

# Ideas that Work:



- **Estate Planning Seminar:** The South Dakota Community Foundation partnered with the Vermillion Area Community Foundation to host an estate planning seminar to help inform the public about the importance of estate planning while offering advice for individuals in attendance. We partnered with local advisors and attorneys to bring value to participants and build awareness of the giving opportunities to the Vermillion Area Community Foundation. 20 people attended the free seminar.
- **1% for the Community:** Based on the popular 1% for the Planet model, local residents and businesses would be challenged to give back 1% of their gross sales to their local community foundation (or another designated nonprofit) each year. If they make this commitment, a 1% for the Community Logo will be given to the business owner to proudly display as a community supporter. This will encourage residents to support this business, knowing that their dollars are working to not only support a local business but to give back to nonprofits.
- **Tour of Homes:** Gettysburg hosted a tour of homes during the holiday season. They partnered with residents to decorate and show off area homes with proceeds benefitting the Gettysburg Community Foundation.
- **Progressive Dinner:** Herreid hosted a progressive dinner party in 2015. They partnered with local residents willing to invite donors into their homes for a portion of the dinner. The appetizers, salads, main course and dessert were all held at different homes. Tickets were sold for the event with proceeds benefitting the Herreid Community Foundation.
- **Give Where you Live:** Year end challenge to acquire reoccurring donor gifts. SDCF matches \$'s for donors. Use a sliding scale based on % of population. Langford had 60 donors in 2015. That is 20% of their population.
  - 5% of population (at \$2 or more/month) - \$500 match
  - 10% pop - \$1000
  - 20% donors - \$2500
  - 30% donors - \$5000
  - 50% donors - \$10,000
- **Citywide Rummage Sale:** The Herreid Community Foundation has sponsored their citywide rummage sale for the past 9 years. Individuals contact the foundation to be included on a map that is then made available around town. All proceeds from those sales are donated to the Herreid Community Foundation.
- **Spring Events:** The Greater Lyman Foundation has been kicking off spring for the last four years by bringing in a band to Kennebec, S.D. and serving a great meal to their donors and to the community. A great way to say thank you to donors, while keeping everyone aware of the great work being done by your foundation.
- **Dinner Down Under:** Faulkton is working to build awareness of their newly established CSA by partnering with a local resident and business owner. "Aussie Dave" is from Australia. He has built businesses in the community and owns others. He is extending his commitment to the community by partnering with a local chef to create authentic Aussie dishes and drinks for a reception on May 17th. The Faulkton Area Foundation sold 80 tickets and will hold a live auction.



- **Year End Letter:** Tyndall produces a year-end letter to all main street businesses and donors letting them know what has happened in town throughout the year, why the foundation exists, and encourages them to support their efforts. They began in 2011 and hope for local residents to recognize it and save an annual contribution for this occasion each year.
- **Thanks for Giving Campaign:** Langford has championed this effort in 2013, with a Thanks for Giving fall campaign. Postcards will be sent to all past donors and alumni and a dinner/reception will be held to thank everyone who has been a part of the foundation.
- **City Partnership:** Montrose has partnered with their city who is offering a matching challenge along with the SDCF matching grant opportunity. The city is offering a 1 to 1 match that will eventually lead to the Montrose Area Foundation meeting the SDCF match. Other CSAs have also received support from economic development groups and local service organizations.
- **The Round-up program** has become popular in smaller communities and has been a success in Vermillion, Platte, and Tyndall. This is another partnership with the city to allow residents to “round-up” their utility bills to the next dollar and have that amount donated to the foundation. This will result in at least a \$.12 donation or at most \$11.88 donation per year. It could really add up with community buy-in. More detailed information from the communities that have implemented this program is available upon request.
- **Business Gratuity:** Another project coming from the folks in Vermillion. One of their board members, and local business owner, decided to help out by offering customers the chance to pay a “gratuity” to the Vermillion Area Community Foundation. This is as simple as including an option at the bottom of their bill to add 3% for a donation. Checks are sent from the business quarterly to the local foundation.
- **Memorial program:** Britton now relies almost exclusively on memorial gifts for fundraising. They print and distribute sympathy cards for families. Inside is an envelope with a card that is sent to the Britton Area Foundation. When a member of the community passes on, residents have an opportunity to send a gift to the foundation in memory of the recently deceased along with a sympathy card to the family of the departed. A great program to establish in any community. The memorial packs are placed in churches, banks and funeral homes throughout town.
- **Direct Deposit:** Residents and employees of the large employer in town (local bank, health care facility) sign up for payroll deduction. Dakotacare employees in Webster participate in payroll deduction for the Day County Community Foundation. A relatively “painless” way to give back.
- **Founders Club:** This system was utilized in Wagner (and many other areas) to get their fund up and running. Board members develop a list of donor prospects and ask them to commit for a certain amount each year for a number of years. It might be \$100/year for five years or \$1,000/year for 10 years or \$5/month for five years. There are no rules regulating this system. Many donors like being considered the “founders” of the foundation.



