

# SALINA JOURNAL

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## Werner honored as Emeritus Board Member of the Cheyenne County Kansas Community Foundation

By **Salina Journal**

Posted Oct 4, 2020 at 2:55 PM

CHEYENNE COUNTY — Carl Werner. The name alone invokes so many unique memories for anyone familiar with USD 297 St. Francis Community Schools. For more than 40 years of his half-century educator career, he was a teacher, administrator and leader at USD 297. His name is synonymous with St. Francis athletics, and many former students owe him a debt of gratitude for knowing the difference between its and it's.

He is now being honored as an Emeritus Board Member of the Cheyenne County Kansas Community Foundation.

Mr. Werner's dedication to St. Francis did not just stop with the school: He was also instrumental in founding what is now the Cheyenne County Kansas Community Foundation. In June 1988, Mr. Werner and six other community leaders (Scott Condray, Eric Fiala, Kelly Frewen, Robert Grace, Jerry Renk and Pastor David Rossbach) established the St. Francis New Generation Fund Inc. The establishing document stated: "To provide funds for the improvement and development of the City of St. Francis and surrounding area."

In January 2007, with Mr. Werner still on board, the St. Francis Community Foundation was established and the SFNG fund was transferred into an endowment fund where the net income, not the principal, would be used for charitable grants to improve the quality of life in the City of St. Francis and surrounding areas.

Mr. Werner's tireless pursuit of ensuring quality education and a robust athletics program for the school district was significantly impacted forever when he founded the St. Francis Educational Foundation Fund in December 2015 with his initial personal donation of \$100,000. He intends for others, not just himself,

to donate to this endowed fund to make the net income available annually to USD 297 for grants to benefit the school district. Today, that fund has grown to more than \$140,000 and has paid \$15,500 in grants to the school.

Fast forward to December 2017, Mr. Werner was still a foundation leader when the community foundation changed its name to Cheyenne County Kansas Community Foundation and added additional funds to benefit all of Cheyenne County, not just St. Francis. He has served on the board of directors, through all the various iterations, for 32 years.

Due to health reasons, Mr. Werner submitted his resignation to the school and the foundation this year, but CCKCF would not accept his resignation. Instead they asked if they could honor him as an Emeritus Board Member. In typical Mr. Werner fashion, he replied with a humble statement: "I'm not sure I have earned that honor but will accept it."

"Indeed Carl has earned this honor! He has set the bar for giving in this community," said Carla Lampe, CCKCF board president. "For decades, he has given his time, talents, energy, and savings to make St. Francis and USD 297 a better place. It's as simple as that. He is a role model for all community members on how to generously give, in all ways, to improve a community. He will forever have a place on our board and our gratitude for decades of community leadership."

"Carl Werner has been the most dedicated champion of the St. Francis school system there ever was, as evidenced by his decades of work in USD 297 as a teacher, superintendent, athletic director, and administrative aid," said Dave Morrow, USD 297 6-12 Principal.

Mr. Morrow went on to say that a few years ago, Mr. Werner made a very generous donation we know today as the St. Francis Educational Foundation Fund, which has been a tremendous blessing to our graduates since its inception. Through that fund, the school board has been able fund scholarships for the KSHSAA Citizenship Award winners, the Dale Henry Excellence In Education Award (given to the runner up of the citizenship vote), and another academic scholarship awarded on the basis of involvement in activities and the student's ACT score.

None of these opportunities existed until Mr. Werner made his donation and gave the school board and superintendent the discretion to use these funds in this way. In every aspect of Carl's involvement in the school system, he has left a legacy of total dedication and devotion.

To honor Mr. Werner, CCKCF is asking those that want to thank him for his years of service to USD 297 and St. Francis, to donate to the St. Francis Educational Foundation Fund to demonstrate to him that his efforts matter and grow this fund he so generously started. Please mail a check to the SF Educational Fund c/o CCKCF, PO Box 967, St. Francis, KS 67756 or make a donation securely online at <https://www.gnwkcf.org/donate-online> (Specify SF Educational Foundation Fund).

CCKCF joined Greater Northwest Kansas Community Foundation as an Affiliate in December 2017. It was formerly the St. Francis Community Foundation formed in 2007. The Foundation serves as a 'savings account' for the good of Cheyenne County "building the foundation of tomorrow" through financial gifts today. The Foundation provides an avenue for donors to give to for projects, county-wide or community specific needs, and personalized giving that best suits the donor's wishes.