

The Intentional Tourist
by Jarrod McCartney
September 7, 2022

As the pages of the calendar turn to the Fall months my mind begins to turn more towards fundraising and preparing for 2023. Chief among my fundraising concerns is the Red Cloud Community Fund (RCCF)'s September Month of Giving. The event has raised \$39,000 for local causes since 2020. September grants have supported the Recreation Trail, Heritage Tourism Development, Illian Ballfields, The Valley Child Development Center, RCCF's Youth Group, Hotel Garber, Webster County Senior Services, Cherry Corner Estates, and the Historic Preservation Commission. As of this writing (Aug. 31st), we have raised \$12,500 for 2022 and will be attempting to match that for a total of \$25,000! If you would like to help, please send a check to RCCF, PO Box 263, Red Cloud, NE 68970, donate online at www.nebcommfound.org/give/red-cloud-community-fund/ or contact any RCCF member.

I also want to announce that the Hotel Garber Groundbreaking Ceremony will be s on Friday, October 7th. Between the Potter Block, the work Dennis & Sally Hansen are doing on their building sites, and the restoration work at the Cather Childhood Home, Red Cloud's downtown will be busy. With the possibility of Downtown Revitalization CDBG funding for storefront and sidewalk repair on the horizon and downtown streets possibly being replaced in 2025, construction will be a common theme for the next few years. It's a sign of a place that's flourishing. Red Cloud Heritage Tourism Development (RCHTD) believes that improving downtown will lead to positive, incremental changes throughout the community, making Red Cloud a more attractive place to live, work, and visit.

RCHTD's focus is on leveraging tourism assets to improve the quality of life in Red Cloud. When the Hotel Garber is completed, the impact of our work will be obvious. But our impact is already being felt in ways that go beyond the more than \$11 million in funding we've had a hand in generating since 2015 (a \$107 to \$1 return on investment for the City and RCCF). New businesses we recruited like The Corner Nook and Twisted Petal are expanding options for everyone. We also played a role in businesses like Hometown Market, Kenny's Hardware & Home Center, Integrity Rehab, Juan's Bar & Grill, and even South Central State Bank getting established or picking Red Cloud as their home. We helped Fat Fox's get the resources they needed to transition from a storefront to a food truck. Businesses like The M Guest House, Back Alley Bicycles, On the Brix, 345 Red Cloud Lodging, Repeat Street Thrift Store, Abundant Life Honey, Repeat Street Thrift Store, the YWCA School of Dance, and others have benefitted from Heritage Tourism related development, whether that be from tourists directly, access to storefronts, or being able to sell their products in other stores.

RCHTD realizes that tourism is not the end all be all of existence. Likewise, there's more to quality of life than a vibrant downtown. Like most of you, we want nice things for everyone. We live here too. Next month, I will write about ways you can get involved and get organized to make the changes you want to see happen.