A Letter from the LACF Executive Director

The power of “Thank You” cannot be underestimated. You may never really know its impact, its ripple effect or how it can create a unique connection between people. We say thank you for a number of things. Thank you for sending money. Thank you for your kindness. Thank you for being there when I needed you. We convey words of thanks in many simple phrases:

- Thanks a ton
- I’m so thankful
- Thank you so much
- Thanks for everything
- I can’t thank you enough
- Many thanks

I recently had the privilege to work with a donor who is planning to leave a portion of his estate to the foundation. We have been having conversations over a number of years since his wife (formerly of Luverne) passed away. He wanted to do something special for her. Something that would honor her life and the life they created together. So we talked, and listened, and shared ideas and options until finally the right focus came to light. A designated fund, set up in honor of his late wife, would be established at the community foundation to support the ongoing needs in a community that had meaning to her and honor to him. After the paperwork was finished and a breath of satisfaction from both of us was shared I said to him, “Thank you so much for choosing the Luverne Area Community Foundation to honor your wife with a gift that will make a difference forever.” His response overwhelmed me. He said, “No Emily, thank you. Thank you for helping me find a way to honor my wife, our life together and make a difference in the world.” It took several days before my heart, so filled with joy, finally settled back to its normal size in my chest. We are meant to be connected in this world, to help, share, support, live and at the end of the day say, “Thank You.”

Thank you for your support of the Luverne Area Community Foundation this past year.

Sincerely,
Emily Crabtree
LACF Executive Director

*“I can no other answer make but thanks, and thanks and ever thanks...”*
-William Shakespeare

Donor Advised Funds - Local Issues - Local Solutions

_________________________ Donor Advised Fund
(Your Name Here)

Donor Advised Fund gives you:
- The power to make a difference
- Your own charitable savings account
- The ability to tackle a community issue with solutions
- Match passion with causes

Opening a donor advised fund is an effective charitable donation tool for your financial portfolio.
It gives opportunity for an immediate tax deduction
It allows for a charitable gift to have growth through investment
It allows the donor to advise gifts to favored charities or community needs over time

Donor Advised Fund gives you:
- The power to make a difference
- Your own charitable savings account
- The ability to tackle a community issue with solutions
- Match passion with causes

Use a Donor Advised Fund or DAF with your IRA

If you are 70 ½ years of age and are facing your required minimum distribution (RMD) but don’t need or want the tax burden, consider rolling it into a DAF at the Luverne Area Community Foundation (up to $100,000 per year). Because you gave the dollars to a charity there will be no tax on the RMD. It now becomes a charitable savings account that you can advise to your favorite charities, including gifts to your church, alumni funds, scholarship programs, local or national 501c3 organizations.

Contact Emily about more information on DAFs or consult your financial advisor on how we can partner together to help meet your charitable goals through a Donor Advised Fund.
2017 Grant Award Recipients

Recipients of the Luverne Area Community Foundation grants in 2017 were (from front row left) Dr. Nicole Woodley (Sanford Luverne), Louella Voigt (BMAT), Corrine Bonnema (Farmer’s Market/L.I.F.T.), Jennifer Lindsey, (SW Crisis Center), Sara Wahl (SW Crisis Center), Lisa Nath (Big Buddies of Rock County), Carrie Soto (Luverne BackPack Program), Cathy Schar (Blue Mound Ice Arena), Emily Crabtree (LACF Exec. Director), (row two) Shirley Connor (Green Earth Players), Helen Saum (Sanford Hospice Luverne), LaDonna VanAarteen (BMAT), Phil Paquette (LPS), Evan VerBrugge (LPS/AL.I.C.E. Committee), Jim Susie (City of Hills), Harlan Vandekieft (Rock County Ambulance), Sara Hartquist (B.H.A.R.E.), (row three) Cory Grimm (Luverne Street Music), Tom Rolls (Sanford Luverne), Jamie Reisdorfer (Sanford Luverne), Craig Odhshah (LPS/AL.I.C.E. Committee), Joe Schomaker (Good Samaritan Mary Jane Brown Home), Jordan Winter (LPS/AL.I.C.E. Committee), Wade Hiller (LPS/AL.I.C.E. Committee), Eric Hartman (Luverne Rotary Club), Greg Burger (Atlas) and Lee Sells (Rock County Ag Society). Individuals and groups not pictured are Serena Gutnik (Rock County Library), Lauree Teunissen (Luverne Senior Citizens Center), Lois Lenderts (HBC) and David VanBatavia (Luverne Fire Department).

