

To : Sharon Miles

From: PDG James Aneff 

Subject: Abilene Rotary Club's participation in Children's art and literacy

Date: June 19, 2018

Dear Sharon,

I am enclosing a lot of documentation and publicity for our Children's Storybook Capital Express Train for Project P-2035

This project is part of a continuing development of a huge program in Abilene to affect Children's Literacy in the United States. Abilene recognizes important artists who create artwork for Major Children's books that are designated as the best Children's book produced each year in the United States. This has been accomplished by establishing the National Center for Children's Illustrated Literature (NCCIL) in Abilene which is the only museum in the United States to specialize in the work of artists who provide artwork for major children's literature. Besides having new collections each year of wonderful art for the children to see it encourages Children to read the new children's books. They having many programs for children to encourage their reading literacy, love of reading and encouragement to learn about and enjoy art. The museum lends portions of their art collections to various museums all over the United States. Abilene has also developed a special Sculpture Garden full of sculptures from various characters in children's books. Because of all this effort Abilene has been names the Storybook Capital of Texas by our State Legislature and the Abilene and Cultural Affairs Council is in the process of having Abilene designated as the Storybook Capital of the United States. The Children's Art and Literacy Festival (CALF) which has been developed by the Abilene Cultural Affairs Council is also part of this unique program developed in Abilene. Included in this packet is information on this year's CALF where the Storybook Capital Express train was first used this month.

This train District Foundation Funded Project of the Rotary Foundation is a major step in providing a wonderful train that will be used all year to take children to view the children's sculptures located in not only the Sculptural Garden but also in another park and at various locations in downtown Abilene. Also it should be noted that our Abilene Southwest Rotary train "car" is actually the caboose which is handicap acceptable. Also noted should be that on top of the caboose is the name of our Abilene Southwest Rotary Club as the sponsor. So we will receive ongoing publicity and recognition for this project for years to come every time the train is used.

The Rotary Foundation and Rotary Magazine might want to note that working with Sylvia Mahoney in the marking of the Great Western Trail Project which was written up in the Rotarian Magazine in December 2017, includes PDG Jim Aneff and PDG David Mason from the Abilene Southwest Rotary Club who helped Sylvia get this Great Western Trail project become transformed into a International Rotary Project. PRIP Ray Klinginsmith became personally involved in this project and further helped in this work. Now the Great Western Trail is being considered by Congress to be named the Great Western Trail and be designated as a National Historic Trail of the United States.

I believe that in the future the Rotary Magazine may want to consider talking a serious look at preparing a substantial article on this work being done in Abilene by Rotarians in this very unique and national literacy development for children. Perhaps they might want to consider coming to Abilene in June 2019 to the Children's Art and Literacy Festival.

The Abilene Southwest Rotary Club has now with the help of two district Grants from the Rotary Foundation contributed \$5,000 to the planning of trees in the Sculpture Garden and \$5,000 as a contribution towards the Storybook Capital Express Train. Our Rotary Club also provides a children's book each week to the Abilene Public Library in honor of our speaker. We also provide dictionaries to every 3rd grade student in one school and several of our Rotarians read each week to students in a school.

The Abilene Rotary Clubs contributed \$2,000 for the lighting of the Sculpture Garden with a Matching District Grant from the Rotary Foundation. They also provide a yearly \$500 grants that help purchase passes for low-income children to attend the (CALF) festival .Abilene Rotary Club members volunteer at the festival, and Rotarian Betty Hukill organizes the Dramatic Readings readers each year. Besides this, the club also provides children's books each week in honor of the speaker and also provides dictionaries to 3rd grade school students.

record.

The three-day downtown event drew 5,172 registered participants. Many activities Thursday, including the Storybook Parade and unveiling of the new Oliver Jeffers sculpture were free, so it's likely many more participated in the CALF.

According to the Abilene Cultural Affairs Council, the registration total was an 8 percent jump from 2017. Issued were:

- 1,901 adult passes
- 1,602 child passes
- 849 Group Day (Thursday) passes
- 820 sponsor passes

Registrations reflected visitors from 191 Texas cities and a dozen states.

Jeffers, who spoke about his art Thursday evening and was honored at a dinner Friday at the National Center for Children's Illustrated Literature, said in a news release from ACAC that his first visit to the Storybook Capital of America was memorable.

