
- People came together to honor ten veterans with a Quilt of Honor. We thank them for their service and sacrifice in serving our nation.
- One of WBSAF’s core values is collaborative—to work together to complete a project or task. We certainly have seen collaboration with other non-profit organizations to reach a common goal to improve the parks in our towns. WBSAF is grateful to Kiwanis and the Thomas Foundation for grants that will enable the final phase of the McCandless Park Project to be completed.

I hope you enjoy reading our newsletter and looking at the pictures from this past year. I encourage you to think of how YOU have come together to make a positive impact on our hometowns.

Serving Together,
Janice Cohorst, Wymore-Blue Springs Area Fund Chair

OUR MISSION

We encourage financial generosity and volunteer commitment to ensure we become and remain a thriving place to live, raise families, do business and enjoy the good life.

OUR VISION

Our vision is a proud, attractive community that builds on its history, continually works to ensure a thriving economic, educational, and recreational presence for today and plans to continue its powerful hometown appeal for generations to come.

OUR VALUES

Collaborative

Loyal

Invested

Motivated

Benevolent



LEAVE FIVE FOR OUR COMMUNITY TO THRIVE

The WBSAF Advisory Committee invites all community members to join us in seizing the immense charitable potential of Gage County as illustrated by the 2021 Transfer of Wealth Study recently released by Nebraska Community Foundation.

Study scenarios suggest that in Nebraska, more than \$100 billion will transfer from older to younger generations during the next decade. Over the next 50 years, the figure swells to \$950 billion. Scenarios are driven by conservative assumptions about the future, based on historical trends, census data, increasing agricultural land values, household income and other key indicators.

There is always an intergenerational transfer as parents pass away and leave



their estates to their children, but if the heirs no longer live where they grew up, those critical resources may leave our Nebraska hometowns entirely.

In Gage County alone, \$1.4 billion could transfer in the next 10 years. Importantly, many Nebraska counties, including Gage, are approaching or are already experiencing their peak transfer years. The study illustrates the real urgency to act now to ensure some of this wealth remains in our communities.

The study’s release marked the beginning of NCF’s Five to Thrive campaign, which urges us to consider leaving just 5% of our estate to our hometown. If just 5% of Gage County’s transfer of wealth were endowed locally, our communities would receive a \$70 million boost.

“The transfer of wealth is a significant pathway to strengthening our Southeastern Gage County communities,” said WBSAF chair Janice Cohorst. “The potential for substantial impact is right in front of us. When we all leave five, our hometowns thrive.”

Learn more about the transfer of wealth and how you can get involved in this massive opportunity at www.fivetothrive.org.

PEAK TRANSFER YEARS
2021–2045

10-YEAR TOW
\$1.4 billion

5% OF 10-YEAR TOW
\$70 million

As of November 2022

WBSAF NEWS AND UPDATES



We did it! Through many fundraising efforts we were able to complete phase four of the McCandless Park Project. The all-inclusive, ADA accessible playground will be a great addition to our communities, allowing children the chance to be able to play together, no matter their abilities. We look forward to the installation of this playground in the late spring of 2023.

We value our fundraising collaboration with Southern Gage Kiwanis and

recognize the many grants that have been awarded to Kiwanis and the City of Wymore to complete this ambitious community amenity. Grant money during this seven-year project has amounted to a total of \$149,521. Private donations have totaled \$203,434.

Once again, to everyone that helped achieve this goal through donations, memorials, or other gifts, thank you! We hope you will be well pleased with the refurbishment of our beautiful parks.

a judge of the needed placement and services. These volunteers have to drive often to attend meetings, visitations, and court appearances, which then has to be reimbursed to ensure the continued participation of volunteers. WBSAF granted to CASA of Gage County to aid in the retention and continued training of volunteer advocates serving the children of our area.

WBSAF wants to thank our endowment donors for their generosity. This affords us the opportunity to provide these high-impact grants and collaborate with our community partners. With more contributions to the endowment, impact grantmaking will grow and we can continue to keep our community vibrant.



