



Enhancing Community

2015 ANNUAL REPORT

The **Bella Vista Foundation's** fourth year of operations was focused on continuing to create relationships and acquaintances within the Bella Vista community, and to expand the Foundation's operations, projects and grants to benefit the community.

The following tools/actions were used to increase Foundation recognition amongst the residents and community organizations:

- A. The Foundation web site www.bellavistafoundation.com was updated, and continued to attract anyone interested in Foundation activities.
 - a. Links were placed on the web site to document projects such as the Master Trails and Greenways Plan.
 - b. Several inquiries from local residents were received and responded to by our directors.
- B. The Foundation brochure, produced in 2013, was distributed at meetings and at a few public locations. The brochure provides general information and includes the Foundation mailing and web site addresses.
- C. A PowerPoint slide show presentation, developed in 2014, was updated and continues to be the tool to introduce the Foundation to local organizations. The presentation was delivered four times in 2015, and will be used in the future. Information regarding the Master Trails and Greenways Plan was added to this presentation.
- D. The Foundation President was interviewed by the local TV channel regarding the progress of the Master Trails and Greenways Plan, and we received press coverage, including several for the roll out of the Master Trails and Greenways Plan.
- E. BVF joined the Bella Vista Business Association to gain exposure to the local business community.

The Foundation had a busy year with community projects, which served to increase our local visibility.

- A. Early in the year the Foundation completed a project to develop a Master Trails and Greenways Plan for Bella Vista. This project was funded in 2014 by a grant from the Walton Family Foundation, who has already supported several planning and construction projects for the Northwest Arkansas Razorback Regional Greenway which extends 37 miles from Fayetteville to Bentonville and Lake Bella Vista.

A brochure was developed to provide a map, explanations and detail on the Master Trails and Greenways Plan, and was handed out in many public meetings. Several 99-page books detailing the Plan are available for public display.

The Foundation submitted the Plan to the City of Bella Vista and to the BV Property Owners Association for formal adoption, which was accepted and recorded by both entities. The Plan includes an extension of the Razorback Greenway into Bella Vista, and encompasses approximately 155 miles of trails within the Bella Vista community.

Subsequently, the Foundation has solicited and received pledges and/or cash from 3 local organizations to purchase fixtures (benches, trash receptacles, etc) for trails and trail heads as they are constructed in the future. These items are not normally included in grants for trail construction, yet need to be funded.

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The City, POA and Cooper Communities, Inc. successfully negotiated agreements for use of their respective private property to accommodate public use of the Bella Vista trails. The City and POA have included in their respective 2016 budgets financial support for maintenance of the trails, and are also addressing the formation of a trails management organization.

Subsequently, The Walton Family Foundation awarded a grant to the Trailblazers, a 501(c)3 non-profit focused on construction of trails in NWA, to construct nearly 40 miles of soft surface trails on the East side of Bella Vista. This is a great step forward in implementing the Master Plan.

- B. The Foundation participated for the third year with the Hay Days Organization to provide charitable funds and products for the 2015 Hay Days event. The Foundation added to the Hay Days grant support for a new event called Battle of the Bands that was organized by the former Live on Stage organization.
- C. The Foundation assisted the Live on Stage 501(c)3 organization to terminate its activities by accepting a donation of their accumulated funds, and subsequently approving a project to award four scholarships to local high school students for collegiate study of arts and music.
- D. The Foundation assisted the Bella Vista Ambassadors by accepting, and ultimately granting a contribution from a local source to accommodate the promotion of Bella Vista as a residential and retirement destination.
- E. The Foundation sold a residential building lot that was donated by a property owner in 2013. The directors have agreed that no additional lots will be considered for acquisition until the real estate environment changes to a more favorable market for individual lots.

The financial records of the Foundation for the year 2014 were reviewed by an outside accounting professional and determined to be accurate and sufficient. Revenues, expenses and balance sheet for the current year are shown in the final 2015 Financial Report as submitted by the Treasurer.

The Board of Directors experienced turnover in 2015. Frank Anderson, formerly an ex-officio director as Mayor of Bella Vista was elected in January. Our Treasurer Al Yanik, resigned in January. The search for additional directors continued, and there is one candidate, Charlie Teal, who was nominated in December and is pending election in January, 2016. We will continue our search for directors. We are allowed by Foundation Bylaws to have a maximum of nine directors, and the Foundation can certainly use more help to conduct Foundation business.

The Foundation continues to value the participation of the Ex-Officio non-voting directors and their alternate(s). Mayor Peter Christie was added to represent the City of Bella Vista. Tommy Bailey resigned as ex-officio director following his departure from the Bella Vista Property Owners' Association, and POA Board Chairman Bob Brooks is serving as an ex-officio director during the search for a new GM for the POA. The ex-officio directors (City, POA and CCI) have supported the Foundation on behalf of their respective organizations, and the Foundation expects that partnership to continue.

To summarize, the Foundation has made significant strides in 2015 toward recognition in the community and has led or participated in beneficial community projects. The Foundation Directors intend to continue and further expand efforts to be recognized as a charitable community depository for donations and services that may be aggregated for the sole benefit of the Bella Vista community.