$69,006 awarded in community healthcare and general category grants in 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare</td>
<td>$34,832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutrition</td>
<td>$11,813</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Services</td>
<td>$2,829</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation</td>
<td>$5,060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts &amp; Culture</td>
<td>$7,211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Development</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>$2,285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Facilities</td>
<td>$6,703</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$2,3% Healthcare
52% Community Development
17.6% Nutrition
7.5% Recreation
4.2% Human Services
10.8% Arts & Culture
3.4% Education
0.7% Environment

Twice yearly the LACF offers grant opportunities for projects that enhance the quality of life in Rock County in the following areas: arts & humanities, community, social and economic growth, environment, people and health and wellness.
The Luverne Area Community Foundation and its partners are about IMPACT… making a difference in the communities we live in.

In 2017 our partners added $302,668 in program grants to enhance the lives of our friends and neighbors.

**Community Partners**

**Luverne Backpack Program**
Program provides at-risk children with nutritious, easy to prepare foods for the weekends until school and access to meal programs resume. This program is staffed by volunteers and serves approximately 160 children ages pre-school to twelfth grade.

$20,000 Invested back in the Community in 2017

**Sanford Health Luverne**
Sanford Health Luverne is a vital partner in the health and well-being of the community. All dollars given to Sanford Health Luverne stay local to improve the quality of care received here. Dedicated to the work of healing.

**Sanford Healing Gardens**
The Healing Garden at Sanford Luverne offers a beautiful, therapeutic garden where people can relax in nature.

$4,303 Invested back in the Community in 2017

**Luverne Basketball Association**
The Luverne Basketball Association strives to provide support for and opportunities to play, learn and love the game of basketball for youth and teens of Luverne.

$952 Invested back in the Community in 2017

**LUVERNE COMMUNITY EDUCATION**

Steward by the Luverne School Foundation this fund is intended to help support the needs of the Community Education program in Luverne.

$4,627 Invested back in the Community in 2017

**Southwest Crisis Center**
The mission of the SW Crisis Center is to provide help, hope and safety to victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence and human trafficking through supportive services.

$850 Invested back in the Community in 2017

**Rock County Food Shelf**
The Rock County Food Shelf’s mission is to offer 2-3 days of emergency food to eligible Rock County residents one time per month. They are located in the basement of the United Methodist Church in Luverne.

$20,166 Invested back in the Community in 2017

**Rock County Historical Society**
The mission of the Rock County Historical Society is to preserve the history of Rock County to share with generations to come. The Historical Society has recently moved their History Center to Main Street in Luverne.

$96,578 Invested back in the Community in 2017

**Big Buddies of Rock County**
The mission of Big Buddies of Rock County is to promote positive family and community values by mentoring children one-to-one in the hopes of enhancing their quality of life, character development and education.

$8,500 Invested back in the Community in 2017

**Child Guide**
The Luverne Child Guide Program cares for all students but has a central focus of connecting at-risk students and their families with resources in our community and school.

$29,495 Invested back in the Community in 2017

**Sanford Health Luverne**
Sanford Health Luverne is a vital partner in the health and well-being of the community. All dollars given to Sanford Health Luverne stay local to improve the quality of care received here. Dedicated to the work of healing.

**Big Buddies of Rock County**
The mission of Big Buddies of Rock County is to promote positive family and community values by mentoring children one-to-one in the hopes of enhancing their quality of life, character development and education.

