

SOUTH BROWN COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION



THE CONNECTION

Quarterly Newsletter

SOUTH BROWN COUNTY COMMUNITY SURVEY LEADS TO ACTION

by Ivy Stone, SBCCF Executive Director

In July 2025, the South Brown County Community Foundation surveyed residents across South Brown County. A clear theme emerged: many residents believed an area for improvement was greater neighborhood pride and care.



Out of that feedback, and a community collaboration group that met to identify next steps, the Brighten Your Corner initiative was created. This neighborhood-based effort encourages neighbors to unify around cleanups, lend a hand, and take pride in their city block or street. The foundation plans to grow this effort across the community, with Horton leading the way.

Horton's Brighten Your Corner Neighborhood Cleanup will take place during City of Horton Dumpster Weeks, April 24–May 4. Community members may volunteer as Neighborhood Leaders, with support from the foundation to help organize neighbors and coordinate trucks. SBCCF will also provide lunch for participating neighborhoods.

Mayor Bryan Stirton has shown strong support for the initiative, and the Lions Club of Horton is assisting with hauling items--a service they have provided annually for many years. Local residents like Justine Kimmi and her family, pictured below, are also stepping up to become Neighborhood Leaders by partnering with the SBCCF to organize their neighborhoods for a cleanup day.

This is just the beginning of one of many action steps to build on the quality of life in South Brown County. **To register your neighborhood, contact SBCCF's Executive Director, Ivy Stone at 217-778-4895 or ivys@southbrowncf.org.**



*pictured: Justine Kimmi & Family
Brighten Your Corner Neighborhood Leaders*

FUNDS IN ACTION

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HORTON FISH & GAME FUND

by Ivy Stone, SBCCF Executive Director



The Horton Fish & Game Club was established in the mid-1940s by local game warden John Spence, and outdoorsman Norman Ross. Its first meeting was held upstairs in Horton City Hall. Today, the club continues its long-standing mission to maintain and preserve local hunting and fishing habitats.

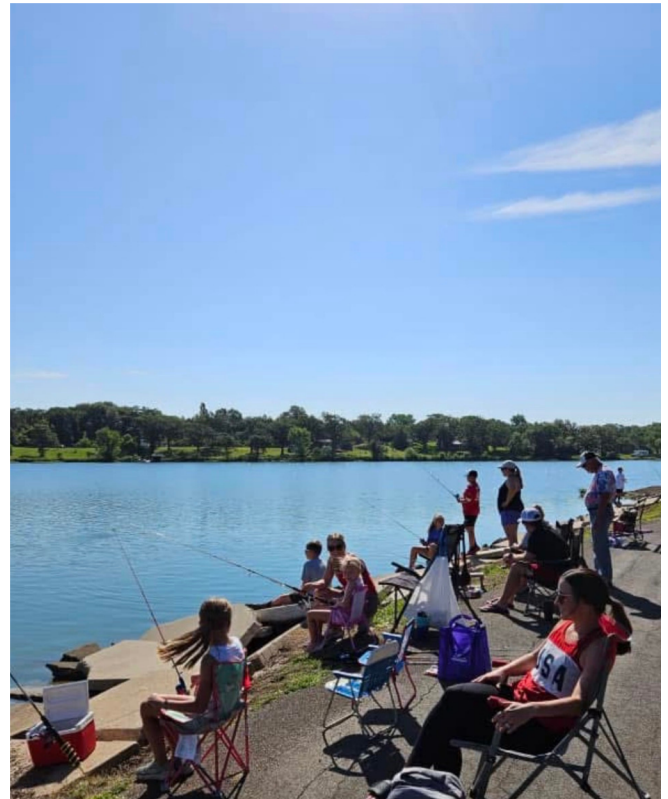
The Horton Fish & Game may be best known for its Annual Youth Fishing Derby, held each year on the Fourth of July, a tradition spanning 56 years and counting.

In 2025, the derby welcomed 213 youth participants, not including the many family members who attended. A highlight of summer in South Brown County, the event offers a fun, family-friendly outdoor experience with prizes ranging from fishing gear and bicycles to tickets to Worlds of Fun, Kansas City Royals games, and more.

The club's impact goes far beyond one event. From hosting fish fries and outdoor shows, to building a handicap-accessible dock and improving fish habitat at Horton Little Lake, their work strengthens both recreation and community. They have also supported families affected by fires and annually recognize a local leader through their Sportsman of the Year Award.

In partnership with Reinvent Horton, Horton Fish & Game completed a shoreline excavation project to restore lake depth to improve fishing conditions. Curtis Ross, president of Horton Fish & Game, says support from Match Days over the years has helped to accelerate the project. Last year, Horton Fish & Game received a combined total of \$3,218.64 from donations and matching dollars.

Through decades of service, Horton Fish & Game continues to create opportunities for youth, enhance local resources, and bring the community together.



