AN INTENTIONAL COMMUNITY

A magazine called *Relevant* provides some interesting thoughts about developing "**community**." I found many of these to be relevant to the groups, organizations and boards in our community of Sabetha.

Community has to be intentional. Even if it starts organically, it still has to be maintained. The community that Jesus formed with His 12 disciples was intentional. It wasn't spontaneous. It's very unlikely that a tax collector and a fisherman would have naturally come together had Jesus not called them both. And there were some moments of tension within the group. The disciples didn't understand or agree with each other on everything, but as they possibly bickered or even disagreed, they became a community that multiplied and changed the world. An intentional group of twelve came together four years ago to form the first Board of Directors for the Greater Sabetha Community Foundation. We are a group that varies age, occupation, church affiliation and gender, but we come together with a common goal for our community.

Community can't just be with people we feel comfortable with, who completely understand each other and believe the same things. Think about your church family. The diversity, the differences, all of these imperfect people that come from different walks of life and yet share one common love: Jesus. GSCF was created by people who have a love for the community of Sabetha and as this group was formed, a great deal of thought went into bringing together a group of people with a common purpose, but yet were different in many ways as well.

Community must be open to invite others in. As we form boards or small groups within larger ones, it is important to extend the invitation to those who might offer a difference or a suggestion for change. It's easy to maintain a community that is closed, but it's important to be open to new ideas and new people that more effectively represent the broader picture of the whole. GSCF will be updating the Board of Directors this fall. Do you know of someone who would like to serve? Would you like to serve? We are open to inviting others in!

Create a **community** memory. Do something that will create a memory and bring people around a common cause. The 4th annual Give to Grow Match Day is two months away. GSCF wants to offer to you this community opportunity. Not an obligation, but an opportunity to support what is happening with your monetary gifts. Help these nonprofit organizations create a memory. Then on January 11, we will be creating a memory once again at the Community Celebration Gala! Put the date on your calendar and join us at The Main Event.

Helping to **create community** has been an up and down process for me. I've had to work to put aside fear, laziness and anything that keeps me from stepping out and pursuing relationships. I've learned that I have to let go of self-preservation and self-criticism. I've had to put off retirement so I can be involved and be a part of lasting changes. My job extends beyond Sabetha as I serve as Affiliate Coordinator for the Greater Manhattan Community Foundation. Working with foundations in Holton, Marysville, Doniphan County, Frankfort, Clay Center, Valley Falls and Atchison has allowed me to meet community-minded people in these other towns that love their place just like I love mine. How satisfying it has been and I am thankful for my part in helping others learn what a **Community** Foundation can do to be an effective force for good.