$8,500 Invested back in the Community in 2017

**Southwest Crisis Center**
The mission of the SW Crisis Center is to provide help, hope and safety to victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence and human trafficking through supportive services.

$850 Invested back in the Community in 2017

**Rock County Food Shelf**
The Rock County Food Shelf’s mission is to offer 2-3 days of emergency food to eligible Rock County residents one time per month. They are located in the basement of the United Methodist Church in Luverne.

$20,166 Invested back in the Community in 2017

**Rock County Historical Society**
The mission of the Rock County Historical Society is to preserve the history of Rock County to share with generations to come. The Historical Society has recently moved their History Center to Main Street in Luverne.

$96,578 Invested back in the Community in 2017

**Big Buddies of Rock County**
The mission of Big Buddies of Rock County is to promote positive family and community values by mentoring children one-to-one in the hopes of enhancing their quality of life, character development and education.

$8,500 Invested back in the Community in 2017

**Southwest Crisis Center**
The mission of the SW Crisis Center is to provide help, hope and safety to victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence and human trafficking through supportive services.

$850 Invested back in the Community in 2017

**Rock County Food Shelf**
The Rock County Food Shelf’s mission is to offer 2-3 days of emergency food to eligible Rock County residents one time per month. They are located in the basement of the United Methodist Church in Luverne.

$20,166 Invested back in the Community in 2017

**Rock County Historical Society**
The mission of the Rock County Historical Society is to preserve the history of Rock County to share with generations to come. The Historical Society has recently moved their History Center to Main Street in Luverne.

$96,578 Invested back in the Community in 2017

**Big Buddies of Rock County**
The mission of Big Buddies of Rock County is to promote positive family and community values by mentoring children one-to-one in the hopes of enhancing their quality of life, character development and education.

$8,500 Invested back in the Community in 2017

**Southwest Crisis Center**
The mission of the SW Crisis Center is to provide help, hope and safety to victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence and human trafficking through supportive services.

$850 Invested back in the Community in 2017

**Rock County Food Shelf**
The Rock County Food Shelf’s mission is to offer 2-3 days of emergency food to eligible Rock County residents one time per month. They are located in the basement of the United Methodist Church in Luverne.

$20,166 Invested back in the Community in 2017

**Rock County Historical Society**
The mission of the Rock County Historical Society is to preserve the history of Rock County to share with generations to come. The Historical Society has recently moved their History Center to Main Street in Luverne.

$96,578 Invested back in the Community in 2017

**Big Buddies of Rock County**
The mission of Big Buddies of Rock County is to promote positive family and community values by mentoring children one-to-one in the hopes of enhancing their quality of life, character development and education.

$8,500 Invested back in the Community in 2017

**Southwest Crisis Center**
The mission of the SW Crisis Center is to provide help, hope and safety to victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence and human trafficking through supportive services.

$850 Invested back in the Community in 2017

**Rock County Food Shelf**
The Rock County Food Shelf’s mission is to offer 2-3 days of emergency food to eligible Rock County residents one time per month. They are located in the basement of the United Methodist Church in Luverne.

$20,166 Invested back in the Community in 2017

**Rock County Historical Society**
The mission of the Rock County Historical Society is to preserve the history of Rock County to share with generations to come. The Historical Society has recently moved their History Center to Main Street in Luverne.

$96,578 Invested back in the Community in 2017

**Big Buddies of Rock County**
The mission of Big Buddies of Rock County is to promote positive family and community values by mentoring children one-to-one in the hopes of enhancing their quality of life, character development and education.

$8,500 Invested back in the Community in 2017

**Southwest Crisis Center**
The mission of the SW Crisis Center is to provide help, hope and safety to victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence and human trafficking through supportive services.

$850 Invested back in the Community in 2017

**Rock County Food Shelf**
The Rock County Food Shelf’s mission is to offer 2-3 days of emergency food to eligible Rock County residents one time per month. They are located in the basement of the United Methodist Church in Luverne.

