



By Jeff Headley

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With this year's Cattlemen's Ball raising a record \$2.12 million, local health care entities received grants from the fundraising effort during a wrap-up dinner held recently in Swede's Dance Hall at Paxton.

Annually, the ball promotes beef in a healthy diet, showcases rural Nebraska, and raises money for cancer research in the Fred and Pamela Buffett Cancer Center at Omaha and local health care-related projects.

The ball was held June 7-8, and was hosted by the Ralph and Beverly Holzfaster family of Paxton and the Neal Hansen family of Sutherland.

With 10 percent of the funds raised going back to local entities for health care-related projects, this year's Cattlemen's Ball organizers were able to distribute \$200,000 to local agencies.

Dr. Ken Cowan, director of the Fred and Pamela Buffett Cancer Center, said, "To raise \$2 million is incredible. It does show that people in this state are so generous."

Cowan said money donated through the fundraiser would be used to further research, hasten cures and speed up recovery processes at the institute.

Ralph Holzfaster said the Cattlemen's Ball involved much work, but the end result was satisfying.

"This was a lot of work, but it was a lot of fun," said Holzfaster said. "We raised a lot of money and not one person said no when we asked them for contributions. It was great to raise so much money for cancer research and it is nice that some of that money gets to stay here."

Beverly Holzfaster said, "It was an extremely successful event and the amount of money raised exceeded our expectations. We're just so grateful for the help. We had great volunteers. It is also great that some of that money will be passed on to the people to help us every day."

Ogallala Community Hospital and the Great Plains Health Care Foundation at North Platte both received \$40,000 from funds raised during the Cattlemen's Ball.

Ogallala Community Hospital will use the money to purchase infusion center equipment.

In July, the Banner Health facility began construction on a \$2 million addition to its existing facility and money from the Cattlemen's Ball will be used to help purchase infusion equipment for the new addition.

"Banner Health, Ogallala Community Hospital certainly appreciates the \$40,000 contribution to be used for our oncology/cancer care program," Ogallala Community Hospital Chief Executive Officer Sharon Lind said.

"We intend to use this gift to upgrade the furnishings in the infusion area of the new addition and create an outdoor space to promote a healing environment.

"It will provide a space for peace and tranquility, to relax and feel comfortable while receiving their chemotherapy and intravenous infusion treatments.

"It's that special touch that makes all the difference in providing quality compassionate care to our patients."

Lind said Ogallala Community Hospital was excited to participate in the Cattlemen's Ball and help strengthen ties to other area medical providers.

"We were very excited to participate in the event," Lind said. "It provided us the opportunity to give back to the community and supports our collaborative work with the University of Nebraska Medical Center's Cancer Research Center, Callahan Cancer Center at North Platte, which strengthens our cancer care program here at Ogallala Community Hospital and in western Nebraska.

"It's about collectively caring for our patients across the entire state of Nebraska and providing the latest in cancer treatment close to home."

Great Plains will use \$30,000 for the Callahan Cancer Center and \$10,000 for the emergency medical center.

Perkins County Health Services at Grant and Chase County Hospital Foundation at Imperial each received \$7,500.

Both will use the funds for satellite treatment center equipment.