



Mary Lou Spanier Field of Interest Fund

Health & Human Services

Mary Lou Spanier was born and raised in Sublette, Kansas. She graduated from Sublette High School and truly enjoys living in Haskell County. Mary Lou is a member of Sublette Christian Church.

Her banking career began at Haskell County State Bank

(presently Centera Bank) in 1951. When Mary Lou retired in 1994, she was Executive Vice President and Cashier. She was appointed a director of the bank when she retired and still holds that position today. In 2001, Mary Lou was honored by the Kansas Bankers Association for fifty years of service at the same bank. Since her retirement Mary Lou stays busy traveling and playing golf. She is active in several local and area organizations.

In 1987, Mary Lou was diagnosed with breast cancer. Following a radical mastectomy and chemotherapy, she became a volunteer for Reach to Recovery. This wonderful organization works with carefully selected and trained volunteers who have been through breast cancer treatments. The volunteers are breast cancer survivors who give patients and family members an opportunity to express their feelings. Volunteers and families talk about fears and concerns, and answer questions of someone who has experienced what breast cancer survivors are going through.

Mary Lou said, "I wanted to start a fund that would help any cancer victim in Haskell County with expenses while undergoing treatment."

GREAT GRANTS Emergency 911

The development of the national 911 system has touched the lives of nearly every American. Yet most individuals don't realize that foundation grants helped implement such a successful program.

Dial 911 any time of day or night from any telephone in the United States, and an operator will spring into action to determine the type and location of the emergency, send appropriate personnel and equipment to the scene and tell the caller what to do until help arrives. It is such an important safety net that 911 is one of the first phone numbers parents teach their children. Efforts to create a national emergency medical response system began in 1966, when the National Safety Act authorized funds for ambulances, communications and training programs. These efforts were augmented in the early 1970s when the Robert Wood Foundation provided 44 grants in 32 states for regional emergency medical services - the largest sum of private funds ever allocated for this purpose. The foundation program demonstrated the concept of a regionalized, systematic approach. Following these grants, the federal government stepped in and made a series of grants that resulted in today's nationwide 911 system.



President's Perspective



**Betty Benson
WKCF President**

Best wishes.

Even though summer is here, activities at the Western Kansas Community Foundation (WKCF) are just as busy as ever - and that's good! We continue to sponsor the STEPS (Seniors Together Enjoying Physical Success) program at Garden City Community College. The second session began June 13th and ends August 24th. The nutrition and physical activity initiative is well underway in four counties and our grantmaking continues with the next round of applications due August 1st.

An unexpected discussion earlier in the year turned out to be a "blessing in disguise." During a recent board retreat, we were told our mission statement didn't necessarily encompass the entire role of the community foundation. So we came up with several possibilities and discussed them with the entire board. Creating a new mission statement helped us review our progress over the years and think about future responsibilities. It brought focus to our purpose and was time well spent.

The new mission statement is: "Enriching western Kansas life through philanthropy, collaboration and leadership." Short and to the point - I hope you agree.

Enjoy the summer season!