"I have traveled all over the world and never have I received a welcome like this," said Jeffers, who brought his wife, two children and others with him. He rode in the parade and was on hand when a sculpture of Marcel and Wilfred, the moose and child characters from his picture book "This Moose Belongs to Me," made its first public appearance.

Because we are a small Club with limited funds, the project has been separated into increments to enable funding of small portions of the large project.

The park is intended for public use by the residents of Nocona and the surrounding area in Montague County. At present, the City does not have an outdoor fitness facility thus residents either walk streets or use the ISD track during off school use times.

GRANT PURPOSE

Our grant application to District 5790 is for \$2,500. We believe that this plus a matching amount from our Club, will reimburse the City of Nocona for gravel and pipe fencing used in the construction of the proposed parking lot and street entries. We intend to perform most of the pipe fencing labor with volunteers, and the City has offered to donate the labor and equipment for the grading, clearing, and gravel placement as well as some steel pipe. The remaining amount of \$770 will be raised through private citizen donations. This initial phase will allow limited use of the park immediately.

TOTAL PROJECT COST & FUNDING

We estimate that the entire project cost will total approximately \$363,913.00 (*see attached cost estimate*). This amount includes the market value of the land, construction of the trails, purchase and installation of all equipment and amenities, installation of path plus parking area lighting, together with associated expenses such as surveys and engineering.

Of the total cost above, approximately \$110,919.00 (30%) comprised of the land and the completed gazebo, has been donated and is completed as of this date.

Progress:

As of June 2018, the site has been cleared of debris, a temporary gates with locks are in place, and the gazebo structure is completed. A preliminary park plan with detailed narrative and construction cost estimate has been completed.

Prior Grant Applications Made:

To date the Nocona Rotary Club has made a grant application to:

Texas Parks & Wildlife Department	\$ 163,736.00
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To date, no grant has been received for the project. Upon completion of the parking lot phase, we intend to begin community fundraising for the next incremental portion of the work, re-apply for a Texas Parks & Wildlife grant. This will be a 3 to 4 year project to full completion.

Scope of work to be funded by this Grant:

The District 5790 Grant and matching Nocona Club money will fund the next phase of work. This will include:

- Constructing driveways to connect a new parking lot with 2 adjacent streets;
- Grading, earth preparation, importation of gravel, and gravel placement to provide a gravel surfaced parking lot with 30 standard parking spaces and 2 accessible parking spaces
- Construction of entry gates and fencing using donated drill pipe
- Mowing of the approximately 1 mile of trail surface.

This phase will provide access to the site, parking for individuals using the park, and an earth surfaced walking or running trail of approximately 1 mile in length.

The estimated total cost of this phase is \$5,770.00. The Nocona Club will match the District grant of \$2,500.00 and will raise the remaining \$770 from local individual donations.

Plan for project completion:

Our funding plan for the entire project consists of continuing to solicit grant monies, to solicit donations of both money and volunteer time then tailor the work each year to the amount of funding available.

We are assisted in this project by the City of Nocona who is the property owner. The City has been able to both purchase materials for the project at their cost and to provide much of the equipment and manpower for the construction.

We feel that this project can be completed in this manner over a period of 3 to 4 years.

FINANCIAL PLAN FOR GRANT FUNDS

In order to comply with the District 5790 Grant criteria, the following outline will govern use of all grant and matching funds for Phase 1 "The parking Loots" in 2018-19:

- A separate non-interest bearing checking account will be established;
- Checks will require 2 signatures from Rotary Club officers or Project Chair;
- Records consisting of invoice copies, sales receipts, and a ledger to record all deposits and payments from the account will be maintained;
- A year end or Phase 1 completion report with copies of all records will be submitted to District 5790 Grant Committee.

This small project should be completed in several months and should not therefore require a formal succession plan other than officer succession.

REQUEST FOR GRANT FUNDING

We are hopeful that the Rotary District 5790 grant committee can assist with the grant needed to complete the parking lot during the 2018-2019 fiscal year.

Thank you for your critical help in making this project possible. Please direct any questions you may have to either individual below or to the Nocona City Manager.

Sincerely,


Robert Herndon
2018-19 Nocona Rotary President


Kyle Reynolds
Rotary Blue Mound Fitness Park Chair