



*of Giving Back to the
Kearney Area*

**Fall
Edition**

“CONNECTING PEOPLE WHO CARE WITH CAUSES THAT MATTER”

2015 Issue #15

Retired Board Members Honored for Growing the Community

Throughout the ages, trees have stood as strong symbols of life. The Kearney Area Community Foundation acknowledges retired board members by planting a tree in their honor. Just as a tree provides for its community by creating shade and making it a more beautiful place to live, our retired board members have been dedicated to making our community a better place today and for future generations.

For the past eight years, a tree was planted in the community as a token of appreciation to retiring board members and as a gift back to the community. Earlier this fall, a tree was planted at the Archway for the 2015 retired board members: Roxanne Bascom, Susan Bigg and Teresa Ibach. These women shared their talents and made a lasting impact; all three ladies were ready to help with any project, always learning new things about their community’s needs. Like others that served before them, they used their experience, enthusiasm and energy to help the Kearney Area Community Foundation meet emerging community needs. Since our inception 20 years ago, more than 73 community members have served (or are currently serving) on our board. We are grateful for their contributions —sharing their time, talent and treasure over the years.

As with all our past board members, they are never truly retired. We have active board alumni that still help the foundation with projects. When you drive around Kearney and look at the many trees, think about those people who helped make this town so great.

Our Mission

The Kearney Area Community Foundation enhances the quality of life in the Kearney Area by promoting the spirit of charitable giving and effectively responding to the community’s needs.

About Us

The Kearney Area Community Foundation began in 1995 to provide a platform for people to give back to their community. Today, the foundation partners with numerous organizations and individuals to support 200+ funds providing scholarships, enhancing parks, promoting education, encouraging community leadership and helping those in need.

KACF Board Trees Planted Around Kearney

- 2008 - Harmon Park
- 2009 - Harmon Park
- 2010 - Peterson Senior Activity Center
- 2011 - Kearney Area Children’s Museum
- 2012 - Kearney Public Library
- 2013 - Nebraska Firefighters’ Museum
- 2014 - Fountain Hills Park
- 2015 - The Archway



Roxanne Bascom



Susan Bigg



Teresa Ibach

Thank you for your dedication and service to the Kearney Area!

GIVE WHERE YOU LIVE SPOTLIGHT: The Kids & Dreams Foundation

Aaron and Kerri Bly have been blessed with five awesome children including their son, Trae, who has autism. Over the past several years, they have been able to find many different resources and options to help him progress. Some of these solutions are not widely known to families experiencing autism or to the general public. Due to their family's life experiences and social issues like bullying, they felt that they could help make a difference for other families by sharing what they have learned.

The Kids & Dreams Foundation was created to provide support to children of all ages (and their families) that are experiencing autism and the challenges that come with it, including bullying. The Blys wanted to enrich the lives of the kids by locating and providing the resources to help each one reach their full potential.

"Kids & Dream's motto is 'Together we WILL make a difference', and KACF has been a big part of allowing that to happen."

Aaron Bly

Aaron and Kerri started the foundation fund at the Community Foundation back in 2013 and knew that they would need help with some of the "behind the scene" aspects of running an organization. After asking several people in the area about how to go about the process of starting a nonprofit, "Every one of them suggested utilizing the Kearney Area Community Foundation (KACF)", Aaron tells us.



Aaron feels KACF has been a huge help to the Kids & Dreams Foundation and has helped him with any questions or needs that he had. He explains, "They freed me up to concentrate on the vision I have for our foundation and to continue to put projects/events in place to help other children and families. We say all the time at Kids & Dreams that 'Together we WILL make a difference' and KACF has been a big part of allowing that to happen. We truly appreciate their partnership."

Operation Shine Camp was possible due to Give Where You Live

As a new nonprofit organization, they had no idea what to expect during their first **Give Where You Live** fundraiser last year. The Blys and board members said they would have been thrilled to have raised \$300 on that day. They state they were "blown away" by the donations and support they received. "It will go down as one of the biggest days in the young history of the Kids & Dreams Foundation," Aaron reports. Their wild success of raising thousands of dollars during **Give Where You Live** gave them the opportunity to have awareness outings around Central Nebraska, host an anti-bullying speaker to talk to area schools and hold their first ever "Operation Shine Camp" in June for kids on the autism spectrum age 7-12 years old. The camp was such a big success and life-changing experience for everyone involved. The **Give Where You Live** campaign was monumental for the launch and continued growth of the Kids & Dreams Foundation. As a new nonprofit, they were able to tell their story and bring awareness to their mission. Aaron says "This event gave us the confidence that we were on the right track and that our nonprofit could make a difference!"