ROOTS AND REFLECTIONS: A MATCH SPONSOR'S STORY

with Steve Martin



South Brown County Community Foundation Director Ivy Stone recently had the pleasure of sitting down with Steve Martin (CEO Emeritus, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Nebraska) for a meaningful conversation. Although Steve has lived in Omaha, NE since 1981, he continues to hold the South Brown County community close to his heart.

IVY: Steve, on behalf of SBCCF, we thank you for your time today and your generosity toward the community and the foundation. What is your connection to South Brown County?

STEVE: Hello, Ivy. Thanks for inviting me. My father and mother moved to Horton in the 1950s. After being in the military, my father became the manager for a new Horton store named Duckwall's. They lived up above the store initially. My mother was a nurse at Horton Hospital. I was born at the Horton Hospital in 1956. A few years later, my father got a transfer to open a new store in Colorado Springs, CO. Our family enjoyed the beauty of Colorado, but we encountered challenges with underfinanced schools, concerns for school safety, and other issues that we didn't experience in small-town Horton, Kansas, so, we moved back to Horton. I attended school there from 5th grade through 12th grade. I graduated in 1974. Horton was a great place to grow up.

During that time, my mother went back to work at Horton Hospital. My father was a contractor and had his own business. He sold appliances, did repairs, HVAC and electrical. Later on, he was also a parks commissioner in Horton. As for me, in the 5th grade, I had a paper route with the Kansas City Star. I had to be up at 5:00 AM preparing papers. I would stop at the steakhouse and have a hot chocolate and a cinnamon roll! I also had a paper route with the Horton Headlight. My family enjoyed reconnecting with friends in Horton, such as the Foster family, the Gordon family, who ran the bank, and a lot of other families. The Vining family ran the local clinic. I used to clean the clinic after school in the evenings for five years. I always had jobs. That was kind of a family thing.



IVY: Do you remember the theater in Horton? I vaguely remember seeing a Disney movie there.

STEVE: Sure! I was a projectionist at the Liberty Theater. We had very old arc-welding projectors. You had to manually crank them. I ran the films there. I later became the manager of the theater while I was in high school. To keep the theater open, community business leaders united to provide the financial support needed to sustain it. They convinced a businessman out of Marysville, KS who had a chain of theaters to run a weekend cinema. I remember when concession sales were low, I made a duct tube that went from the popcorn vent into the vent that went into the theater. Everyone watching the movies could tell when we were making popcorn. It doubled our popcorn sales!

IVY: Haha! Genius move! Well, after you graduated from high school, what path did you take?

STEVE: I was lucky enough to get a scholarship in both academics and football. I was able to put myself through school with scholarships and jobs. I did one year at Highland Community College, and then I was recruited to Washburn University in Topeka for academics and athletics. I was an offensive lineman and co-captain on the football team. I majored in nursing and graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree. My program encouraged entrepreneurship.

I partnered with colleagues in Topeka and opened a business called Health Check (occupational home health) and later moved to Omaha, NE in 1981 to work for a drug company called Upjohn. That company merged to become a division of Pfizer. My wife, Amy, and I were married in 1984. She was teaching at a local college. She went on to teach at Creighton University for 35 years, retiring as a Professor Emerita. I was recruited to work for Blue Cross to design ways to pay doctors in hospitals. It was the early days when health insurers were making efforts to slow inflation of hospitals. I was asked to create a drug card program. I spun that off into a new company with Blue Cross. That was my first job as a CEO. The growth went from about \$100,000 in revenue to about \$1 billion. From there I was recruited to take over as CEO of Blue Cross in Nebraska. I was in that position for 18 years. At the time I retired, we were a \$4 billion company with about one million customers.

IVY: That's incredible! And just as admirable is the way you give back.

STEVE: My wife and I were lucky enough to do a lot of investing when we were young, and we've been able to support a lot of philanthropic work, including scholarships and the arts. We enjoy being involved with fundraising for our Omaha community.

IVY: South Brown County and Horton High School have also reaped the benefits of your generosity. Would you share about some of that?

STEVE: I was very impressed with the way Horton promoted itself to Marcus Lemonis from the television show, "The Profit" (2014). People really got involved and were trying to improve the community. My mother and I were glad to be a part of that improvement. That was right around the time my father passed away. My mother and I provided funding to have new clocks installed, in my father's name, at Horton City Hall, replacing the broken clocks. He always wanted to fix those clocks.



Steve & his wife, Amy Haddad



Horton High School put me in their hall of fame. I toured the high school, met with some of the teachers, and asked what would be helpful. My wife and I were able to fund the purchase of some new technology--computers, 3D printers, and those types of things. This was around the time South Brown County Community Foundation was forming.

One thing that's always impressed me is that Horton, on its own, partnered with Greater Manhattan Community Foundation to start the foundation. There's always been a real drive by the business owners to keep the town refreshed and to try to find different businesses that might be attractive to the town.

