

# Grants go to county efforts

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Ellsworth County I-R

In September, the Ellsworth County Extension Service plans to observe Emergency Preparedness Month with a challenge.

Over the month, county residents will be encouraged to learn more about emergency preparations and actions to take in case of a fire, flood, tornado or some other disaster.

Would you be able to grab your birth certificate and other important papers, for instance, in the case of a house fire?

Extension agent Jamie Rathbun hopes the answer to that question will be "yes" after the Emergency Preparedness Challenge.

"Your birth certificate probably isn't the first

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thing on your mind, but you might need it down the road and this will save you from having to go through the time and expense of getting another one," she said.

The challenge was one of eight projects to receive grants this year from the Smoky Hills Charitable Foundation. In all, foundation directors awarded \$5,887 in grants. Requests totaled \$43,000.

Chairwoman Sara Soukup said she wasn't surprised by the number of requests because demand seems to increase every year.

"The selection is always difficult as all the projects are worthy projects. We had to totally cut some and not fully fund the grants that were selected," she said.

"The board realizes the importance of growing our community grant fund."

The projects were:

- + Ellsworth County Kids Wrestling — \$1,500 for the purchase of a new wrestling mat that also will be used by members of the Ellsworth Junior/Senior High School wrestling team.
- + Wilson Schools Physical Education Department — \$800 towards the purchase of a Shoot-A-Way, a ball return.
- + Ellsworth County Senior Center — \$700 for a new computer and software.
- + Caring for the Heart — \$750 to the non-profit counseling service for office operations.
- + Ellsworth County Extension — \$600 for the Emergency Preparedness Challenge.
- + Kanopolis United Methodist Church — \$537 to purchase a computer and projector for Get Fit Kanopolis.
- + Wilson Chamber of Commerce — \$500 towards construction of the World's Largest Czech Egg.
- + Post Rock Opportunities Foundation — \$500 for improvements to the foundation's Kansas Originals Market and Gallery, north of Wilson.

Rathbun said the idea for her Emergency Preparedness Challenge came from a two-year-old project in Nebraska.

"I thought is sounded like a cool idea, but I didn't know how I was going to fund it," she said.

She said participants will be asked to organize emergency kits. Anyone who is able to check off eight of the dozen items in the kits will be entered in drawings for weather radios, carbon monoxide detectors and other prizes.

The foundation has awarded more than \$48,000 in grants from its community fund since it was organized several years ago.

More information is available from board members: Sara Soukup, chairman; Vern Schepmann, vice chairman; Eleanor Hunter, secretary; Heather Barta, Pat Bender, Amy Branda, Marvin Bush, Pat Mollhagen and Frank Toman or the foundation website, [www.smokyhillscf.org](http://www.smokyhillscf.org).

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