

Community Development Corner
Dec. 26th, 2018

We are heading into the final days of the Red Cloud Community Foundation Fund's (RCCFF) Rural Development Philanthropy (RDP) Challenge. Every dollar RCCFF raises by New Year's Eve will be matched 50% by the Sherwood Foundation. As of this writing (Dec. 20th) we have received 533 unique donations from 238 different donors. While we have had someone step up to provide a "Capstone Donation" that will ensure we reach our \$200,000 goal, we think it would be a tremendous accomplishment to push the number of unique donors up to 250 by the end of the year. Doing so will also lessen the burden on our capstone donor, which will allow them to donate to other community needs. As we wind down the holiday season, I encourage you to make one last gift by investing in the future of your hometown or favorite place to visit. Donations can be made online at <https://www.nebcommfound.org/give/red-cloud-community-foundation-fund/> or dropped off at my office or given to any committee member.

RCCFF is going to experience a bit of change starting next year. Dennis Hansen will step down from his role as Chair but will remain an officer, assuming the role of Treasurer. Our new Chair is Ashley Olson, while Danny Bengé was elected Vice Chair. Ashley Armstrong will remain in the role of Secretary. This transition should be seamless, but I encourage you to refer to Danny as Mr. Vice Chairman when you stop in at Hometown Market. My role, if you're curious, will be as an "Ex Officio" member due to being a quasi-employee. I also want to take a moment to thank our other members: Ryan Sherwood, Jill Swartzendruber, Stacie Heldt, Clint Shipman, Adam Vetter, Kory McCracken, Jay Yost, and Jay Hall. Their efforts helped ensure that we were successful with the RDP Challenge and they will be vital to helping us figure out how to maximize our ability to do good work in the community going forward. I look forward to working with them as we move forward with the Garber Hotel Project, making Red Cloud an even more attractive place for recreation, building a deeper connection with the school, and whatever additional projects we take on. I want to take a moment to thank Jay Hall as well as Jay will be stepping down from the committee. Jay has been a steady presence on the Foundation for years and has been a critical part of its growth over the last decade. Thank you, Jay. If you are interested in joining the committee, please speak to me or Dennis soon as Red Cloud/Guide Rock is full of great candidates and we have many of you in mind.

Since this is my last column of the year, it's probably time to reflect on what we've accomplished—and we have accomplished a great deal (\$300K for our endowment; TVCDC; Heritage Tourism; Indian Creek Pond Dock & Improvements; 2018 Nebraska Showcase Community Award; \$9000 in scholarships from BRAN [I'll write an update how to apply for that next month or February]; scholarships for traditional and non-traditional students, etc). But what I'd rather do is start to layout a vision for the future of Red Cloud that goes beyond our present projects. I'm more confident than ever that the Garber Hotel will happen and that there will be significant development that emerges from its completion. I'm excited about some of the transitions happening downtown and about exploring some ideas to help fill the empty bays of the Cather Center and elsewhere downtown. It is not appropriate to talk about those ideas in public at this point or why I'm confident about the Garber Hotel, so I will just implore you all to have faith in us. We've accomplished some pretty impossible tasks in Red Cloud over the last decade and we will continue to make the impossible possible. One thing that may seem impossible at this point that I would really love to make reality at some point is getting a movie theatre back in Red Cloud. I see that, a Nebraska/local products store, and a learning/visitor center as things that need to happen sooner rather than later. These are all just dreams at this point, but I would challenge you to think during these relatively quiet winter months about what we need to do to get a movie theatre in Red Cloud. I also

challenge you to dream even bigger and dream about what you want downtown Red Cloud to look like 20-30 years from now. As always, I'd love to hear your ideas. Happy New Year, everyone!