$20,166 Invested back in the Community in 2017

**Rock County Historical Society**
The mission of the Rock County Historical Society is to preserve the history of Rock County to share with generations to come. The Historical Society has recently moved their History Center to Main Street in Luverne.

$96,578 Invested back in the Community in 2017
A donor-advised fund, or DAF, is a charitable giving vehicle sponsored by the LACF that allows you to make a contribution to LACF and be eligible for an immediate tax deduction.

- But because your account is a donor-advised fund, you advise the organization on how to grant the money out to your favorite charities.
- Plus the dollars you put into your DAF will be put into a growth fund so your donation will grow for even more charitable impact.

Donor Advised Funds (DAF) offer year round grant gifting, tax relief AND advisement for gifts!

A donor-advised fund, or DAF, is a charitable giving vehicle sponsored by the LACF that allows you to make a contribution to LACF and be eligible for an immediate tax deduction.

- But because your account is a donor-advised fund, you advise the organization on how to grant the money out to your favorite charities.
- Plus the dollars you put into your DAF will be put into a growth fund so your donation will grow for even more charitable impact.

www.luvacf.org

100% LOCAL
100% BENEFIT
100% DEDUCTIBLE
SPONSORSHIP
Throughout 2017 we have been assisting Sanford Luverne in raising funds for a new structure and location for the Rock County Ambulance garage.

The current garage is located in a residential area 2.1 miles from the medical campus. In its current state it is a standard 25x25 two stall garage. With the updating of rigs this structure is too small to hold the current trucks leaving no room for supplies, care or maintenance of the ambulances. The new structure will be built next to the Sanford hospital allowing for better access and a decrease in response time.

The goal is to raise $350,000 and break ground by the end of this year. While the efforts are close, more funds are still needed. If you are interested in making a donation to a critical service in our community please contact Emily at the foundation office 507-220-2424 or Emily@luvacf.org

Donations are tax deductible per the IRS rules.

ROUND UP FOR CHARITY
Residents of Luverne on local city utilities can opt to “Round Up” their utility bill and have the extra dollars and cents given to the Community Grants Fund.

2017 Gift: $1,942

150 FOR 150
Celebrations and parades, acknowledgments and history; that is what has happened in the community we love this past year. 150 years as Rock County’s county seat, Luverne had much to be thankful for. In celebration of such a milestone and in line with our mission we challenged 150 donors to give $150 toward our Community Grant Fund. Through this challenge we raised $17,650 from 117 donors, a nice year end addition to this fund.

2017 Gift: $17,660

1-ACRE CHALLENGE
Being a community rich in agriculture the foundation challenges local crop producers to donate one acre of corn or beans to the Luverne Area Community Foundation Community Grant Fund. This is an ongoing gifting option. Inquire at your local elevator on how to give. These gifts are used to support the community grant fund.

Gifts of Grain are accepted at all New Vision Co-op and CHS Easter Farmers Elevators in the county. Grain can be accepted year-round.

2017 Memorials to the Community Grant Fund

IN MEMORY OF

Beverly Christensen        Mary M. Odland
Deb Martius                Mildred Heikes
Erling Tofteland           Shirley Papik
Esther Petersen            Sylvester Lonneman
John Gabrielson            Tim Christensen
Kathryn Aaker              Verlyn Hoff
Warren Herreid

A unique way to honor someone special or remember a loved one who has passed is to make a gift to the Foundation Community Grant Fund in their name.
LIFETIME GIVING

Sometimes things need a name change

There are two funds in which members of any Rock County community can apply for competitive grants. This year we decided the General Fund sounded too general, so we gave it a better name. When you give to the Community Grant Fund we secure those dollars for the applicants and their projects looking for funds through the grant application process!

LACF’s number one priority is to increase the Community Fund. The Community Grant Fund is still our fund of greatest need. These dollars are unrestricted and give the LACF the most flexibility to meet the needs in the communities in which we live.

