

Hillsboro foundation awards nearly \$16,000 in grants

■ Thirteen non-profit causes receiving funds.

BY DON RATZLAFF
The Free Press

Hillsboro Community Foundation board members presented grant checks totaling nearly \$16,000 Feb. 14 to 13 area public-service organizations and causes.

The presentation occurred during halftime of the Hillsboro High School boys' basketball game against Hesston.

This was the second year grants were awarded through the Kansas Health Foundation Fund, which was established about four years ago and has grown through annual contributions to the required \$150,000.

The other 10 grants came through the Hillsboro Area Impact Fund.

Following are the recipients of this year's grants, with an explanation from each organization about its work and its intention for the money.

■ **Big Brothers Big Sisters of Marion County, \$1,000.**

"Bigs in Schools" is a one-on-one mentoring program that matches at-risk children with carefully screened, caring volunteers, many of who are high school students.

■ **Circles Marion County, \$2,000.** This initiative to end poverty through relationships between those with low resources and those with adequate resources will establish a second Circles site in 2014.

■ **City of Hillsboro youth/bowling center, \$1,000.**

The goal of the project is to provide a venue for community youth to spend free time in a safe environment. It also will provide a home for the Tabor

College inter-collegiate bowling team and a facility for community bowling leagues.

■ **Families and Communities Together, \$1,000.**

Through Hillsboro Area Family Financial Assistance Fund, FACT provides emergency financial assistance to families that reside in the USD 410 school district. Payments are used for utilities, rent, medical services or other critical services.

■ **Hillsboro Elementary School after-school program, \$1,000.** The program provides healthy, enriching and emotionally developing activities for at-risk students between first and sixth grade who may be without adult supervision. The grant will help continue this service and provide financial assistance

for students to participate in community activities.

■ **Chess Guild** (kindergarten through 12th grade), \$250. The funds will cover the entry fee

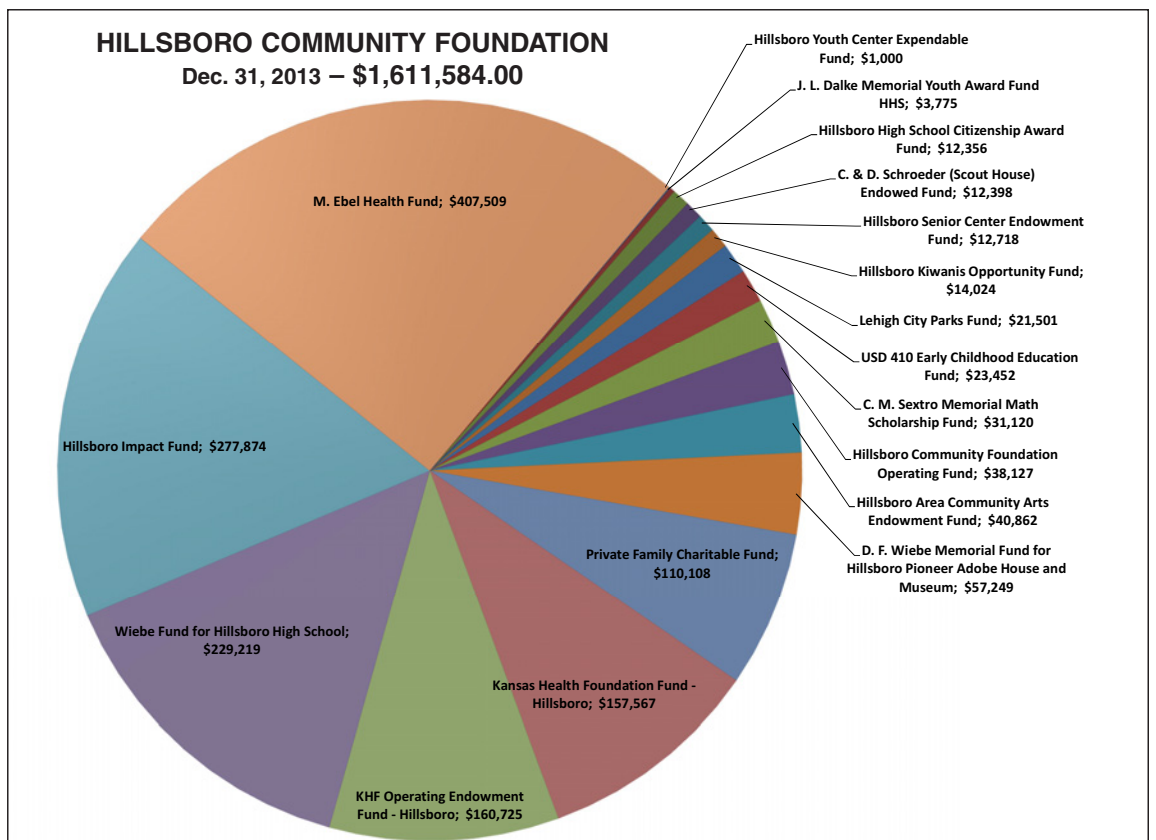
for 12 students to participate in the state championship chess tournament.

