

Marshall food pantry receives funds from KC businesspeople

By Carlos Restrepo. The Marshall Democrat-News: July 17, 2013.

Marshall City Administrator Connie Latimer and Bill Riggins, executive director of the Marshall Saline Development Corporation, attended a business trip promoting urban/rural alliances Friday, July 12, in Kansas City.

During the meeting, Riggins and Latimer received support from several entrepreneurs from Kansas City who stepped forward to help raise funds for Marshall's food pantry, which is currently trying to raise money for its expansion.

"We believe in the work the city and MSDC are doing and appreciate the city manager articulating the needs of the city," said Marvin Lyman, president of Radical Consultants, one of the donors at the event. "We were glad to help promote regional cooperation by supporting this project."

The event is one of the several meetings the MSDC has planned with leaders from Kansas City to promote Marshall as a place for economic development, following the release earlier this year of MSDC's Economic Development Plan for the city.

The plan was drafted by Zimmer Real Estate Services, a Kansas City company which has been aiding MSDC in its steps to achieve the plan.

"Saline County has an immense reserve of entrepreneurial talent and strong institutions like Wood & Huston Bank, Fitzgibbon Hospital and Missouri Valley College, among others," said Troy Nash, Vice President of Zimmer Real Estate Services.

Following the recent death of Latimer's father, Russell Fenner, Latimer said she and her brother, Monte Fenner, Saline County Southern District Commissioner, decided to honor his memory by contributing to the pantry's expansion.

"We decided to create a memorial by having people donate to the food pantry building fund," Latimer said.

Latimer said at least \$4,250 was raised for the pantry from the trip to Kansas City. She said she was told another donation would be coming their way but she does not know the amount at this time.

She said the recent trip was both a great opportunity to raise funds for the pantry and to put Marshall on the map.

"I am just very proud of our community," Latimer said. "I met with very successful entrepreneurs and businessmen who are very community-oriented and they've seen something positive in our community. They've seen something that makes them want to be involved with us."

Stacy Sedler, of the Sterling Consulting Group, a certified Woman Business Enterprise company, said the event helped build relationships, an important step in Marshall's economic development process, which takes time.

"We are working to build relationships between communities that previously had little or no contact with one another," Sedler said. "The projects will be built and jobs will come, but the relationships are the key."

In 2012, the Marshall Food Pantry served 7,157 families for a total of 18,256 people served. Latimer said the pantry is in dire need of an expansion so it can better serve the community.