- **Tour of Tables:** Deuel County Community Foundation hosts a tour of tables event where area businesses will sponsor a table, decorate it, and then will host a potluck. Door prizes and silent auctions, and other donation opportunities make it a great way to build the foundation's asset base while increasing awareness of the foundation and the benefit it will have on the community.
- **Facilitate unusual gifts:** Unusual gifts of land, stock, coins, vehicles, insurance benefits, or crops are also great ways to support the foundation. Commodity postcards and marketing materials placed in local businesses are a good way to secure these types of donations. SDCF staff are available anytime to assist with this process.
- **Recognition dinner:** Celebrate philanthropy in your community, announce a major gift or grant, and build awareness for your foundation. No ask is even necessary at an event like this, but will sometimes pay off in the form of an estate gift or anonymous donation.
- **Giving Back 365:** Watertown Community Foundation (non SDCF fund) promotes philanthropy by offering a "giving back 365" program. \$1/day can make you an influential philanthropist in any community, and is easy for many residents around the state.
- **Alumni mailing:** Send letters to high school alumni and graduation classes.
  - Hill City Scholarship fund began asking classes to give an amount equal to the year they graduated. For example, the class of 1951 would be asked to give \$19.51 per person. Has worked well so far for them.
- **Bingo Night:** Herreid holds two bingo nights annually to build awareness of the foundation, make some money, and have a good time with residents! The spring bingo night is strictly a cash game, with the fall event bringing in large prizes from community businesses and residents. Last year, they gave away an ATV and a big screen TV, among many other great prizes. They seem to raise around \$12,000/year from these events. Bingo might not be the right fit for your community. Maybe it would be partnering with a local winery and bistro to host a wine-tasting event. Or head to the local golf course to hit the links for the local community foundation. Find the niche in your community and help people celebrate the power of philanthropy.
- **Festival of Trees:** The Greater Sturgis Area Community Foundation and the Greater Belle Fourche Area Foundation hosts an annual Festival of Trees in the local First Interstate Bank. Trees wreaths are decorated and donated by local businesses, groups and organizations and displayed in the back in November. Tickets are sold to an evening reception and gala where the trees and wreaths are sold at auction. The local foundation will partner with two other nonprofit organizations that will also benefit from the proceeds. The local arts council often provides music while the bank and other groups donate food and drink for a social held before the auction. This is a great opportunity for residents to gather before the holiday season while supporting great community organizations.



- **Decks of Playing Cards:** Both Viborg and Langford have purchased historic playing cards from RealSouvenirPlayingCards.com. Local businesses or residents “sponsor” a particular card by make a donation to the cause. The price may vary with the value/visibility of the card (i.e. Face cards may be worth more than others). The resident or business sponsoring the card may include a photo and description of their choice. Many include historic photos of the town/businesses, while others recognize individuals or loved ones. The decks cost around \$5 each and can be sold to the community to make additional profit. Not a big money-maker, but creates visibility for the local foundation and a long-term marketing tool.
  - A twist on this idea would be to set aside 250 decks for an end-of-the-year raffle. All board members would select one deck to put their name on. Each member would then open that deck and sign a pre-determined card. They would sell the cards at \$20/deck, and anyone who purchases a deck with a signed card is entered into a drawing for great prizes or one big prize.
- **Being Donor-centered:** Thanking donors is very important in philanthropy. Letting them know their gift has been received and is appreciated will strengthen the already positive relationship that has been built with that particular donor. Thanking them for what they are doing is a lot of work, but is the means to accepting larger gifts in the future. Here are some ideas:
  - Thank them. Cards, phone calls from board members and printed names in publications and on websites is great.
  - Invite them to see the projects you’ve contributed to. □ Celebrate with them. Throw them a party. Invite your grantees.
  - Invite them to serve on the board or volunteer
  - Ask them for their opinions (donor satisfaction surveys, large donor lunch meeting to pick their brain)
  - Collect and re-tell donor stories. Video or text would be great!
- **Connect a donor opportunity to a unique aspect of your community:** For example, if you are on Hwy 20 you could start the Hwy 20 club. Members donate \$20/month or per year to the CSA. They would receive special recognition.
- **Create a community giving area:** Parkston, S.D., has acquired a piece of property in the downtown area and has turned it into a very nice park. Donor names are engrained in the walls and on granite plaques. This park is unique to Parkston with many of the materials donated by local businesses and individuals and offers another opportunity to recognize donors to the foundation.
- **Social Media:** If you haven’t already, social media can be a powerful way to engage/connect with current and potential donors, while staying in touch with local and national trends. Vehicles like Facebook and Twitter require about 1-2 hours/week and offer another way of telling your story and marketing your foundation.
- **Website:** SDCF offers a free website to our CSAs. This is a great outlet for telling your story, promoting your grants, accepting grant opportunities and accepting online donations. The SDCF pays all administrative fees connected to online donations, so the donor is credited with the full amount contributed into the CSA fund.