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Chess Guild sponsor Leah Rose (second from left) and members of her team show off the grant award of \$250 they received from Hillsboro Community Foundation board member Bryce Wichert (far left) during Friday's presentation. The money will be used to cover the entry fee for 12 members to compete in the state tournament.



Investing in early childhood development is the key

Marion County and USD 410 is blessed to have wonderful early childhood programs for our youngest learners. These begin at birth with our Parents as Teachers program. At age 3, children are eligible to enter our Head Start / Preschool program at Hillsboro Elementary School. At age 5 or 6, children begin Kindergarten. Research is clear that these early years of learning are vitally important to brain development, social awareness, motor skills, speech, reading, math, and writing. James Heckman, Nobel Laure-

ate in Economics, said, "The best way to improve the American workforce in the 21st Century is to invest in early childhood education."

A recent study by University of Virginia researchers indicated kindergarten classrooms have changed dramatically since the late 1990's. There is a heightened focus on academics and particularly literacy. In 1998, 31% of teachers indicated most children should learn to read while in kindergarten. By 2006, 65% of teachers agreed with this statement. Also dur-

ing this time, the number of teachers doubled that believe children who begin formal reading and math instruction before kindergarten will do better in school.

The USD 410 Early Childhood Fund, through the Hillsboro Community Foundation, has four distinct goals:

- Enhance school readiness for children from birth to 5 years
- Help all children read on grade level by age seven
- Improve the quality of life through enriched parenting practices, early screening, and quality care
- Provide an economic benefit to our communities because

of healthier children and families

This year, the Parents as Teachers program of Marion County is serving five additional families from USD 410 because of the generous donations of several people to the Early Childhood Fund. It is the goal of the Early Childhood Fund to continue expansion of PAT services for USD 410 families. \$1,000 will provide PAT services to one family for a year. Consider a donation to the USD 410 Early Childhood Education Fund. Well-designed early childhood interventions have been found to generate a return to society ranging from \$1.80 to \$17.07 for each dollar spent.

Children's Dental Program established by HCF to meet health needs

Every day teachers in our community work with students that have needs beyond education, but that impact their ability to learn on a daily basis. A few years ago a former teacher left an estate gift of around \$350,000 for the Hillsboro Community Foundation to meet health needs of children. From this gift, the Marga Ebel Children's Dental Program was established by the Hillsboro Community Foundation in partnership with USD 410. The decision to assist children with their dental needs came from the research that has shown that tooth decay is the single most common childhood disease nationwide.

The program is in its second year and each year about \$18,000 goes into the program to service the underserved dental needs of students in our community. The program is designed to assist children that have no dental insurance to cover the out of pocket cost that would otherwise be a hardship. It also offers vouchers to children regardless of income that have a need. The service provider is Hillsboro Dental Care which provides quality services at a reduced rate. Numerous families have been reached out to. The program has had around 16 participants. Other children and families have been served by assisting them to find providers that accept their dental insurance, offering transportation and education.

The impact of the program has been visible and measura-

ble. USD 410 School Nurse Alissa Unruh said a few students that are participating in the program were frequently seen with medical complaints last year and accruing absences. After their dental needs were identified and taken care of their complaints of illness and absences decreased measurably.

Statistics have shown that children often have an unmet healthcare needs or receive delayed care because of worry of the cost of care. Many children have never been seen by a dentist. The children of our community are benefiting greatly from a program like this. Their bodies are healthier and better able to learn when their mouths are not in pain or dealing with infection that impacts the rest of their body and may be life-threatening. Their self-esteem improves when damaged teeth are repaired. It is a goal of the program to assure that all students have the opportunity to reach their full potential. It is essential that we work together as a community to identify the needs of our children. Unruh said "I am fortunate to get to see the kids that the program benefits. When you have a smiling child run up and wrap their arms around you and tell you that their teeth do not hurt anymore, you know this community is on the right track."

If you would like more information please ask for the school nurse at 620-947-3981 or pick up applications at any USD 410 School.

2013-14 DONORS

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*The Hillsboro Community Foundation is an affiliate of
Central Kansas Community Foundation.*

HILLSBORO COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FUNDS

Building Our Community By Connecting Donors Who Care With Causes That Matter

Here is a listing of funds established within the Hillsboro Community Foundation. Each of these is open for additional contributions:

Enclosed is my/our contribution to the:

