



2016 ANNUAL REPORT

The **Bella Vista Foundation's** fifth year of operations went flying by and was a successful year for continuing charitable projects begun in prior years, and introducing some new projects to benefit the community.

Presentations were made to several local clubs and organizations as the **Foundation** expanded its exposure in the community. Foundation directors also participated in the Spring Expo held by the Bella Vista Business Association. The presentations included promotion and support for the Master Plan for Trails and Greenways in Bella Vista.

An ongoing project by the **Foundation** for the trails is to solicit donations toward purchase of trails equipment and furniture (benches, bike racks, etc.) for the new trails. The Master Plan received a great boost in 2016 with construction of almost forty miles of trails on the East side of Bella Vista. This project, titled The Back Forty, was accomplished by the NWA Trailblazers, who were funded by a large grant from The Walton Family Foundation. The Back Forty trails have already hosted an International Mountain Biking Association event, drawing more than 500 participants from around the USA and also some international visitors. This event was followed a couple of weeks later by a walking and running event sponsored by Rush Running.

The **Foundation** has already received contributions toward the purchase of furniture for the new trails, and has made arrangements with the City of Bella Vista for the City to acquire and install furniture with grants from the **Foundation** as funds are received from community donors. The first quantity of benches has been ordered and will be installed early in 2017. The first major contribution for this purchase came from the Bella Vista Sunrise Rotary Club.

Two grants were awarded to local organizations. The local Bell Vista TV Channel received a matching grant toward purchase of replacement portable video recording equipment to improve their capability to record remote meetings for their viewers. The Bella Vista Ambassadors received a grant toward advertising and promotional costs for their efforts in marketing the Bella Vista community.

A new project was launched to fund and support a musical concert on July 3rd to provide community entertainment preceding the City sponsored annual fireworks display at Loch Lomond Park. The Hot Dam Blues Concert was organized in partnership with a committee of residents, the City and POA, but had to be called off on the 3rd due to stormy weather and related damage to facilities. Planning and residual funding will hopefully be utilized for a similar event in 2017.

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Another new project for 2016 was an event named Heroes and Hamburgers. This successful event was held in September at the Simple Pleasurers facility in Western Bella Vista. City police and firemen were honored and awarded with funds raised toward purchase of special purpose computers to be used in City emergency vehicles. The **Foundation** partnered with the City, Simple Pleasurers and many local volunteers to accomplish this event.

The **Foundation** Board of Directors experienced some turnover in 2016, but ended the year with the maximum of nine directors allowed by the Foundation Bylaws. Director/Secretary Andy McCown resigned in January, and new director Charlie Teal was elected to the Board. Directors Sunny Lane and Stu Sorensen were elected in March and June respectively. Also, the new COO of the POA, Tom Judson, was added as an ex-officio director in March to represent the POA along with the other two ex-officio directors, Mayor Peter Christie and CEO John Cooper III, who represent the City and Cooper Communities, Inc. Additional turnover will occur early in 2017 because Director Ed Morgan will not be standing for re-election, and a search will occur for a new director.

The 2016 year ended as the **Foundation** began a new project in partnership with the POA. An Adams Pro Tour golf tournament will be hosted by the POA at the Highlands Golf Course in May, and the **Foundation** plans to be the charity partner for this event. Lots of work will be done early in 2017 to bring this high visibility event to the Bella Vista community.

Another busy year closed, and the **Foundation** looks forward to expanding its services to the community by increasing financial resources and staying involved to provide unique services in accordance with the Foundation's stated purpose of serving the Bella Vista community.