Total Lifetime Giving to the Community Fund will continue to be acknowledged in the Annual Report. Gifts given in the Community Fund since the Foundation’s inception will be cumulatively calculated and acknowledged.

SILVER ($25,000 +)
Eleanor Loger
Ella Mae Josendahl
First Farmers & Merchants Bank
H. Allison Ording
Phyllis Nelson

BRONZE ($10,000 +)
Bruce and Brenda Loosbrock
MainStreet Financial Services
Tollefson Publishing – Rock County Star Herald
W.R. Berkley Corporation Charitable Foundation

PEWTER ($5,000 +)
Blue Mound Area Theater, Inc
Buffalo Ridge Insurance
Dr. Harold and Mary Tilstra
Michael and Cheryl Ann Cox
Minwest Bank
Rock County Corn & Soybean Association
Round Up Campaign

PATRON ($1,000 +)
Ben and Deb Vander Kooi
Betty Mann
Blandin Foundation
Cary and Karen Radisewitz
Cleveringa Construction
Continental Western Group
Curt and Marilyn Bloemendaal
Dallas Bowron
Diane Harrison Ogawa
Dingmann Funeral Home
Don and Lisa Dingar
Dr. and Mrs. Joshua J. Crabtree
Dr. John and Jeanne Bowron
Eisma & Eisma Law Offices
Everett and Janice Brandenburg
Exchange State Bank
Gary and Barb Golla
Gene and Nadine Schoep
Glen’s Food Center
Greg and Janet Burger
Harold and Lori Schmidt
Hartquist Funeral Home
Jeff and Sara Hartquist
Jody and Sharla Reisch
K.A.H.R. Foundation
Klosterbuer & Haubrich LLP
Luverne Chamber of Commerce
Luverne Farm Store
Luverne Optimist Club
Main Street Financial Services, Inc
Margaret Vegge
Mike and Jennifer Engesser
Monte and Michele Van Dyke
Nelson Benson
Pamida
Papik Motors
Prairie Heights Bison
Robert and Carol Fawley
Ron and Cathy Honken
Samuel and Barbara Berghorst
Sanford Luverne Medical Center
Sioux Valley Energy
Steve and Marnie Perkins
Tim and Sue Dispanet
Timothy and Karis Gust
Vander Kooi Law Offices

DONOR ($500 +)
Ahrendt Brothers
Ardell and Jayora Bowman
Berkley Insurance Company - Continental Western Group
Beth Gibson Lila
Bill’s Water Conditioning
Brad and Amy Ver Steeg
Busse Plumbing, Heating & AC
Cattinach Insurance Agency, Inc.
Charles and Jean Egland
Don and Lona Klosterbuer
Doug and Shellee Eisma
Dr. Richard Morgan and Carol Morgan
Dr. and Mrs. Joshua J. Crabtree
Dr. John and Jeanne Bowron
Eisma & Eisma Law Offices
Everett and Janice Brandenburg
Exchange State Bank
Gary and Barb Golla
Gene and Nadine Schoep
Glen’s Food Center
Greg and Janet Burger
Harold and Lori Schmidt
Hartquist Funeral Home
Jeff and Sara Hartquist
Jody and Sharla Reisch
K.A.H.R. Foundation
Klosterbuer & Haubrich LLP
Luverne Chamber of Commerce
Luverne Farm Store
Luverne Optimist Club
Main Street Financial Services, Inc
Margaret Vegge
Mike and Jennifer Engesser
Monte and Michele Van Dyke
Nelson Benson
Pamida
Papik Motors
Prairie Heights Bison
Robert and Carol Fawley
Ron and Cathy Honken
Samuel and Barbara Berghorst
Sanford Luverne Medical Center
Sioux Valley Energy
Steve and Marnie Perkins
Tim and Sue Dispanet
Timothy and Karis Gust
Vander Kooi Law Offices