GIVE WHERE YOU LIVE ON DECEMBER 3 - BIGGER AND BETTER THIS YEAR!

This is the third year that the Kearney Area Community Foundation is hosting the Give Where You Live 24-hour campaign for 146 local nonprofit organizations, helping all of them reach new donors and educate the public on their mission, programs and desire to improve the quality of life in the Kearney Area.

You can make gifts in person at our office on December 3, between 8 a.m. and 7 p.m. or online until midnight with a credit card by visiting givewhereyoulive.razoo.com.



Grants Given to Nonprofits to Benefit the Community

The Kearney Area Community Foundation gave out **\$11,352** in grants to nine Kearney area nonprofits during the late summer grant cycle. The Kearney Building for Tomorrow Endowment allows the Foundation to be responsive to current community needs by giving out grants twice a year. Grant applications are due February 1st and August 1st each year. The Foundation is proud to help nonprofits of all different sizes with important needs.

American Legion Post #52 (\$2,000)

Purchase a new refrigerator to complete the kitchen remodel at the American Legion Building.

Buffalo County Youth Advisory Board (YAB) (\$1,000)

Supporting a youth leadership summit at UNK.

Double R Horse Rescue (\$500)

Provide feed for rescued abused and neglected horses.

Faith Christian School (\$1,068)

Provide startup kits to create a robotics club and offer a summer camp that is open to all area youth.

Grace Fellowship (\$1,000)

Support the "Big Igloo Freedom Fest" on July 4 - keeping it free to the public

Kids & Dreams Foundation (\$1,000)

Assist with their "Operation Shine" special needs camp, for children 7-12 with autism or related conditions.

Nebraska Teachers of the Year (\$250)

Provide expenses for the speakers at the Kearney conference for local educators.

Pleasanton Lions Club (\$2,500)

Assist in adding handicap accessible restrooms, heat and running water to the concessions stand in Pleasanton.



Double R Horse Rescue believes every horse deserves a second chance at life and has helped rehome 400 horses.

Sahling Scholarship Benefits Students in a Growing Industry



The Kearney Area Community Foundation (KACF) is pleased to announce the receipt of a generous \$225,000 donation by John and Sonia Sahling of Kearney, to create an endowed scholarship fund for non-traditional students. The scholarship fund will annually provide five \$2000 scholarships to local non-traditional students getting a CDL (Commercial Driver's License) through the Nebraska Safety Center at the University of Nebraska Kearney (UNK). "Sonia and I believe in giving back to our community that has been so good to us over the years. We understand that there is a growing need in the Kearney area to provide education for workers in our community that want to better themselves by improving their skills. We hope this endowed scholarship fund will provide assistance to community members forever," said donor John Sahling.

KACF Executive Director Judi Sickler stated, "I love the Sahlings' vision. By providing nontraditional students with a training opportunity, they can begin to earn better wages. By getting a CDL, it improves the quality of life for those that want to live and work in Kearney. In return, this has a ripple effect, by helping local businesses and employers retain and attract the skilled labor they need to be successful and grow their business. The need for this type of nontraditional scholarship was brought to the Sahlings and without hesitation they were onboard. Kearney is fortunate to have so many great donors that quickly tackle needs in our community."



**KEARNEY AREA
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION**

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10TH ANNUAL
CELEBRATION OF

Giving

During our annual dinner, the "Celebration of Giving" Philanthropy Awards are presented to individuals, families and businesses that have encouraged and supported charitable stewardship in the Kearney area. At the recent Celebration of Giving dinner, three awards were given in the categories of Volunteer, Corporate and Philanthropist.

This year the Foundation was honored to recognize Dr. David and Lorma Wiebe with the philanthropist award; Charlie and Beverly Pickens for the Volunteer Award and Schrock Chiropractic was given the Corporate Award. Artwork for the awards was created by local artist Rich Schuessler.

We want to thank the more than 200 people that attended our dinner. If you weren't able to join us, you can see the video tributes for these award winners on our website www.kearneyfoundation.org.

Kearney Area Community Foundation

2015-2016 Board of Directors :

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Bob Huddleston, Vice Chair

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Jasmine Thompson and Garrett Vetter

Don't forget to GIVE WHERE YOU LIVE