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## GBCF awards grant for area community playground equipment

Tabra Ward acknowledged that she and her fellow Hudson citizens were “overwhelmed” when they realized a new playground would cost more than \$20,000 – quite a bit more.

Part I of the project came to \$36,000.

They decided to seek advice and financial assistance from the Golden Belt Community Foundation (GBCF) and one result is a \$10,000 matching grant.

"The staff at the Golden Belt Community Foundation encouraged us to pursue several options to raise money and gave us confidence," Ward said. "They were great at answering questions and, of course, we are extremely grateful for the grant.

"We are also grateful to local and area residents," she elaborated. "I cannot emphasize enough how fantastic our small town is. Given that Hudson has just over 100 people, it is amazing how quickly we raised \$36,000."

The GBCF played a big role because of the dollar-for-dollar grant, Ward noted. "It was a huge incentive for businesses and private donors to know their dollars would be doubled. We are so thankful."

The Stafford County town has had "great playground equipment for youngsters 5 and older, thanks to the local Fensky family," Ward commented. "But we needed to add equipment for toddlers."

Research into the Americans with Disabilities Act indicated priorities were new ground cover, and a barrier between existing and new items.

"Our playground wasn't designed for toddlers. We wanted to provide a safe and fun place for all ages," Ward said.

The current budget will fund: the ground-surface cover and barrier; a playground set; new swing for older children; new tot swing; and two benches for adults.

Local volunteers and Hudson firefighters will install the equipment to save on labor costs.

Hudson City Councilwoman Marilyn Hitz echoed many of Ward's comments and emphasized that the City Park is an integral part of community life.

"Many people in Hudson and the surrounding area take pride in our town and are always interested in updating our surroundings," Hitz noted. "Since the park is located in the center of town and is adjacent to Hudson Community Hall, it complements the use of the hall for all types of events."

The GBCF "has been a wonderful partner for many years," Hitz added. "The staff and board of directors have been very thoughtful of our current project and helpful with our future plans."

Ward and Hitz also mentioned the park is heavily used for a variety of activities, including the Easter Egg Hunt; weekly hamburger nights; Old Fashioned Christmas; Movie in the Park; Sunday dinner at the Wheatland Café; and Chicken Bike Ride. Other events are in the works.

The GBCF's territory includes Barton, Pawnee, Rush and Stafford counties. For more information about grants, endowments and other types of funds, contact Christy Tustin by calling 620-792-3000.

At \$20 million in total assets and more than 160 funds under management, the Golden Belt Community Foundation has been connecting people who care to causes that matter since 1996. Golden Belt Community Foundation exists to provide non-profit organizations in central Kansas with a permanent source of support and to serve as a vehicle for charitable giving for donors. GBCF serves the counties of Barton, Pawnee, Rush, and Stafford. For more information about Golden Belt Community Foundation, call (620) 792-3000 or visit their website at [www.goldenbeltcf.org](http://www.goldenbeltcf.org).