“Take me out to the ball game; take me out to the crowd…” We all know the song that accompanies America’s favorite past-time. You can envision the bright white chalk lines on the baseball diamond, smell the fresh cut turf of the outfield, and hear the CRACK of a baseball bat making contact with the ball.

The Redhawk Academy started in Garden City in 2015 as an 18 year old and under summer baseball team. The Academy was started by a group of founders, including Marcus Sabata, General Manager of the Garden City Wind professional baseball team. In its first year, the team had 25 players tryout, this year they added a 16 year old and under division to the team and saw 50-60 players at tryouts. The hope of the Redhawk Board of Directors is that consistently more players will be seen at tryouts every year. Team members come from several area towns including Garden City, Lakin and Holcomb.

What are players without their coaches? The coaches of both Redhawk teams are well versed in what it takes to be successful in baseball. Both coaches played baseball in college, and the coach of the older team played alongside and was coached by Dayton Moore, General Manager of the Kansas City Royals. The 18 year olds finished the season 16-6 and were in the Semi-Final round of the Hays, Kansas City and Garden City tournaments and ended in 4th place of the Colorado Springs round-robin. The 16 year old team ended the season 7-12, which is pretty good considering they were a new team this year and their best hitter injured his arm early in the season and was out for the rest of the summer.

The Redhawk Academy is located on Fulton Street, some may remember the building housing the Armory, others including Sean Thayer, President of the Redhawk Academy Board of Directors, remember a rent-to-buy appliance mart whose commercials included a bald man with black

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Grants and Programs

Scholarship Reception

WKCF held its first Scholarship Reception on May 26th at the Southwind Country Club. This was a great opportunity to match donors / fund holders with the students receiving the respective scholarships. Currently, WKCF has 22 different scholarships for High School graduates wanting to further their education and 1 scholarship for students currently attending college who wish to continue their post-secondary education. More information about the different scholarships WKCF has to offer can be found on the website, wkcf.org.

Anniversary Mini Grants

In June WKCF had a great time giving away twenty $100 Mini-Grants as part of the Foundation’s 20th Anniversary Celebration. Board Members (past and present) willingly sported party gear while assisting with the delivery of the checks. This was a great opportunity to visit the agencies we serve and connect with the people doing such wonderful work in our 15 county service area. The mini-grants came completely out of the blue for organizations. As one of the grant recipients wrote in their summer Newsletter: “It wasn’t a big grant; it’s not enough to complete any major projects; and it won’t buy us prosperity or security for generations to come. What it is, however, is a great pat on the back for doing good work in the community.” May we add a big ‘thank you’ to Luther and Ardis Fry whose Family Fund generously provided the grant monies.

Mini-Grant Recipients

1. Shepherd’s Center, Cimarron
2. Lane County Historical Society, Dighton
3. ABC Pregnancy Care, Garden City
4. Bad Boyz Boxing Club, Garden City
5. Catholic Charities of Southwest Kansas, Garden City
6. City on a Hill, Garden City
7. Family Crisis Services, Garden City
8. Finney County Senior Center, Garden City
9. Genesis Family Health (formerly Mexican-American Ministries), Garden City
10. Kansas Children’s Service League, Garden City
11. Miles of Smiles, Garden City
12. Russell Child Development, Garden City
13. Salvation Army, Garden City
14. Kearny County Senior Center – Food Pantry, Lakin
15. Baker Arts Museum, Liberal
16. Wichita County Health Center, Leoti
17. Dudley Township Library, Satanta
18. Western Kansas Child Advocacy Center, Scott City
19. Community & Youth Action Team, Tribune
20. DU Good Events, Ulysses

Scholarship recipients: Parker Tanner and Loan Trinh

Family Crisis Services

Shepherd’s Center
Women of Purpose: Strength in Numbers

The new focus for the 2016-2017 Women of Purpose grants cycle is women's health, in the broadest sense. This will be of interest to many area nonprofit organizations working with health programs. A Request for Proposals will be sent out this winter. The fall membership drive will kick off with an “Early Morning Casual Kick-Off Breakfast” at the Finney County Historical Museum on September 27th. The Annual Award Luncheon is scheduled for April 5th at the Community Congregational Church in Garden City.