IVY: We have appreciated your support as a match sponsor over the years. Have you observed any improvements within our community that you would say are the result of the work of the foundation and Match Days?

STEVE: Certainly! There's the revitalization of the pool, the parks, the baseball field, making sure young people have places to go. The work to revitalize downtown I know is still a challenge but Horton has always been competitive, and the community is moving forward.

IVY: Steve, on behalf of SBCCF, thank you and Amy for your generous support of our community. We are deeply grateful for the way you've honored your roots, and we remain committed to stewarding that generosity with integrity and gratitude.

THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS 2025 MATCH SPONSORS!



LEGACY PARTNERS
\$10,000 & Above



VISIONARIES
\$5,000 - \$9,999

Amy Haddad
& Steve Martin
Charitable Fund



ADVOCATES
\$1,000 - \$4,999

Anonymous
Donor

Dennis & Lynda
Ross



Gil & Michele
Crouse



Mitch & Sarah
Gerving



FRIENDS
\$500 - \$999



Jason & Ronda Smith



WINDOW BOX COTTAGE
Home Decor, Linens, Furniture & Antiques



For more information on becoming a sponsor, contact SBCCF director, Ivy Stone, at 217-778-4895 or ivys@southbrowncountycf.org.

PLANNED GIVING THROUGH A COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

by Ivy Stone

Executive Director, South Brown County Community Foundation



Community foundations help individuals support the causes they care about, both now and in the future. By managing charitable funds and investing them over time, they ensure resources are available to meet local needs for generations. One meaningful way to give is through planned giving.

Planned gifts are arranged in advance, and fulfilled upon an individual's passing. Planned gifts can create a lasting impact and often support endowment funds, where the principal is preserved and earnings are used to benefit the community year after year.

To ensure donor wishes are clearly understood, community foundations often use a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) when establishing planned gifts. An MOU outlines the purpose of the fund, how it should be used, and what happens if circumstances change. This helps protect donor intent and provides guidance for future decisions.

Together, planned giving and clear agreements like MOUs allow community foundations to honor generosity today while sustaining impact well into the future. For more information on planned giving, feel free to contact SBCCF at 217-778-4895 or ivys@southbrowncountycf.org.

HELP SHAPE SOUTH BROWN COUNTY'S FUTURE

Want to connect through giving or volunteering? Use the contact information below to get started. You may give an immediate gift by scanning the QR code below and be part of the positive impact happening across South Brown County.



SOUTH BROWN
COUNTY COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

1120 1st Avenue East
P.O. Box 224
Horton KS, 66439

Office Hours: M-F, 9am - 4pm
ivys@southbrowncountycf.org
217-778-4895

SCAN ME



FUNDS OF THE FOUNDATION

ANIMALS

Brown County Humane Society SBCCF Fund

COMMUNITY/CIVIC

Brown County Fair Fund

Civic Center Fund

Horton Chamber of Commerce Fund

Horton Fish and Game Association Fund

South Brown County Community Foundation Fund

SBCCF Operational Endowment Fund

COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT

Everest Community Park Maintenance Fund

Everest Improvement Fund

Horton Industrial Development Inc (HIDC) Fund

Lions Club of Horton Fund

Mission Trails Fund

Reinvent Horton Community Development Inc Fund

SBCCF Charitable Purpose Grants Fund

Robinson Cares Fund

Willis Betterment Fund

COMMUNITY MINISTRIES/CHARITIES

Church of the Lord Jesus Christ Renovation Fund

Fearfully & Wonderfully Made Fund

Horton Baptist Church Fund

Heart of Horton Fund

Kahbeah Fellowship Fund

South Brown County Ministerial Association Fund

St. Leo's Altar Society Fund

Zion Lutheran Church- Everest KS Fund

EDUCATION

Armor Academy Fund

Charger PTO Fund

Everest, KS Public Library – Barnes Reading Room Fund

Horton High School Alumni Association Fund

Horton Public Library Fund

USD 430 Activities Fund

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Amberwell Health Fund South Brown Fund

Amberwell Hiawatha Health Fund

Kanza Mental Health South Brown County Fund

MEMORIAL

Danny J. Petersen Memorial - MOH 1970 Fund

Keith Olsen Memorial Fund

PUBLIC SAFETY

Friends of Everest Fire Department Fund

Powhattan Fire Department & Public Safety Fund

SCHOLARSHIP

Carlita Pederson Music Education Fund

Chargers Bright Future Goins Family Scholarship Fund

Highland Community College Foundation Horton Fund

Norman Ross Memorial Scholarship Fund

Pottroff and Logan – Shop Door Scholarship Fund

SENIOR CITIZEN

Horton Senior Center Fund

YOUTH RECREATION

Everest Little League Fund

Horton Community Baseball Fund

Mission Lake Christian Camp of Horton Fund

Willis All-Stars 4-H Club Fund

**Your generous support furthers the mission of our nonprofits.
Thank you for your consideration!**



PO Box 224, Horton, KS 66439