CONTRIBUTOR ($100 +)
Adam and Tracy Hansen
Alan and Ruth Stoakes
Alisha Tack
Allie and Kevin Rozeboom
Aron and Connie Wieneke
Amy Kroger
Angela Beyenhof
Anna Tilstra
Anonymous
Arlene Wynia
Arthur and Carol Wulf
Audrey Gabrielson
Barb and Gary Golla
Barb Askby
Barbara Bot
Bart and Paula Thielbar
Beryl Haugen
Beth Bartels
Betty Ehlers
Betty Luethje
Bob Juhl
Brad Cowell

Lowell and Diane Jauret
Lowell and Shirley Harrison
Mark and Cindy Kurtz
Martin Shearer
Michele and Monte Van Dyke
Mike and Rosie Reker
New Horizon Farms & New Horizon Feeds
Pat Scheidt
Professional Ag Marketing Inc.
R & S Sales
Robert and Sheila Stegenga
Ron and Elaine Fick
Ryan and Charlotte Johnson
Shirley Klosterbuer
Skattum’s Confinement Systems, Inc.
Terry and Michele Vajgrt
Tim & Connie Connell
Tollefson Publishing – Rock County Star Herald
Total Card, Inc.
Van Dyke Bros., Inc.

FONTS
Optima Bold Italic
Galahad Std
LUVERNE AREA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

CELEBRATES PHILANTHROPY

Making a difference in the lives of those with whom we live in and around is a goal of the LACF.

Many of us do things everyday to make an impact.

In 2017 these 3 award winners were recognized for doing just that.

OUTSTANDING CORPORATION OR BUSINESS

This award recognizes a corporation or business that has created a culture of philanthropy within their organization and has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to philanthropy through its: 1) financial support of one or more nonprofit organizations, 2) leadership involvement and 3) volunteer participation and commitment of its workforce in establishing a role model for other businesses in our community. This award does not recognize a single individual representing a corporation or business, but rather the work of the entire corporation or business.

2017 RECIPIENT: FIRST FARMERS & MERCHANTS BANK

First Farmers & Merchants Bank of Luverne is this year’s Outstanding Corporation or Business. This award is given to a business that has created a culture of philanthropy within their organization. Leaders of FF&M share that “we are grateful to live in a community that recognizes the needs of our community.” Needs in a community cannot be met without the financial and volunteer support of businesses and community members. FF&M Bank financially supports youth programs, community fundraisers and events, educational needs, programs for senior citizens, agricultural projects and organizations, nutrition causes, health and wellness programs and preservation programs – 28 different organizations if they were all to be named. Bank employees are encouraged and supported to be involved on local boards, civic organizations and volunteer based causes. When roll call is complete their staff serves on 34 local committees and organizations. The bank cosponsors the free monthly family movie night and has served the Relay for Life and Backpack program from their beginnings. When a community need presents itself, FF&M reacts often leading the charge with financial commitment. In house fundraising through bake sales and cash for jeans day on Fridays is used for charitable programs. Choosing to give gifts to those in need during the holiday over gifts shared with each other is another example of how FF&M bank staff put others before self. Giving of self is a family affair. Current Vice President/Branch Manager Ryan Wynia states, “Our employees are like family to us.” This environment was nurtured by former bank President Mike Engesser and we look forward to watching Ryan and his staff continue this culture. At FF&M Bank they care take of each other but together they take care of others. Congratulations to all of the employees at FF&M.

SPIRIT OF PHILANTHROPY AWARD

This award recognizes an outstanding individual or family with a proven record of exceptional financial generosity and volunteer leadership to one or more Rock County nonprofit organizations who has: 1) demonstrated extraordinary civic and charitable responsibility, and 2) whose generosity inspires others to philanthropic action. This award is to honor the achievements of a living person(s).