The 2016-2017 Executive Committee is co-chaired by Emme Miller and Janie Welsh. Members include Alice Banning, Audrey Law, Sara Robinson, Liz Scheopner, Jeannie Cottrell and Carol Nanninga. Liz, Jeannie and Carol replaced Robin Zauche, Pat LeClerc and Isela Hall who left the Committee at the end of their term in April. The Women of Purpose Fund had close to one hundred voting members last year, with this year’s membership drive taking off, the group is well on its way to surpassing that mark.

Grant Writer’s Academy

On June 30th and July 14th, WKCF together with the Finnup Foundation and Finney County United Way hosted a Grant Writer’s Academy for area nonprofits at the Finnup Center for Education and Conservation in Garden City. The two-day workshop was facilitated by Deanna Knapp and Vanessa Lohf from the Wichita State University Community Engagement Institute, Center for Organizational Development and Collaboration (CODC). Fifty-five participants from forty-one area nonprofits signed up for the workshop. Many of these agencies had experienced staff turnover and had lost a key individual in their grant writing process. Other agencies appreciated having a refresher on grant-writing. Surveys conducted by WSU as well as the sponsoring organizations demonstrated a high level of satisfaction with the information and content delivery. They also showed a need for this type of educational service.
Buff Robotics Summer Camp: Batteries are NOT Included

Bill Gates once said that “Technology is just a tool. In terms of getting the kids working together and motivating them, the teacher is the most important.” That is certainly evident in the Buff Robotics Summer Camp program. Yuriy Drubinskiy and his wife, Sarah, are teachers at Garden City High School and Charles O. Stones Intermediate Center, respectively. The two have a passion for engineering and computer programming that spurred the creation of a week-long summer camp for 3rd-8th graders centered around building and programming a robot and learning computer coding.

This was the inaugural year for the camp, so they had no equipment for the program. The Drubinskiy’s submitted a grant application to the WKCF in the first grant cycle of 2016 and requested funding for VEX kits comprised of Lego-like pieces, motors and wiring to form a robot unit, along with a game field and blocks to test the robots. One goal of the camp was to get kids to solve problems and get them interested in engineering sciences, something that is becoming ever more important in today’s world. The Western Kansas Community Foundation was intrigued by the program and awarded the grant request with hopes of great success for the camp.

About three dozen students from 12 area schools attended the camp that took place in July. They started their week being split into 3-4 member groups and building a basic robot, learning how to drive and operate the unit. The second day, campers added a claw to allow their robot to pick up blocks and stack them. Each day, another element was added to the robot’s capabilities, such as color distinction or arms to move several blocks at once. At the end of each day, there was a challenge to be completed and teams competed against each other to see whose robot would reign supreme and earn their team points. Teams also earned points by answering questions correctly during the teaching portion of the day, or by exemplifying the “theme” of the day. At the end of the week, teams competed on the game field to sort and stack colored blocks and spent some time learning computer coding. At the end of camp, all participants received a certificate of completion, the top team earned a trophy and the teams in 2nd and 3rd place received medals.

At the end of the first year, Buff Robotics Summer Camp appears to have been a huge success. With boys and girls alike interested in how things work, and some additional intrigue sparked by the television show, “Battlebots,” the next generation of engineers seems to have added a few new members to their ranks.
hanging out while a couple others do some practicing. Use of the building is donated to the two organizations through the generosity of a supporter within the community.

Western Kansas Community Foundation has been a supporter of Redhawk Academy since their first year. At the end of 2014, the Foundation funded the Academy’s grant request for equipment. This year, the WKCF was pleased to be able to award a second grant request that funded uniforms for both the 16 and 18 year old teams. Sean says “The strength of the Redhawk’s comes from the people involved. My favorite thing about being part of the Academy is being able to provide opportunities to some players who otherwise would have had none.” The long-term goal of the Redhawk board is to be able to lower registration fees for the players each year, with the help of grants from the Western Kansas Community Foundation; they are closer to that goal. “Buy me some peanuts and crackerjacks; I don’t care if I never get back! So let’s root, root, root for the home team!” Go Hawks!

