



## Speaker to tell Randolph residents about building a 'magnetic community'

RANDOLPH — "Magnetic Communities" and how to become one, will be the message from the Randolph Area Community Foundation next Tuesday, at 6 p.m., at the Lied Public Library conference room, Randolph.

Area residents will want to take in this presentation to learn about their role in Randolph's growth, according to Josh Rayford, local foundation president.

"As a Foundation, we have often wondered how other communities statewide have been so successful in attracting new families, building new facilities, and growing their schools," Rayford said. "We found a guy from a town of 329, who will share with us how they do it. He has told their story statewide."

Richard Walter will share a recipe used by Shickley, a small town in southern Nebraska seven miles west of Hwy. 81, for successful community involvement and a way to help capture the "transfer of wealth" happening now in Nebraska. To date, over 230 Nebraska towns and 34 counties have affiliated with the Nebraska Community Foundation to organize their towns into effective teams for creating "Magnetic Communities" for growth.

Randolph Community Developer, Gary Van Meter, said he has experienced what the

program could do in other communities.

Van Meter heard Walter speak last year where he shared the Shickley Foundation story and how they grew from \$20,000 to a base worth almost \$3 million.

"Given the size of Shickley, which is at 329, it's a story that can fit a town of any size. Nearby communities of Osmond, Wausa, Laurel, Bloomfield and others have moved forward thanks, in part, to affiliation with the NCF," Van Meter said. "Bringing the community out to listen will determine if this key component is right for Randolph."

Walter will identify key elements for making successful communities by attracting stakeholders who are "outside of the zip code."

"It's important to take advantage of membership in the NCF," said Van Meter.

Van Meter identified several examples from the Walter presentation.

Affiliation involves the opportunity for matching funds as challenge grants from larger foundations also affiliated with NCF. Sherwood, Kiwit, and national foundations help small communities by offering matching challenges to greatly increase a community's asset base.

School alumni are another valuable way for towns to attract outside resources.

Literally hundreds of for-

mer hometown alumni are seeking ways to give back to the towns where they were raised. Community Foundations are now working with Alumni Banquet programs to bring former grads home to see how the town is progressing.

"A good example of a major project to demonstrate Randolph's progress was the Randolph Public Library," Van Meter said.

There is no admission. Residents will be asked, however, to weigh-in on the decision to move forward with affiliation.

"This will be for the community to decide," Rayford said. The Foundation can't move forward without support from community resi-

dents. We hope folks will come to listen to Walter's presentation and find out what other Nebraska towns are already doing and provide the direction we are hoping for."



**Richard Walter will share with area residents about Shickley, a small town in southern Nebraska, and how the community found a way to help capture the "transfer of wealth" happening now in Nebraska.**