- **The Big Gift:** Annual community events and fund drives are essential for building awareness and assets of your foundation. At the same time, the big gifts can make influential impacts that will last for perpetuity. Board members should consider working closely with attorneys and financial professionals to inform them of the local community foundation and the benefit a large estate gift could have on the viability and sustainability of the community. Having an attorney or financial planner on your board is even better. The key here is personal contact and relationship building with donors and planners alike.
- **Annual Pheasant Hunt:** The Deuel County Community Foundation has hosted a pheasant at a local pheasant preserve in November of the past two years. The lodge owner donates the guides, hunt, birds, and event space, and hunters pay \$250 to spend the day hunting, eating, and enjoying conversations. The average group size has been 20-25 hunters. A good way to offer more "value" for the donation. You could also partner with local landowners/lodge owners to offer a "gratuity" to incoming hunting enthusiasts. This gratuity would be added to the bill and donated to the Foundation at the end of the hunting season
- **Langford - Sponsor The Score:** Initiative and partnership with their local school district. Donors are encouraged to "sponsor the score" of a home varsity football, basketball or volleyball game. The donor would write a check for the amount of points scored by the home team in the contest they chose to sponsor. Recognition would be given at the game and all "sponsors" could be entered into a drawing at the end of the year for a nice local prize. Deuel County has also tried this for the first time in 2013
- **Langford - "Thanks for Giving" Campaign:** This will include a postcard insert into the local paper, a fundraising letter to the donor base, and a donor recognition event on November 15th, including a presentation by the SDCF. They received a capacity-building grant to cover the costs of this initiative.
- **Tyndall - Year-End Letter to Community:** This is an annual letter sent by the chairperson of the board to downtown business owners and residents. This letter informs them of the great work being done by the foundation and asks that they make a year-end contribution to the fund. All board members and their contact information are listed at the bottom of the letter. They are attempting to establish an annual culture of giving around that time of year.
- **Armour - Board Match Challenge:** Current and past board members came together to offer a \$10,000 match challenge to the community.
- **Lead/Deadwood-Chili Contest:** In April, the Lead/Deadwood Community Foundation hosts a chili contest including 18 different organizations and companies. They charged \$7 a person and awarded grants at the event.
- **Herreid - 100 Bushel, 1 Calf Club:** Donors are encouraged to donate at least 100 bushels of their choice of grain or 1 calf, with sale proceeds going to the Herreid CF to gain access into this club. Club members will be recognized at an event and in a publication.



- **Community Care Package:** Eureka is staying in touch with its young people by getting the city and community groups together to send care packages to those who go on to college. The package includes a letter from the mayor, city council, school representatives, a local newspaper, something manufactured in their area (jerky, sunflower seeds, etc); and other items. This is just a good way to let them know they are welcome back after they explore the world.
- **Alumni Photo Bombs:** Other state foundations have partnered with schools to put old high school photos of alumni on their website. Their photos will not be removed from the site until they make a contribution to the foundation. This adds some accountability and fun to the giving process.
- **Alumni Telethon:** The Herreid Community Foundation partnered with local students and their alumni association to host a telethon. Students and board members worked through an evening to call upon alumni to ask them to support the Herreid Community Foundation. It was time intensive, but very successful for building awareness and value of the fund.
- **Community Foundation Welcoming Committee:** This is an initiative coming from another state. Residents of their local community foundation will act as a welcoming committee for new residents. They will all include a letter from the foundation president, a “treasure” map telling them about all the local treasures in the community (or a scavenger hunt to help them find the local hotspots), an invitation to any upcoming events and other items (locally made products, coupons to local retail stores, information about the local community foundation, etc).
- **Easter Egg Hunts:** The donor pays a certain amount and the Foundation brings the stuffed plastic eggs to a home and hides them in the yard. Suggested amount: 50 eggs for \$25 or 100 eggs for \$50.
- **Coffee and Calendars:** In Wall, SD, the community coordinates a Coffee and Calendars event quarterly for community groups and organizations to gather over a cup of coffee and discuss upcoming events. This is an easy way to get the word out about what different groups in your area are doing.
- **Faulkton-Hawaii Luau Dinner:** The Faulkton Area Community Foundation hosted a traditional Hawaiian Luau Dinner to raise funds for their CSA. The event featured traditional Hawaiian cuisine from the islands. Tickets were sold for \$60 or \$450 for a table of 8. Ticket holders received a Hawaiian pre-dinner cocktail, appetizer, main course, and dessert. Entertainment included Hawaiian trivia, raffles and a silent auction. Prizes were given for table trivia winners, best Hawaiian-dressed male and female.
- **Philip-Flower Fundraiser:** Nonprofit organization asks local businesses if they would like flowers in front of their storefront. The organization buys flowers for all the businesses that ask for them. This also ensures consistency in flowers from store to store on their Main Street. The organization takes care of the flower pots all summer (watering/weeding, etc.)

