

CAUSES THAT MATTER



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Making Meals Possible Multifund Grantmaking in Johnson County

Johnson County Friends Feeding Friends (JC-FFF) has a straightforward title. It brings to mind people from across Buffalo, where it is based, working together to address hunger. And it lives up to that name.

In Johnson County, 28% of children are eligible for free and reduced lunches. In the small community of Kaycee, that number climbs to 35%. Johnson County Friends Feeding Friends has the goal of making sure these children don't go hungry. So, across the county, every weekend, around 150 food bags are sent home with children. The program also helps stock food pantries weekly in schools.

Project Coordinator Sharon Miller and Assistant Project Coordinator Breean Waller make a strong team. But they couldn't do this alone. They receive supplies from Food Bank of the Rockies, Blessings in a Backpack, and other partners. About 18 different community groups help pack and deliver food bags.

Students from Buffalo High School form an important part of this volunteer base, making sure other young people in the community are cared for.

Still, with possible government funding cuts ahead, their need will continue to grow. Sharon is determined to use available support in many ways.



Sharon Williams, Friends Feeding Friends Project Coordinator, organizes inventory for food bags.

That's why grants made possible by donors like you are so vital.

Sharon has a background as a business and financial manager. When she moved to Buffalo from San Diego, she was eager to put these skills to good use, and JC-FFF was a perfect fit.

Sharon and Breean have reason to celebrate. Sharon notes that, before Friends Feeding Friends, "30% of surveyed kids reported some weekend hunger. We repeated the survey last fall, and the number was down to 12%."

Because of your support, more youth in Johnson County received meals. Fewer kids go hungry because of you.

Continued on back page

STATS & FACTS

Grant Amount: **\$15,000**

150 Food Bags sent home with children every weekend.



5 Food Pantries

Stocked Weekly by JC-FFF:

- New West High School
- Clear Creek Middle School
- Buffalo High School
- Buffalo Christian Academy
- Kaycee K-12



A Haus for Artists

Mobile Art Program in Cheyenne

Multifund Grantmaking from WYCF

In the southeastern part of our state, there is a unique tiny-house. Even though nobody lives there, it's full of life. Inside lives a rotating gallery of artwork that moves from place to place. The ArtHaus, a project of Arts Cheyenne, gives emerging artists and youth a unique home to showcase their work.

“As a working artist myself, it was a struggle finding galleries,” says Arts Cheyenne Board Member and teacher Steve Knox. “Cheyenne needed something desperately for newer artists to display their work, that’s where Arts Cheyenne proposed a mobile art gallery.”

With your support, a grant from the Wyoming Community Foundation made the ArtHaus possible.

There were no galleries in Cheyenne for youth and emerging artists to hang their work in a professional and quality gallery. The ones that are available, can be expensive to get art into. Arts Cheyenne had an idea for a mobile art gallery. So, with the support of his board, Steve started building the mobile art house in his shop at home.

“Once the mobile art gallery was built, the grant from WYCF helped start our actual programming,” says Steve. “It creates an accessible opportunity for artists in Cheyenne. We don’t have to charge a crazy commission number that other galleries would. Artists can have a professional space to show their work and sell it too.”

The ArtHaus is giving artists in the community an opportunity to make connections. Emerging artist, Anjel Garcia, is grateful. Anjel’s first showing was when he was a senior in high school, Anjel has Steve and the ArtHaus to thank for that.

“The ArtHaus has given me so many opportunities to showcase my work,” says Anjel. “I knew little to none about where to display my work, who I should connect with, and I wanted to see art thrive in Cheyenne.”

The ArtHaus is a place of education. Artists learn how to display their work and create a show that tells a story. “The ArtHaus enhances the professionalism of the art sector in Cheyenne,” says Steve.

“Artists who have never displayed work or have only had a high school hallway as a makeshift gallery now get the opportunity to display their work in a quality setting.”

Donors like you, who care about the arts, make Cheyenne a better place. Now and into the future.



Visitors watching the rainbow stretch over the ArtHaus at Curt Gowdy State Park.

“I was given countless opportunities to sell my work, make connections, and display my pieces to a community that otherwise would not know who I am,” says Anjel.

“I am extremely grateful for Arts Cheyenne, Steve Knox, and the art community for working so hard to give young artists opportunities to build a career in art.”

A mobile gallery like the ArtHaus makes art accessible to someone who might never have gone to a traditional gallery. “Public art creates vibrant communities. It keeps our town alive and beautiful,” says Steve.

The ArtHaus offers a spot anywhere the public can enjoy, thanks to your generosity.

“Through the arts, we’re also teaching people how to be problem-solvers, care about others, and tell stories through visual arts.”

Photos provided by Arts Cheyenne.



The ArtHaus gives everyone a chance to view art as the gallery can be set up anywhere. Last summer, the Downtown Depot in Cheyenne was just one of the venues patrons enjoyed.

