

NEMAHA COUNTY COOP RECOGNIZED AT THE STEP ANNUAL MEETING

The 23rd Annual Meeting of the Nemaha County STEP Foundation was held at the American Legion Post 21 in Seneca on January 27.

Guests and members enjoyed an appetizer and dessert buffet prepared by The Willow's. Koch and Co. helps subsidize the food and was recognized for their continued support of STEP.

Guests were entertained by Keegan Schmelzle who presented a humorous solo called, "The Littlest Hitler." Taylor Musgrove read her prose piece, "Little Red Riding Hood." Both are seniors at Nemaha Central High School and their forensics coach is Cathy Enneking.

Following a short business meeting which was led by President, Gary Sparling, the audience heard from four grant recipients about the grants just completed. Jeff Gore shared about the Centralia City Park project and Diane Yunghans and Courtney Strathman shared about the park project in Baileyville. Tony Altenhofen told how STEP through the Leonard Ronnebaum Fund helped pave some cart paths at Spring Creek Golf Course. The last completed grant project took place at Albany Historical Society.

Leslie Scoby, Executive Director, recognized many area professional advisors who were invited to the meeting and asked to partner with STEP in working to capture some of the transfer of wealth that is taking place in Kansas. She urged people to think of the foundation as a vehicle to give back to the communities we all cherish.

In 2015, scholarships totaling \$13,300 were given to area college students. Scholarship funds need to have a beginning balance of at least \$10,000.

The Nemaha County COOP was recognized as a business pass-through fund that does great things for local communities. In the last two years the COOP has given over \$38,000 to projects in many towns. Bobby Martin, CEO, moved here in August and is impressed by the caring people in this region. He told that his company receives matching funds from Land O' Lakes to help local projects. This is one example how a community foundation can be used as a vehicle for positive change.

A new board member, Marceil Hasenkamp of Soldier was elected to her first term. Marceil is active in her community and especially loves and cares about children. She will fill the seat vacated by Michaela Schultejans who has served on the STEP Board for 8 years. Gary Sparling presented Michaela with a gift and asked the audience to show their appreciation of her service.

The STEP membership drive is currently underway to fund the operational costs of the 501(c)3. Donations can be made toward annual memberships are \$60 (Business), \$50 (Family) and \$30 (Individual). Memberships may be mailed to the STEP Foundation at PO Box 165, Seneca, KS, 66538.