

STEP Foundation Holds Annual Meeting

(KMZA)--The 21st Annual Meeting of the STEP Foundation was held Wednesday at The Windmill Inn in Seneca. STEP is an acronym for Striving to Ensure Progress, and is the local community foundation serving Nemaha County.

The event is held annually for members and guests. This year's featured guest speaker was Vern Henricks, CEO of the Manhattan Area Community Foundation. Henricks shared with the audience of 80, the importance of building relationships while we build our foundation. He stressed that a Community Foundation like STEP allows a person or a family to be in control of the gift they might give back to their community. Henricks said there are many ways to give, and that whenever "money is changing hands; there is an opportunity to give." He emphasized that the IRS recognizes that Community Foundations do an excellent job of working for individuals and other non-profits to be certain the giving is only to charitable causes.

After a meal, which was subsidized by Koch and Co, a business meeting was held. Secretary, Julie Strathman stated that a quorum was present and Treasurer Brett Haverkamp reported that at the close of 2012, the STEP Foundation had \$1,300,768 in assets.

President Don Lueger and Gary Scoby recognized outgoing Board members, Donna Zinke and Jerry Rottinghaus for their time and dedication to the Foundation. The nominating committee presented two names to replace them: Gary Sparling and Mark Wessel. They were unanimously voted in as new members of the Board of Directors of the Nemaha County STEP Foundation.

The membership also voted on and accepted revised by-laws that were updated last summer to reflect changes needed.

Leslie Scoby, STEP Executive Director, presented a PowerPoint to educate the audience about the events of the last year. During the presentation Doris Haug thanked the STEP Foundation for its \$1000 grant to the Nemaha County Relay for Life and heard from Angie McGuire whose organization, Big Brothers/Big Sisters was awarded a grant for over \$5,000 in 2013. The Seneca Free Library and the City of Seneca were also highlighted for the grants awarded for a scanner and new tennis courts, respectively. The tennis courts grant was made possible from the Nate & Bernadine E. Rettele Advisory Fund.

Leslie also highlighted scholarship recipients to graduates of Nemaha County that are made possible through several scholarship accounts.

Scoby told the audience that between 2014 and 2020, if residents of Nemaha County would give only 5% back to their communities, more than \$12,000,000 could be raised to establish a permanent endowment to further STEP's mission to enrich the quality of life in Nemaha County. She encouraged the membership to share the news of STEP and the good it can do for the people of Nemaha County.

The STEP membership drive is currently underway. Annual memberships are \$60 for businesses, \$50 for families, and \$30 for individuals. Memberships may be mailed to the STEP Foundation at PO Box 165, Seneca, KS, 66538. For more information, please contact Executive Director Leslie Scoby at 785-285-1765. To learn more about STEP and the Keep 5 in Kansas Imitative, visit

nemahastep.org

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