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Alice Wondra Memorializes Parents with Endowment Fund at GBCF



When Alice Wondra was considering how she could memorialize her parents, she kept the phrase "people in need" in the forefront of her mind.

The result is the Andrew and Elsie Wondra Memorial Fund for People in Need, an endowment that has been established at the Golden Belt Community Foundation (GBCF). The first grant from the fund has been awarded to the Barton County Emergency Aid Association.

"My parents considered giving back to their community just as a part of life," Wondra said. "They were good neighbors and would do what they could to respond to the needs of others."

"This memorial fund seemed like a good way to honor them and to continue their contributions. They understood and acted on the concept of neighbors helping neighbors."

Wondra's father was a farmer and stockman, while her mother was a registered nurse and homemaker. They were born and raised in Barton County, where they were life-long residents except for a couple of years in Stafford County.

Andrew Wondra passed away in 1994, and Elsie in 2006. The Wondras lived on their farm northwest of Great Bend and both were active in their church and community.

"I appreciate the experience of growing up in a rural community in Barton County," Wondra said. "It gave me many opportunities to see people caring for one another."

"I would encourage other families to consider endowments or gifts to the Golden Belt Community Foundation," she added. "This is an ongoing opportunity to support the common good."

Wondra contacted the GBCF "after researching several non-profit organizations in central Kansas. The Foundation offered a way to support a number of worthy causes, while providing flexibility to respond to varying needs over time."

During a conversation with Christy Tustin, GBCF executive director, the Barton County Emergency Aid Association was mentioned, Wondra recalled.

"The Association's work fits in very well with the intent of this memorial fund," Wondra said. "The Golden Belt Community Foundation's staff members are skilled in assessing current needs among various agencies."

The Association helps people in need in a variety of ways, a spokeswoman said. These include helping when: a utility shut-off notice has been received; an eviction notice has been served; and transients find themselves in emergency situations.

"We also help clients that have become homeless," the spokeswoman noted. "If for some reason we can't help with a situation, we refer them to other resources that can."

"Without donors such as the Wondra family, we would not be able to help as many people as we do in emergency situations. It was such a blessing to receive this generous donation. It is greatly appreciated."

The spokeswoman also noted that the needs are great in Barton County.

"Many people do not realize the amount of poverty we have right here in our own backyard," she commented. "Without the continued support of generous donors, we would not be able to help as many people in need."

"We live in a community that cares about others and we thank local and area residents for their generosity," she added.

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.