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For Immediate Release

Founders Club to help kick start the Byron Community Foundation

By David Sletten

The creation of a Founders Club is one of several projects the new Byron Community Foundation is rolling out this year.

The Founders Club is the first step to raise funds for the foundation's endowment fund, which will enable the foundation to distribute grants to viable projects in and around the City of Byron. Participants invest \$1,000 to become a member of the Founders Club.

"The Founders Club is a great way for individuals to assist the foundation in getting started. Through this project we hope to raise money for our general endowment fund which will help provide a solid footing for the foundation," said board president David Sletten.

Inclusion in the Founders Club is a one-time opportunity for area residents. Special recognition will be given to Founders Club members, although contributors may remain anonymous, if they so choose.

The foundation was started earlier this year in an effort to build on the area's rich tradition of giving and as a means to connect resources within the Byron community. Established by local citizens, funds are administered by Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF). Donations are tax deductible as the foundation is a 501(c)3 nonprofit, public charity.

The Byron Community Foundation strives to provide tools for the philanthropy of individuals, families, businesses and other organizations dedicated to strengthening and enhancing the Byron community by engaging citizens, connecting resources where needed, and building a stronger sense of community, according to its mission statement.

The board, made up of 11 local residents, will also be holding an asset mapping session with the aid of representatives from SMIF. The asset mapping session is open to the public and all interested parties are encouraged to attend. The session is scheduled for July 11th at 6:30pm. The session will be held in the commons area of the Byron High School. The individuals attending this session will help identify assets within the

categories of financial, physical, institutions, associations and individuals. The process will aid the board in recognizing the strengths of the community.

The board meets once a month and directors have been busy outside meetings getting the foundation off the ground. The board will also begin fundraising and identifying projects and goals for the distribution of funds.

Anyone interested in becoming a part of the Founders Club should contact President David Sletten or any of the board members: Dan and Amy Mesenburg, Lou Kuhlmann, Chris Ryan, Joe Cartney, Cathy Enerson, Tai Kraft, LeAnn Bieber, Jeff Elstad, or Frank McAnulty. More information is also available by emailing dsletten2001@gmail.com.

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