2017 RECIPIENT: BETTY MANN

Betty Mann is this year’s recipient of the Spirit of Philanthropy award. This award is given to a living person(s) who has shown a commitment to charitable responsibility and a generosity to inspire others to philanthropic action. Betty’s inspiration as a person of philanthropy comes in many forms. She gives generously of her heart, her time, her money and her passion. Some of Betty’s most public generosity comes in her passion for the Rock County History Center. For 23 years Betty has been the president of the Rock County Historical Society and visionary for keeping the history of Rock County alive through the museums which have grown from one building to six. The research room and volunteers guided by Betty at the History Center have created a system of history collection that is invaluable. Betty says, “It is so gratifying to help someone to find information on their family or subject matter.” In addition to her personal financial commitment to community, Betty has also donated her nutcracker collection, numbering 2,800 and counting in hopes that it would attract people to the History Center. Betty told me that she gives because of how it makes her feel. She states, “I really enjoy doing things to help others. God has given me a great life and I feel happy when I can do something for others.” It is her hope that her example of giving would inspire others to do the same.

THE NONPROFIT SPOTLIGHT AWARD

Recognizes an outstanding volunteer group that has demonstrated exceptional commitment to the community through direct involvement, financial support and leadership. The group should have official status or recognition, i.e., be a chartered support group or incorporated as a nonprofit organization.

2017 RECIPIENT: BACKPACK PROGRAM

There are many outstanding nonprofit organizations in Rock County. This year’s Nonprofit Spotlight award winner has been doing the good work of providing at risk children with nutritious, easy to prepare food for the weekends and access to meal programs for the past nine years. The Luverne Backpack Program serves 180 students. The success of this organization rides of the dedication of a working volunteer board. The program is funded through charitable gifts from individuals, businesses, organizations and grants. The program has very little overhead due to the generosity of rental space and being an all-volunteer labor force. Carri Soto, President of the BackPack Program, reports that 98 cents of every dollar goes directly for the purchase of food. Outside volunteer groups are also involved in helping the Backpack program be successful. Businesses, churches, coffee groups and more volunteer to pack food bags each week to be delivered to the school and anonymously placed in lockers of eligible students. The Backpack program has grown once serving only elementary age students to now offering its food program to ages three through 12th grade. Middle school and high school students have the opportunity to hand select food to help meet their hunger needs. The Luverne Backpack Program works hard to bring the issue of food insecurity to light in Luverne. Carrie states, “We have a beautiful community and it becomes easy to think that issues like food insecurity don’t exist. By speaking about the issue, the challenges, and needs of many of the families that we serve, we have been able to help bring about a greater understanding and sense of collaboration. All of which helps further our mission of Enriching lives one bite at a time.” Congratulations to the Luverne Backpack Program and its volunteer board members.
In the event that you or a loved one would suffer a heart attack in Rock County there is a strong chance that there will be an AED (Automated External Defibrillator) nearby that could save your life thanks to the AED grant program in partnership with Sanford Luverne.

There are now 54 AED units in the county. You can find them in churches, public buildings, squad cars, city trucks, fire halls and lead trucks, and local establishments.

In 2017 we started a pad and battery replacement grant to make sure that when an AED is in need the parts can be replaced. Our local boy scout troop led by scout Tyler deCesare (Troop #0032) did an inventory of all the AEDs in the county, recording battery and pad serial numbers and expiration dates. That information is now in the hands of the Rock County Ambulance for future replacement awareness. Any AED unit can now get replacement parts at no cost through this program.

Why are AEDs important in our communities?

1. Sudden cardiac arrest is a leading cause of death in the U.S.
2. CPR is not enough
3. EMS is fast,... but not fast enough
4. Certain populations are at higher risk (men over 45 and women over 55)
5. Early treatment dramatically improves survival rates
   (when an AED is used within the first 3-5 minutes survival rate goes up 60%)
6. Preparation for the unexpected matters
   (34% of places with an AED have used theirs at least once to save a life)
7. Get trained in how to use an AED and CPR
8. An AED can save a life: yours, your loved one, your neighbor, your co-worker

Give $ - Save a Life – Rock County is a healthy place to live!!