It is a busy time of year and taking time to slow down to look around us tends to be the last thing on the to do list. If you do slow down and take a look at our community and the many things taking place, it truly is an amazing place to be.

There are many organizations and individuals leading the way to carry out what makes this community strong and appealing to those who visit here. The Foundation is here to provide support for those community projects and programs. Whether the Foundation can provide funding, provide support in non-profit administrative requirements, or just help discuss ideas for upcoming efforts, SGCF is here just for this.

With all of these great projects taking place, SGCF works hard to support a wide variety—and as many as possible. The Old High School Project is one that continues to grow and need different levels of support. The Foundation has provided $10,000 from license plate funds to support the project, along with administrative support for the project fund itself. SGCF attends the weekly meetings and has been available to offer support in fundraising and marketing the project. The OHS project has made huge strides this past year. Architectural plans were revealed during Sweet Grass Fest and the building itself is completely down. SGCF will have a page on the website soon with the architectural plans and provide updates on the projects progress - www.sweetgrasscf.org

“This allows us to provide much safer transportation for our youngest patients, being adjustable from a 4 pound patient up to 99 pounds.” - Rob Farnum, Ambulance Manager

In reaching a completely different scope in the community, SGCF was able to support the local Sheriff Reserve department and Ambulance service. Many of the Reserves are also EMTs. They are often the first on the scene of an accident while serving on the Reserves. A grant was awarded to supply medical bags to carry with them with the equipment to start emergency care prior to the Ambulance arriving. These bags will allow for faster care when it’s needed most.

Seat belts used on the cots for adults while riding in the Ambulance did not keep younger patients in the right position during a transfer. A grant was awarded to purchase an ACR-4 Child Restraint system. “Think of this as like a car seat, but for ambulance cots,” said Rob Farnum, Ambulance Manager. After training staff on the system Rob reported “We were able to utilize it the next day after putting it into service! This allows us to provide much safer transportation for our youngest patients, being adjustable from a 4 pound patient up to 99 pounds.”

Trying to make contact with every person in the county through our programs is our goal. Reaching out to local organizations and continuing to stay ‘in the loop’ of projects in the community will help us meet it. The Foundation is here to benefit the community and the board and staff strive to do this in the most impactful ways.
The ability to offer more came to fruition this spring. Every spring during the review of applications for the Community Giving granting program, the board has wanted to be able to offer more, to make a larger impact. The grants awarded through this program are up to $1,500 and have supported many different programs and projects over the last 5 years. The Hospitality House has been awarded a grant every year for the full amount to assist in purchasing fresh vegetables and fruit for their meal program. The Hospitality House provides an average of 1,100 meals a month to local residents who can either enjoy the company of their friends and family at the Senior Center, or to those who have their meals delivered to their homes.

The Foundation has worked with the Hospitality House on many projects and visited the board and staff of the Senior Center to learn more about their efforts and programs.

While reviewing their Community Giving application, the Grant Management Team wanted to do more. They reviewed the budget needed to provide the raw food for their meals, and although $1,500 would help, there was still a large discrepancy to fulfill the line item.

There had been discussion of offering a multi-year grant for quite some time during SGCF board meetings, and this seemed like the perfect opportunity to do it.

For the first time, the Foundation was able to grant a multi-year grant for $5,000 each year to assist the Hospitality House Senior Center. On June 19th, during a wonderful roast beef lunch, SGCF was able to share with those in attendance the great news.

SGCF is excited to be able to offer this multi-year grant to such a wonderful organization and group of people. The amount of work and love that goes into every meal shows on the faces every day lunch is served, and their cookies are delicious too!

During June’s Coffee Connections, we caught up with Sweet Grass Counties Search and Rescue team. Although calls come in year round, the summer up-tick has already begun. They took time to share ways to stay safe while hiking, camping, and rafting, along with items to make sure to have on hand when out enjoying our great outdoors. They were able to demonstrate how they can use a drone to help during rescue missions and other calls. The drone, owned by an SAR member who also had to get a pilot’s license to fly it, is able to pick up thermal activity and fly in 40 mph winds. The individuals involved with Search and Rescue have hours of training in different rescue procedures, and many of them are also EMTs and fire fighters. Thank you to everyone who is a part of the SAR team, we appreciate what you do!
SAFETY IS A PRIORITY

NEW HELMETS FOR HERDER PLAYERS

Concussions and head injuries are often a topic of discussion when talking about football. “The players are bigger, stronger, and faster than they’ve ever been” states J.V. Moody, head coach of the SGHS Herder football team. “We have made dramatic changes in the way we conduct practices to lessen the chances of all head injuries. We have changed our tackling technique to try and take the head and neck out of play by using the ‘Hawk Tackling Technique’ used by the Seattle Seahawks. We have reduced contact periods during weekly practices that are way below the allotted time established by the Montana High School Association. Our goal is to reduce concussions and other head injuries to zero in a season, that’s where we need your help.”

The previous plan had been to purchase 5 helmets a year until they had 30 newer helmets. That would take 6 years, in which those first helmets purchased could be out of date by the time the last 5 were ordered.

This grant request made so much sense. SGCF could help keep SGHS players safer with a higher level of protection with 30 new helmets. A grant for $10,321.50 was made to the Herder Football program. By purchasing all of the helmets together, the individual cost of each helmet was less, plus they would receive 3 helmets for free.

“I’m so glad to hear about the donation for new football helmets! I knew there were better helmets out there, and it killed me having a kid playing, and knowing his head (and all the boy’s heads) could be better protected with newer technology. Way to go SGCF!”

Kristin Schwers-Herder Mom

This grant was possible with the SGCF License Plate funds.

Don’t forget Sweet Grass Community Foundation during the Raw Deal Run Community Fundraiser! Donations can be made during the campaign, September 1st - September 28th.

The Raw Deal Run event will take place on Saturday, September 28th.

Jacob Roberts is this year’s recipient of the Robert Martinz Scholarship fund.

Jacob will be attending school to become an electrical lineman in January.
Big Timber’s thriving downtown and the amazing turnout for Sweet Grass Fest and Rodeo are two of many indicators that ours is a vibrant community that draws people together for a diversity of reasons. We live in a unique and beautiful location and the collective devotion to this place by our community and beyond seems as strong as ever.

As a SGCF Board Member I get to see first-hand how that commitment translates into financial support for tangible, positive results for so many community organizations and their worthy causes. A current example is the Old High School Project and the newly revealed plans for a much-needed multi-use event space that will showcase the history and vitality of Big Timber and Sweet Grass County. Many years of hard work and dedication by members of this community will finally be realized in this dynamic public space and it will be a welcome addition to our downtown.

On a personal note, as a new parent of a baby girl, I am excited and confident in the future of our community. SGCF is helping create a legacy that will both preserve what we love about this place and make it an even more resilient community for hers and subsequent generations. That legacy would not be possible without our generous volunteers and financial supporters. I join all of our board and staff in thanking you for that commitment to the future of Sweet Grass County.

It takes all of us to make great things happen. We would like to take time to thank everyone who supported the Foundation so far this year. All of the projects and programs we were able to support, are because of the generosity of our community. The SGCF Board of Directors and staff are looking forward to the rest of this year and what it will bring. With a strong vision and support from the community, we can make an impact with the many wonderful things taking place in Sweet Grass County. Thank you!