- ☐ Hillsboro Area Impact Fund – an undesignated endowed fund established to enhance the quality of life for all residents of the Hillsboro area. Grants are distributed annually to deserving community groups through an application and selection process.
- ☐ Clariece and Dean Schroeder Endowed Fund for Scout House Maintenance - The Scout House is home to local scouting programs and is used in the community for receptions, reunions, and public meetings. This fund will provide for ongoing maintenance of this attractive log structure.
- ☐ Marga Ebel Health Fund – an estate designated for the health and welfare of the children in the community.
- ☐ Kansas Health Foundation Fund –this fund will enhance and encourage healthy lifestyles in Hillsboro and surrounding areas through education, recreation, and all things connected to good health.
- ☐ Hillsboro High School Citizenship Award Fund – established so each year funds will be used exclusively for the HHS Citizenship Award. I
- ☐ Hillsboro Senior Center Endowment Fund – earnings will provide for support of ongoing programming and facilities of the local senior center.
- ☐ Hillsboro Community Foundation/Kansas Health Foundation Operating Fund – earnings support operational and promotional expenses of Health Foundation to assure stability for service to future generations.
- ☐ C.M. Sextro Memorial Math Scholarship Fund – each year funds are awarded to qualifying HHS graduates who have indicated a desire to further their education with a curriculum involving higher mathematics.
- ☐ John A. and Harriet Kizler Wiebe Fund for Hillsboro High School – designated gift for HHS.
- ☐ Hillsboro Kiwanis Opportunity Fund – an endowed gift fund supporting charitable activities and designed to enhance the quality of life in the Hillsboro and surrounding communities.
- ☐ Hillsboro Area Community Arts Endowment Fund – established to promote and enrich our community through various expressions of the arts.
- ☐ David F. Wiebe Memorial Fund for Hillsboro Pioneer Adobe House and Museum – Endowed fund to ensure the future of the House and Museum and to preserve the history of the Mennonite culture.
- ☐ USD 410 Early Childhood Education Fund – Created to support the mission of early childhood education, to enhance school readiness for children birth to age 5.
- ☐ Lehigh Parks Endowment – established in 2008 with funds from the sale of Lehigh Senior Center, earnings will be used to enhance public areas in and around Lehigh.
- ☐ Hillsboro Youth Center Expandable Fund.
- ☐ Jerry L. Dalke Memorial Youth Award Fund - for HHS.
- ☐ Expanding Our Influence Stadium Campaign Fund

Hillsboro Community Foundation / P.O. Box 273 / Hillsboro, KS 67063

hillsborocommunityfoundation@gmail.com

Kathy Decker, Executive Director, 620-947-0170

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Signature, Date _____

- ☐ I/we would like more information about including Hillsboro Community Foundation in my/our estate plan.
- ☐ I/we want information on the 10K Club

Mail to:
Hillsboro Community
Foundation
P.O. Box 273
Hillsboro, KS 67063



Continued from front page

■ **Hillsboro Elementary School / Tabor College School-to-Farm, \$2,000.** This project will serve three student populations: elementary, high school and Tabor College. The funds will help get the project started and acquire a portable henhouse to be able to introduce chickens as the initial farm project.

■ **Hillsboro Museums, \$1,200.** The funds will provide "A Day in the One-Room Kreutziger Country School" experience for teachers and students in grades three and four as they study a unit on prairie pioneer days.

■ **Hillsboro Police K-9 Unit, \$500.** The funds will be used to pay vet bills, shots, checkups and dog food. The canine plays an important role in fighting crime and battling drug use and sales in Hillsboro and surrounding communities.

■ **Hillsboro Senior Center, \$2,500.** The center serves the communities of Lehigh and Hillsboro. These funds will be used to replace old counter tops in the kitchen. Meals are served five days a week.

■ **Marion County 4-H Council, \$500.** This grant will provide funds to send older 4-H youth to a leadership workshop. This will enable the older youth to help the younger 4-H youth develop new skills.

■ **Marion County 4-H Endowment Fund,**



Members of the Hillsboro Community Foundation board of directors, hand Hillsboro Impact Fund checks to the following community representatives beginning top row, from left to right: Steve Noble to Marilyn Enszt and Joyce Barkman of Hillsboro Senior Center; Brad Richards of the Hillsboro Police Department K-9 Unit from Steve Noble; Mary Regehr of Hillsboro Museums from Todd Jost; second row, left to right; Nancy Pihl of Marion County 4H Council and Marion County 4H Endowment Fund from Deb Ewert; Hillsboro Elementary School/ Tabor College Farm-to-School representatives show off their check; Tabor Bowling and Hillsboro Recreation from Bonnie Funk; third row, from left to right: Cynthia Fleming to Mark Rogers of Circles Marion County; Larry Payne representing City of Hillsboro Youth/Bowling Center from Randy Wiens; Bryce Wichert to Hillsboro Elementary School After-School Program, Mike Moran; and bottom row, left to right; Randy Whisenhunt to Jackie Rice representing the Marion County Big Brothers and Sisters; Robert Loewen presents to Ashley Gahn and Tamara Hinerman of Families and Communities Together (FACT). Thirteen area entities received checks totaling nearly \$16,000.

\$500. This grant will offer larger scholarships enabling more youth the opportunity to attend camp. This will especially help families with multiple children.

■ **Hillsboro Recreation Commission and Tabor College, \$2,500.** This grant through the Kansas Health Foundation Fund will provide a touch-pad timing system for the Tabor swim team and Hillsboro Recreation Com-

mission summer youth team. The two entities are working together to purchase the system for practices and meets of both programs. The HRC program serves youth within a 10- to 30-mile radius of Hillsboro. The program normally enrolls 40 to 75 youth for swim team. With the touch-pad system, HRC will be able to host swim meets with fewer volunteers.

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