

Community Development Corner
Oct. 31st, 2018

The Red Cloud Community Foundation Fund (RCCFF) needs your help and as a board member and Red Cloud native who is concerned with the future of our community, I want to devote some time explaining why. Time is running out with our Rural Development Philanthropy Challenge from the Sherwood Foundation. The Sherwood Foundation will donate up to \$100,000 to RCCFF if we raise \$200,000 on our own by December 31st. Combined, this would add \$300,000 to our unrestricted Legacy Endowment—a fund established through a generous donation by Frank & Shirley Sibert several years ago. Like a community savings account, an unrestricted endowment can be used to support community projects, programs, and people. The endowment is a permanent fund that will be held and invested in perpetuity, creating an asset for the community that will remain for generations to come. A contribution to an endowment is a “forever” gift that increases over time, While RCCFF grants out a portion of the income earned by the unrestricted endowment each year, the principal—and your gift—is left intact to continue to build the fund. Long-term, the endowment will assure financial support for community needs we cannot even vision today. This provides unlimited possibilities to future generations. To illustrate this point, if we were to imagine a fund starting out with a \$300,000 balance on Jan. 1st, 2019, we could reasonably expect to grant out \$330,000 and still have \$400,000 in our fund to invest by Jan. 1st, 2039. Since we already have the generous donation from the Siberts and the matching money from their challenge, our fund balance and ability to grant gifts will be even greater.

So far, we have raised \$125,000 for the current challenge. Since Sherwood will give us \$1 for every \$2 we raise, that means we’ve actually raised about \$187,500. This means we’re leaving about \$37,500 of Omaha money on the table if we do not raise the final \$75,000 before years’ end. If you’re interested in the future of Red Cloud, I strongly urge you to consider making a donation.

Now comes the part of my plea where I would usually point out all of our recent successes, such as the The Valley Child Development Center, all the work connected to Heritage Tourism and downtown development, the Indian Creek Pond dock and restocking, and our continued support of scholarship and other community needs. Yet I recognize that some of these projects are probably not supported by everyone in the community and, perhaps that makes you a little reticent to give. The great thing about building an endowment like this is that while we will continue to support some of the aforementioned projects, being able to grant out an additional half million dollars over a 20 year period means that we can support additional projects. Whatever we support will ultimately come down to a board vote, but I envision us being able to support more recreation and small business projects and to provide matching funds on grant applications for large-scale projects. I envision RCCFF being able to help give small businesses a boost, and I can promise you that our Recreation & Health Committee will be looking for ways to get the community more active—be it through a trails system, bike paths, or some other means. I see this fund as giving us money to support a Youth version of our foundation and help us get high schoolers more involved in community service and feeling more connected to their hometown. In short, the additional money from this endowment will enable us to grant more money out—to hear new ideas from the entire community, to broaden the scope of what we can support, and to make us more nimble in responding to community needs as they arise.

If you are interested in supporting RCCFF—during this campaign or in the future—please give me or any FAC member (Dennis Hansen, Kory McCracken, Danny Benge, Jill Swartzendruber, Ryan Sherwood, Adam Vetter, Ashley Olson, Ashley Armstrong, Jay Hall, Jay Yost, Stacie Heldt, Clint Shipman) a call. I can

be reached at 402-746-4065. You can find out more information about the campaign too by searching for us on the Visit Red Cloud website. If you're interested in making a donation now, you can send correspondence to: RCCFF, PO Box 263, Red Cloud, NE 68970. There are a variety of ways to give other than cash that have tax advantages. Call us to learn more about how making a gift of grain or livestock can reduce your taxable income and still allow you to deduct costs of production. If you are over 70 ½ and have a Required Minimum Distribution from an IRA, you can donate it to a qualified charity and get a tax deduction as well.

On a side note, I am curious to gauge response to the new Nebraska Tourism Commission marketing slogan: "Nebraska: Honestly, It's Not For Everyone." As an executive officer of the Nebraska Travel Association and since I work in tourism in Red Cloud, I am curious to hear what you think. Just like our, "America's Most Famous Small Town" slogan, the new state tourism slogan is "not for everyone." Just remember, however, that the intended audiences for both campaigns are outsiders not locals. They are not meant to be a state or community motto necessarily—that's what Chambers of Commerce and government are for. They are meant to provoke interest. That said, it's still okay to not like them.

Speaking of the Chamber of Commerce, November is a busy shopping month and a vital time for local businesses, many of whom will have to weather low sales in January and February. That's why I strongly encourage you to take advantage of the specials and discounts you'll find at the Chamber's Shopping Extravaganza on Tuesday, November 20th. Contact Bridget Daehling and Stacy Rasser at the Gary Thompson Agency for more details. I also strongly encourage you to skip Black Friday and Cyber Monday sales in favor of shopping locally on Small Business Saturday (Nov. 24th) and giving back to your community on Giving Tuesday (Nov. 27th). We will not have a formal event for Small Business Saturday this year, but many retailers will be open and will carry over discounts from the Shopping Extravaganza. Even if they don't, I strongly encourage you to shop locally on whatever day it is that you have time to go shopping this holiday season.