Hello, Neighbors!



Fund Stories

By Savannah Downing, Trego Co. Development Director, Heartland Community Foundation

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It's time for another round of fund stories for inspiration!

Mallory and Matt Davis are raising their daughters in Russell and working in the family business.

They are also making plans now for how part of what they have built can one day support Russell County. "Establishing this Fund for the Future is our way of giving back for years to come," Mallory says.

Mallory had already seen what permanent funds could do. Through her years of service on the Russell County Area Community Foundation board, she had helped award grants made possible by endowments established by other local people. Those gifts were still generating money for Russell County years after they were first made.

Mallory moved to Russell in 2008 and married Matt, a Russell native, in 2010. They work in the family business and are raising their daughters, Emma and Alexis, there.

As part of their estate planning, they established a Fund for the Future that can eventually receive the assets they choose to leave to it. Depending on their final plans, that could include assets from a will or trust, insurance, stock, farmland, property or business holdings.

An estate gift does not have to be cash. For many families in Northwest Kansas, farmland, business interests and other property may be some of the most significant assets they own.

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The Davises' story is different from many because they are making the plan now – while they are raising a family, working and building their future in Russell. It is a reminder that you do not have to wait until your golden years to think about what you want to keep going.

From the Sheridan County Community Foundation, David and Jan Leopold raised four sons in Hoxie. Today, all four live somewhere else.

But David and Jan have made sure their sons will still have a role in giving back to the community that helped raise them.

David grew up in Hoxie. Jan is originally from Abilene, and the two met while attending the University of Kansas Medical Center in the 1960s. After several years in Lawrence and Kansas City, they returned to Hoxie near the end of the decade.

David opened his accounting practice and joined his uncle in the Mickey-Leopold Funeral Home. He also served as mayor of Hoxie and on the boards of the hospital, library, church, Hoxie Housing Authority and other local organizations. Janet raised their family, helped in the funeral business and devoted time to their church and other community causes.

Their four sons — Brett, Brian, Chris and Pat — grew up in Hoxie and eventually built lives in Fairway, Wichita, Riverside, Missouri, and Lawrence.

When David and Jan created the David E. and Janet S. Leopold Family Fund, they were thinking not only about giving back themselves, but about giving their sons a role in what comes next.

"We wanted to create this fund because we are thankful for what Hoxie provided to our sons and family over the years," Jan said. "We are grateful for the opportunities afforded to them — especially the education they received at Hoxie Schools — and we hope our fund will support the next generation and help Hoxie thrive for years to come."

All four sons will serve as successor advisors to the fund. That means the next generation will have an opportunity to help guide the family's charitable giving in the years ahead.

For families whose children or grandchildren have moved away, a charitable fund can be more than a way to give. It can also give the next generation a continuing reason to stay involved in the community that shaped their family.

The same possibilities exist here in our community.

If you've thought about how your children or grandchildren might stay connected to the place your family calls home, talk to us. We can help you explore what that could look like.

What's your legacy?

The future of our community is in our hands!

•Editorial

however, that change is coming, and that change can actually be very, very good!

I'm speaking, of course, of the opportunity of returning these newspapers to their communities, and letting people in our towns that love our little papers have a chance at small-business ownership, and continue to carry the torch of freedom for their towns.

Although this time can be seen as 'bad', some of us have been waiting for this opportunity to come, some of us have been eagerly waiting to embrace a changing of this season. I am one of those people, and although it is sooner than I had planned, the changing of seasons typically doesn't give a darn about our best-laid plans, and I'm embracing the changing of the season early and with open arms.

I know I have said it for years and years to those of you who read my column, but now maybe you can see why I have repeated these words like a broken record: a community's newspaper is a vital part of its heart, and when it closes, it is devastating to your community's ability to grow, stay vital and record the history of those who live, work and play in your towns.

I know everyone says "newspapers are dying" and "tech is the new future", but I'm here to tell you first hand, none of that is true.

