



## 2017 ANNUAL REPORT

The **Bella Vista Foundation's** sixth year of operations went by quickly and was a successful year for continuing charitable projects begun in prior years, and introducing some new projects to benefit the community. Also, there are some new faces amongst the Board of Directors.

Presentations were made to several local clubs and organizations as the **Foundation** expanded its exposure in the community. Foundation directors participated in the Spring Expo held by the Bella Vista Business Association. The presentations highlighted the identity and functions of the Foundation, and included promotion and support for the Master Plan for Trails and Greenways in Bella Vista and solicitation for donations of funds to purchase trails furniture.

The Bella Vista Back 40 Trail System has completed its first full year of operation. This was the first 37-mile leg of the proposed 155 miles spelled out in the Master Trails and Greenways Plan that the **Foundation** helped develop with funding from the Walton Family Foundation. Plans are currently being developed to begin construction on another complement of trails in the center of Bella Vista, west of Highway 71, east of Highway 279, as well as the continuation of the Razorback Greenway from Lake Bella Vista to Blowing Springs.

The **Foundation** is continuing to seek funding for trail furniture to be placed along the Back 40 trail through presentations given to local organizations including Kiwanis, Rotary, Altrusa Clubs and participating in the Back 40 Fall Festival put on by the City of Bella Vista. Donation order forms are currently available on the **Foundation** Web Site as well as links from the City. To date, a total of thirteen trail benches have been donated by organizations and individuals. Further efforts are currently under way to seek trail furniture donations from local businesses.

As a complement to utilization of the Back 40 and Blowing Springs trail system, The City of Bella Vista has facilitated "Hike and Learn" sessions inviting the public to participate in trail hikes lead by University of Arkansas professors of Archeology, Geology, Entomology and a Master Naturalist. The City is also very active working with local biking organizations which sponsor biking events.

The **Foundation** was the Charity Partner for the inaugural 2017 Cooper Communities NWA Classic golf tournament the week of May 22nd hosted by the Bella Vista Property Owners Association with assistance from the City of Bella Vista. This event was one of the first community-wide activities in Bella Vista that involved the POA, City of Bella Vista and Cooper Communities, Inc.

The 2017 Tournament event, along with the Pro-Am Party and the Pro-Am Tournament, generated participant and sponsor revenue of over \$65,000, expenses of \$44,000, with net proceeds of more than \$21,000. Local charities which benefitted from the 2017 Tournament were the Boys and Girls Club of Benton County, The First Tee of NWA and The Bella Vista Animal Shelter."

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*Enhancing Community*

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1....

The **Foundation** will continue as the Charity Partner for a repeat event in 2018. The Cooper Communities NWA Charity Classic professional golf tournament is scheduled for the week of June 4, 2018, and will be held in Bella Vista at the Highlands golf course, hosted by the POA. As the 2017 year closes there was discussion regarding changing the tournament date to May 21<sup>st</sup> (same week as the 2017 tournament) due to conflict for the professional APT players with a tournament to be held in St. Louis, MO during the June 4<sup>th</sup> week. The final decision on our date will be made by January 10, 2018.

More spectator attendance will be encouraged for the 2018 tournament with sponsor-aided attractions in a "garden" area set aside for that purpose, including expanded outdoor food and beverage services, and a youth golf clinic on Pro-Am day along with a long drive contest for the professionals. A silent auction has been added to the Pro-Am party, and donations of auction items will be solicited to increase the charity proceeds from the tournament. Tournament sponsors and charitable beneficiaries are being actively solicited by the **Foundation**.

The **Foundation** awarded a grant to the Bella Vista Woodcarvers for promotional expenses for their Annual Artistry in Wood Show held in July.

A new project for the **Foundation** associated with the trails system was engaged in December. The Walton Family Foundation will provide funding for a variety of trees to be purchased and planted in areas located in the proximity of the trails system as a part of their Benton County Tree Planting Master Plan. The **Foundation** will accept the funding and work with the City and POA to coordinate the plantings with the WFF consultant who coordinated the tree projects for other NWA communities. The trails systems agreement between the City and POA will be amended to accommodate the location, care and maintenance of the subject trees.

The **Foundation** Board of Directors experienced some turnover in 2017, but ended the year with the maximum of nine directors allowed by the **Foundation** Bylaws. Director Ed Morgan decided not to stand for re-election for a 2<sup>nd</sup> term, and Director Pat Kunnecke resigned in August. Two new directors were elected during the year.....Directors Bob Ritschel and Bob Brooks were welcomed to the Board of Directors.

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.

*Serving the Community of Bella Vista, Arkansas*

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