STATS & FACTS

Grant Amount:
\$10,000

43 different locations the ArtHaus was set up in 2022.

145+ pieces of artwork displayed in the first season.



Over **75** artists featured in the ArtHaus.

A Community at Play

Rock Springs Area Local Board Grantmaking

The Dellas and Dorothy Larsen Fund

Bunning Park is the place to be in Rock Springs on Wednesday evenings in the summer. City hosted “Concerts in the Park” bring community members out for an evening of music and fun. A grant from the WYCF Rock Springs Area Local Board treated our musicians and concertgoers alike to a new setup in 2022.

Bunning Park’s playground was once next to the bandshell. In previous summers, sounds of children playing on aging playground equipment clashed with music from the bandshell.

John “JJ” Syvrud, of the Rock Springs Parks & Recreation Department, knew there was a way to make park activities better for all. Thanks to WYCF funding, the city relocated and built a new playground and made improvements for more community-wide activities.

The project went beyond simply moving an old playground. “The

equipment was getting old and outdated, but in an already stretched city budget, new playground equipment was, unfortunately, low on the priority list,” says JJ. “I don’t think these projects would have been completed without the help of the foundation.”

JJ credits Rock Springs Area Local Board member, Paula Wonnacott for her help and guidance.

“Our local board is there to help fill needs in the community and encourage organizations to apply for

Continued on back page



Letty Schoenfeld, daughter of local board member Lauren, enjoys the new playground at Bunning Park.

STATS & FACTS

WYCF Rock Springs Area at a Glance: The local board was created in 1991. It provides resources and grants to nonprofits working to build a better community in the Rock Springs area.

10 Local Board Members

Shelby Blume
Jeremy Brown
Jack Costantino
Renee Dana

Kathy Garrison
Keith Hay
Kayla Manniko

Lauren Schoenfeld
Susie Von Ahrens
Paula Wonnacott

Special thanks From JJ Syvrud to: Mark Lyon (Parks Division Superintendent), Civic Center Staff, City of Rock Springs, and the Rec Center Staff.

The Rock Springs Area Local Board granted from the Dellas and Dorothy Larsen Fund, held at WYCF to make this project possible.

The Dellas and Dorothy Larsen Fund was created to support the City of Rock Springs Parks, for projects that promoted children at play. Over the years, the local board worked with WYCF staff and advisors to expand the definition of ‘children at play’. With Wyoming weather, parks are unusable for many months of the year. The board recommended indoor equipment that allowed children to play year-round. The inflatables are used in the gym and the swimming pool at the civic and rec centers.



Continued from front page

New West High School, Buffalo's alternative school, benefits from JC-FFF's food pantry program. Success in school is directly related to students being well fed, and Sharon knows this.

"One memory that will stay with me for a long time is attending the first graduation ceremony for students at the alternative high school, New West," recalls Sharon. "I know that many of these young adults would not have graduated without the New West program, and I believe that JC-FFF helped them achieve success by providing nutritious food daily at the school. WYCF grants make that possible!"

"A Community at Play" continued

funding through WYCF," explains Paula. "For that reason, I encouraged JJ to apply. We (the board) were also allowed to recommend indoor equipment for year-round play."

JJ was able to use funds to replace and repair existing water inflatables and bouncy houses. Inflatables at the Civic Center have gotten a lot of love from the community. So much so that wait lines were never ending at recent events and JJ saw a need to add more inflatables.

Playground renovations and purchasing new equipment for the city can take a long time. It's also expensive. JJ and Paula found a way to connect and work together because they know what it

means for their community. Bunning Park and the inflatables are now a center for activity all year round.

Because of support from WYCF grantmaking, families in Rock Springs will enjoy many more years of fun. Other communities around the state can do the same.

"What we hope," Paula says, "is that someone reading about the playground, experiencing it with their grandchildren, and thinking about a lasting legacy for the community, will be inspired to ask their personal financial advisor about the opportunities provided by the Wyoming Community Foundation."

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UPCOMING EVENTS

WYOMING COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

June 6 - 7

WYCF Statewide Board Meeting, Buffalo

WYOMING AFTERSCHOOL ALLIANCE

April 18 - 19

Safety & Workforce Summit, Cheyenne

April 24

Riverton Boys & Girls Club Breakfast

June 12 - 16

Wyoming Association of Career Technical Educators (WACTE) Conference, Cheyenne

WYOMING WILDLIFE FOUNDATION

May 4 - 6

Old West Invitational Turkey Shoot (OWITS), Hulett

WYOMING WOMEN'S FOUNDATION

April 19

WYWF Community Conversation on the gender wage gap in Wyoming, Zoom

October 12 - 15

Wyoming Women's Antelope Hunt, The Ranch at Ucross



Thank You! You've helped Wyoming communities thrive in good and bad times.

To learn more about how YOU can make a difference today and for years to come, contact Jerrica Becken, Director of Philanthropy at jerrica@wycf.org

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