Free Estate Planning Design

Western Kansas Community Foundation partners with John Griffin, JD of Stewardship Counseling, LLC to provide estate planning design services free of charge. The draft plan can then be given to an attorney to formalize. Mr. Griffin will also review existing plans which can be beneficial especially when significant life changes have occurred. No products are sold or endorsed through this counseling process, only the opportunity to gain ideas.

The Stewardship Counseling program has been made possible thanks to generous support from Garden City Community College Endowment Association and Commerce Trust Company of Garden City. Stewardship Counseling is offered once a month except for July and December. Appointments are made on first-come first-served basis. Contact the Foundation now to set an appointment!
On August 1, more than three dozen foundations kicked off a nationwide campaign, #ReasonsForHope, to encourage people across the country to break through the darkness and find a path toward our ideals of dignity, equality, and justice. Already, this campaign has given voice to thousands of stories of optimism. On social media, the campaign’s hashtag #ReasonsForHope trended on Twitter as people responded enthusiastically. Some saw hope in efforts to curtail violence. Some saw hope in a push for a more inclusive society. One person saw hope in the smile of her godson. These are the stories of inspiration that animate philanthropy and build a better, stronger society. WKCF is proud to join in this campaign because, every day, we get to work with remarkable, inspiring community leaders who are looking to create hope, as this newsletter sets out to demonstrate.

The ReasonsForHope-campaign is timely, in more than one way. According to a new study, Community foundations saw a 1.8% decline in investment returns in 2015, compared with an increase of 4.8% in 2014. This trend puts a lot of stress on foundations’ grant making mission. Concretely, it means we have to be extremely prudent with the money we give away. To be more strategic in our granting, WKCF is going to reduce its grant cycles from four to three starting in 2017. More information on past grant distributions and guidelines for grant applications can be found on the website at wkcf.org.

In times of declining markets, like this, we are especially grateful for those agencies starting an endowed fund with us. In July, Finney County Community Health Coalition opened an agency fund providing perpetual support for health programs in our area. There is great benefit in opening a permanent fund. Interest earned on the agency endowment funds goes back each year to the sponsoring organization, even though the invested dollars remain with the Foundation. Once a fund is established, contributions may be added any time, and those contributions are immediately tax deductible up to the maximum allowed by law for that donor.

Last but not least, WKCF had some staff changes this summer. In July Melissa Gallegos left WKCF after nearly eight years of service to assume a new position with the Holcomb Branch of America State Bank. Melissa played a key position within WKCF, first as Program Officer and since last December as Assistant Director. Her ability to combine professionalism with charm and humor made her the ideal connector between donors, grant seekers and fund holders. Significantly, her leadership role with the Women of Purpose Fund was recognized by all. Melissa will be greatly missed, and we wish her all the best as she moves on in her life and career. Meanwhile Stacie Hahn took over the Program Officer position. We are currently looking for an Operations Director as well as part-time Community Liaison. As a result of staff changes, the board decided to cancel our Match Day-event this year and host one in 2017.
Yes, I want to **INVEST IN THE FUTURE** of Western KS

Date __________  Enclosed is my gift of $____________ to be directed to:

- [ ] Name of Fund ____________________________
- [ ] In honor of ____________________________  [ ] In memory of ____________________________

Name ____________________________  Phone ____________________________

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Please make check payable to Western Kansas Community Foundation.
Mail this form with your check to 402 N. Main, Garden City, Kansas 67846. A receipt will be sent for tax purposes.

**I would like information about:**
- [ ] Making gifts of securities, land, real estate or life insurance
- [ ] Establishing a fund – individual, family, or field of interest
- [ ] Someone to speak to my group
- [ ] Personal estate planning services
- [ ] Using the Foundation to administer charity in my will or trust

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**Get WKCF News in Your Inbox**

To increase our reach, we’re transitioning to a quarterly e-newsletter, with printed versions in February and November.
**Sign-up today at WKCF.org** – Or email Stacie@WKCF.org

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