Newspapers are not dying, the function of a newspaper has always been the same: watchdog of government, a teller of news to the people. Newspapers have never changed, and for good reason! Our job is to watch elected officials and the money they spend. To put into the history books your lineage as your loved ones pass away. Our hobby is to print the sports, and the clubs, and the fun stuff we get to print, but our JOB is to record and report what the government is doing with your money.

Does that make you a rich man? No, and it was never intended to do that. We are the People's word, and if you're getting rich in the news business, you're likely just taking from the People, or you're bought and paid for by the government.

Is the money why we do it? No, and it never will be to a good newspaper office. We do it for the freedom, for the People, and what we continually stress is that once good little newsrooms are gone, where will the people go for freedom of their voices and their words? Who will watch the People's money and safeguard their freedoms?

What changed was the People bringing in their news. Full stop. The immediate gratification that social media offers people today is quite intoxicating, but when you take time to look at it in the light of a newspaper editor's desk lamp, you'll see why it's such a scary trend.

Social media will *never* watch legal notices, financial reports and meeting agendas for the potential for shady deals, rights infringements or excessive expenditures. Social media can only alert you after the government has done something, when people finally start catching onto something already started.

Newspapers are trained to watch for abuse of the People's money and freedoms. That's our only job. And to put that information in front of the People in quick fashion, alert them to what we are finding, and allow them to take the reins and rein in government abuse of power. It happens in large cities and small towns alike! Do you truly think social media will be the answer to alerting the people? Not in a million years.

The independence of your local newspaper office is what protects the people in that community, the sovereignty to investigate without a corporation overlord with lined pockets stopping you is what keeps your little weeklies afloat! That's why our doors are still open. I believe today, as I have for some time, your small town weekly newspapers will be the last vestige of American Freedom. Largely because we are still owned by the people in our towns.

I encourage you all to take a good, hard look at your little paper, and ask yourself and others if you think it's a vital function in your town. If it is, then my goodness, gather those people who hold it most dear and call our broker. Keep the tradition of your community's past, present and future running in your towns. The legacy of these papers, some 150 years old, is tremendous and so important. The challenge can seem like a mountain, but when you realize what's at stake for your community if your paper closes, that mountain will feel like a mole hill. There are nonprofit avenues with Chambers and other groups who have taken the reins in other towns. There are private owners, previous and current employees, so many people who are incredibly interested in bringing ownership of our papers back to the community!

Take heart, readers, and take action! Every season changes, and I encourage you all to embrace this season's change! Find what's important to you, and dig in for it. I promise, you will always find it worth it! Even if you're not a new business owner at the newspaper come Jan. 1, 2027, my goodness get your bottom into that office, welcome the new owner, and buy a subscription. Hell, buy two! And visit, often, and send your news to the office. A newspaper office can never do it all alone, it needs the investment of news from its community's residents to keep those doors open and rotating! I look forward to the changing seasons that are coming, and encourage all readers to do the same!

– Nickole Byers

•Word

This exercise for older foks was sent in by Mr. Anonymous, who ought to know if it works.

Begin by standing on a comfortable surface, where you have plenty of room at each side.

With a 5-lbs. potato sack in each hand, extend your arms straight out. Try to reach a full minute, and then relax.

Each day, you'll find that you can hold this position for just a bit longer.

After a couple of weeks, move up to 10-lbs. potato sacks.

Then try 50-lb potato sacks and then eventually try to get to where you can lift a 100-lbs. potato sack in each hand and hold your arms straight for more than a full minute. (I'm at this level.)

After you feel confident at that level... put a potato in each of the sacks.

MAKES SENSE

Two women meet on the street. One asks the other about her husband, "Liquor doesn't agree with him and he doesn't know how to play poker," says the first.

"That's wonderful," says her friend.

"It would be," said the first woman, "If he didn't drink and play poker."

BUCK ALWAYS SAID

The smart man knows how little he really knows.

LET US HEAR FROM YOU

Submit your observations or jokes to: word@mainstreetmedia.us or mail them to this publication.

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