CASA of Gage County provides family-centered care supporting and promoting court-appointed volunteer advocacy so that every abused or neglected child can be safe, establish permanence, and have the opportunity to thrive. A Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) is a volunteer who is appointed to a case to ensure the child involved has someone looking out for their best interests and is able to inform

The Wymore Food Market is a group that distributes grocery items to children of the Southern School District. This organization is supported and run by volunteer members of the Wymore Methodist, Our Savior's Lutheran, and State Line Lutheran Churches. The group is able to receive grocery items from the Lincoln Food Bank and distributes them monthly to any child enrolled in the Southern School District. Approximately 440 children and their families have benefited from this program to date and WBSAF is proud to support this important cause.



Neil Van Boening and Janice Cohorst connected with Nebraska Community Foundation in LaVista on November 17, for the NCF Annual Celebration and Training. The theme for this year's training was CONNECT—connecting to our dreams, connecting to our neighbors, connecting to our communities, and connecting to fellow ambitious Nebraskans across the state. The knowledge obtained, along with the eagerness and passion that our fellow Nebraskans have for their communities, is exhilarating and Neil and Janice returned home with the desire to make a positive impact on our southeast communities. We are looking forward to 2023's Annual Celebration in Kearney on November 9.



WBSAF NEWS AND UPDATES

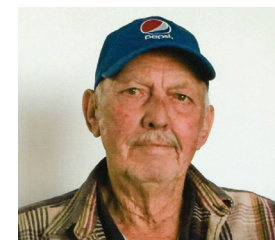


Big Give Gage is a 24-hour event put on by the Beatrice Community Hospital Foundation and the Gage County Foundation. There was a whopping \$329,000 raised to benefit Gage County's favorite charities! Big Give Gage's motto for 2022 was "Give Where You Live." WBSAF was fortunate to have 133 donors this year. We were first on the leader board for number of unique donors. Seventy-three of the 133 donors reside in Southern Gage County—that means that 60 donors live elsewhere but still maintain a strong connection to their hometown. That is amazing and certainly ties in with our push toward leaving "5 to Thrive" (see the back page of this newsletter). Our fund also ranked second on the leader board with dollars raised. In total, WBSAF received \$32,220 through the Big Give. These funds are going toward the improvements of our parks in Southern Gage County. In the four years that we have participated in Big Give Gage, we have raised \$129,577 for our local parks. WBSAF has been blessed with the generosity of so many and hope they will continue to think of our Southern Gage communities as their home.

In Memory Thank you to the following individuals and their families for memorial gifts to our fund. Their legacies and commitment to community will live on forever.



Forrest "Chuck" Shores
April 6, 1940–April 20, 2022



Vernon "Dale" Crumb
Oct. 22, 1942–Dec. 8, 2022



Ernest McKeever
June 9, 1936–Dec. 15, 2022

Even though the winter months were harsh on so many golf courses in our area, many golfers were able to chase around the little white ball on May 1. With proceeds totaling \$3,161, the collaboration between Southern Gage Kiwanis and WBSAF was deemed a success. Two thirds of the total amount raised was from local businesses for hole sponsorships. Profits from this annual event went toward the completion of the McCandless Park Project, specifically the ADA inclusive playground for local youth.



Wymore-Blue Springs Area Fund members sponsored several community activities in 2022. We planted flowers downtown in the barrels, sponsored the weekly community coffee during the summer months, took money at the gate during football games, and gave out hot chocolate during the annual treasure hunt in November.



McCandless Spooktacular was once again a huge success for our Park Improvement Project as well as the community. Over \$3,000 was raised to continue the revitalization of our area parks. Over 150 families and their children enjoyed a day full of trick-or-treating, games, and of course...CANDY! We are so thankful for the continued support of our event and booth sponsors. We look forward to this event every year, and every year, it gets better.

Thanks to the growth of our unrestricted endowment, managed by Nebraska Community Foundation and made possible by generous donors (like you), WBSAF is able to support the work of our community non-profits each year. The amount available for grantmaking is dependent upon the performance of the endowment and uses only the investment earnings, never the principal.

Each year WBSAF calls for grant applications from non-profit organizations that work to benefit the lives of those in our Wymore, Blue Springs, Barneston, Holmesville, and Liberty communities. The request for funds must align with WBSAF's mission "to encourage financial generosity and volunteer commitment to ensure we become and remain a thriving place to live, raise families, do business, and enjoy the good life." This year we had the fortune of granting to two local organizations in need of additional funds to continue their work and support our area.