

PRESS RELEASE

Bank It Raises \$47,870 in 2015, Selects 2016 Visions

Alva, OK January 2016: Our community can celebrate another amazing year of generosity. In 2015 the habit of helping grew as citizens, businesses and local institutions all worked together to support the 4 COMMUNITY Visions of 2015: The Alva EMS, Graceful Arts, the COMMUNITY K-9 & Alva Police Department, and the annual vision, Neighbors in Need that supports the Alva Wesleyan Food Bank. Each of these visions received funds to support their organization's needs. The Alva EMS received \$14,495 to purchase a LUCAS Machine which will aid the EMTs in performing continuous CPR on a patient during transportation to the hospital. Graceful Arts received \$4,141 to help continue and expand youth art's education. The Alva K-9 unit received \$6,566 to expand training for the newest addition to the task force, Duke and his partner Patrick Hawley. These funds were also used to help pay on the remaining balance for the purchase of the dog. And lastly, the local participating Food Bank is set to receive \$6,107 to help fund their organization's needs in 2016.

This year Bank It raised \$2,000 more than the previous year and owe it all to this amazing community and the financial institutions that support it. This year, Alva State matched \$\$6,000, BancCentral matched \$8,500, and Community Bank matched \$750. High Plains Bank matched \$200 and Hopeton is still anxiously awaiting *their own* customers to get on board and start donating towards Bank It *at their location*. All banks have pledged to match a portion of the funds donated *at their location, by their customers*. So the more patrons that donate locally, the more funds will be matched.

This year there were 6 applicants. Due to the continued need of the local food bank for funding, Bank It has accepted it as an annual 4th quarter vision. This the first 3 quarters of the year available for worthy organizations.

Bank It selected for the 2016 visions –

Northwest Family Services, January to March – NWFS applied for funding to help aid in the youth services programs they provide for local families. NWFS has been operating for over 40 years and help over 1000 individual each year. This organization helps to provide temporary and emergency foster care when needed. They provided education for new parents and help support families in need with hygiene products, diapers, wipes, household cleaning supplies and even car seats. Due to the new car seat law, many families and/or foster families don't have appropriate age car seats. NWFS is trying to help provide these for families who need them. Additionally, NWFS provides many programs for local families, including: Emergency Youth Shelter, Foster Care, Counseling, First Time Offender Services, Child Development & Parenting Education,

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Parenting through Separation & Divorce, Community Resource Program, Healthy Living Program & more that help youth in at-risk situations. Bank It is proud to aid in support and funding for Northwest Family Services.

Creature Concerns, April to June – Creature Concerns applied for Bank It this year with a new vision in mind for their organization. They have worked hard with the City of Alva Pound and found a great need for micro-chipping of all incoming lost animals and all animals up for adoption. This new vision will allow patrons to get their pet micro-chipped locally, as well as provide at least 1, maybe 2 local scanners to use for re-uniting lost pets with their families. Creature Concerns is one of the hardest working non-profit organizations Bank It has helped and are excited to help again. They have a solid plan in place for implementation and are excited to make the lost pet and adoption process more organized and easier to manage. They also plan on using the funds to add another Spay/Neuter Clinic this year. They already host at least 3 and are always booked morning to night. Bank It is excited to partner with this great organization.

Panhandle Nutrition (Senior Citizen's Center in Alva) July to September – The local Senior Citizen's center feeds between 60-90 seniors each day, and are hoping to secure funding to help supplement the menu as well as help pay monthly bills. Due to greater and greater state funding, this facility is very close to being unable to provide daily lunch to local seniors. They have explored decreasing lunches to 3 days a week, but Alan Smith stated, "I refuse to make our citizens go hungry. If I have to pay utility bills or for meals myself, I will." He additionally explained how severe the cuts to funding have been. Bank It hopes the cycle of generosity will continue when this Vision comes around in 2016.

Neighbors in Need, local participating food bank, October to December - This COMMUNITY Vision is an annual 'Bank It for the Food Bank' program. Food and funds can be donated in support of the local participating food bank.

The Bank It board wants to create a 'HABIT OF HELPING,' creating an avenue for helping others that is both convenient, and well organized. Stop by any local financial institution and let your teller know to "Hold out some money for Bank It". For more information log on to www.ahabitofhelping.com.