

*Your*  
Looking forward and giving back  
**Watertown** SPRING 2015  
Community Foundation



**WILDLIFE WARRIORS** is a program for fifth and sixth grade boys supported since it began two years ago by Giving Back 365 donors. The science-based lessons are designed to foster a love and appreciation for nature and the Watertown community. Projects benefit animals, people and the environment.



Looking forward and ...  
**GIVING BACK**  
**365**

\$1 a day can make a difference. Watertown Community Foundation donors have been proving that since the Giving Back 365 program began three years ago. The program keeps growing and so does the impact.

In 2014, Giving Back 365 donors awarded \$12,500 with the following grants:

- \$2,000 to **Beacon Center** to help with purchasing furniture.
- \$960 for a fire proof file cabinet for **Big Brothers Big Sisters**.
- \$1,168 to purchase activity stations at the **Boys & Girls Club**
- \$2,000 to **Inter-Lakes Community Action Partnership** which will fund costs for an intern to conduct a community needs assessment in Watertown.
- \$1,500 to support the **Wildlife Warriors** program Bramble Park Zoo for "at-risk" boys.
- \$2,000 for radio equipment to **Watertown Area Transit**.
- \$900 to **Watertown Youth Soccer Association** for new soccer balls and bags.
- \$2,000 to the **Young Entrepreneurs Academy** for materials with which to build trade show displays.

Nearly 50 individuals, couples and businesses have joined the 2015 Giving Back 365 effort thus far. If you haven't already done so, we urge you to consider joining this giving circle by giving \$1 a day to make your community better. Half of your contribution is used for grants in the current year and half is placed in an endowed fund to support future Giving Back 365 grants. As a member, you are eligible to participate in the grant-making process.

There are several ways to join or make a donation. You can donate by check or go to: [www.watertowncommunityfoundation.org](http://www.watertowncommunityfoundation.org) to use your Visa, Mastercard or Discover card.

For more information on how you can join Giving Back 365, please contact us at 605-882-3731, 211 E. Kemp, or email: [foundation@iw.net](mailto:foundation@iw.net)

TEAR OFF/ MAIL IN PANEL

To join Giving Back 365, please complete the following.

\_\_\_\_\_ I/we wish to join Giving Back 365. My check for \$365 is enclosed.

\_\_\_\_\_ I/we wish to join Giving Back 365 at the **Above & Beyond** level. My check for \$500 is enclosed.

\_\_\_\_\_ I/we plan to join Giving Back 365 by making a payment or multiple payments with my credit card by going to: [watertowncommunityfoundation.org](http://watertowncommunityfoundation.org).

\_\_\_\_\_ I/we wish our membership to be listed as follows

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I/we wish to join Giving Back 365 but prefer anonymity.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (Please Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address, City, State, Zip

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Email



# What's next for H<sub>2</sub>O-20?



*ONSITE – Groundbreaking is set to begin in April for the new multi-purpose center just east of the new middle school. Here, Robb Peterson (left) and Bert Falak, H<sub>2</sub>O-20 committee members, pose with Mayor Steve Thorson (center) in front of the building site.*



H<sub>2</sub>O-20 Implementation Committee members take that question seriously and began diving into the answer after the first of the New Year. They discussed Watertown's recent wins, challenges and continuing hopes for its future.

Chairs of each of the five focus areas first gave updates on their committee's progress. Most Watertown residents would likely cite the multi-purpose facility as the major accomplishment – their June vote proved that. However, there were many more successes. Among them were: The implementation of Middle College at Watertown High School, a Parent University as well as Community U, two new certified industrial parks, an Angel Fund to assist incoming businesses, establishment of a Watertown 311 website, community beautification projects, an ArtWalk, a plan to improve uptown alleyways and enhance the City's gateways, plans for new softball diamond complex and sheets of ice, enhancements to the bike trail, and establishing more community-wide events like the Homecoming 5K, Family Zoofari, and Winter Fest.

That's a mouthful, but only the tip of the iceberg. There are more wins, but there's still more to be done in all of the five focus areas: 1. Commitment to Public Education, 2. Diversity of Employment Opportunities, 3. Safe & Attractive Neighborhoods & Business Districts; 4. Vibrant Cultural & Recreation Amenities; and 5. Welcoming, Family-Friendly, & Appealing to All Ages.

While the group acknowledged H<sub>2</sub>O-20's successes, they recognized that some things could have been done better throughout the process. The meeting, however, was mainly meant to begin planning the next steps in propelling the H<sub>2</sub>O-20 team into a new phase.

"Some things have grown legs and are going on their own, which is exactly what you hope for," said Robb Peterson, H<sub>2</sub>O-20 leader. For example, the recreational trails team meets regularly and has implemented many great things in our trails system and they aren't done. That group, as well as others, has developed a life of their own, and that's the community acting together on its own behalf.

Also, the multi-purpose center has been taken over by the City and continues to move forward. Some priorities got side barred due to addressing other ones, but now we are at the point that the implementation committee needs to meet with chairs and sub-chairs to ask: What are the open projects? Are there some that need to be cut? What are the top priorities now and what do you need to get it done?

The committee acknowledged financial support from various entities. The major contributors were the City of Watertown, Prairie Lakes Healthcare Center, Watertown Development Company and the Watertown Community Foundation, which also provided administrative support. That, along with the dedication of the chairs and a lot of "race horses" who ran with their projects created a community-wide team second to none, said Jo Vitek, committee member.

In fact, perhaps the overall biggest "win" was community involvement, the group agreed.

Some committees may consolidate, update priorities and involve different members. However, engaging the community in the effort is one area the implementation committee isn't worried about. Time and again, Watertown impressed its consulting firm, MarketStreet, with sheer numbers of community involvement. It began in the planning stages with dedicated leadership, broke records with 2,400 survey respondents and continued full-steam ahead with 700+ residents involved in the committees going forward.

"I would like to thank the community for the support given to the H<sub>2</sub>O-20 effort," Peterson said. "The incredible efforts from the people involved, directly and indirectly, is a testament to the greatness of the city we live in."

Just because H<sub>2</sub>O-20 has accomplished a few things, doesn't mean it's over, added Don Roby. "It's not going away. The plan doesn't go in the drawer, it's ongoing."

The strategic plan will lead the community-wide H<sub>2</sub>O-20 team into the new phase soon. If you aren't already involved in H<sub>2</sub>O-20 but would like to be, please let us know your interest. Please contact the Watertown Community Foundation at 211 E. Kemp or phone: (605) 882-3731 or email: [H2O-20@watertowncommunityfoundation.org](mailto:H2O-20@watertowncommunityfoundation.org)