

Empower Eureka Continues to Move Forward

It was the beginning of March of this year when people in Eureka took the first steps to become actively involved in some new things for their community. It didn't matter that they had no idea what was in store for them as a group or individually. They were willing to accept a challenge and see where the path would lead them.

Over those months a Core Team was established. They learned some leadership skills and set a basic course for the next year. A community-wide meeting was held for anyone wishing to learn more and give their input.

At that big meeting, eight topics were identified as things that the group wanted to see happen in Eureka. From those topics, Initiative Teams were formed and each focused solely on one topic. Through further meetings, the less popular ones fell by the wayside. There are now three Initiative Teams working toward identified goals.

As you read a brief description of each of those teams, know that you are invited and encouraged to become a part of any or all of these teams. The three are all very different from each other. All have been established to make sure great things keep happening in Eureka.

The November 27th meeting started out with each person telling about a Community Milestone in Eureka. The answers were extremely varied, but all resulted when people worked together to achieve things they felt were important. That set the tone for the evening, and the groups worked together as people in Eureka have done in the past to make their ideas become realities.

The largest group that evening began work on a project that they anticipate will take several years to accomplish. They are the Community Center team, and their first step of action is "Kickstart a Community Center". This will be done by taking a learning journey to other communities who have community centers and learn how they established them. They will also have a community meeting specifically for input about local thoughts for a community center. They will invite groups and organizations for future discussions. These steps will give them an idea of the feasibility of a community center for Eureka.

One group that met and further developed ideas was the Business Team. Their purpose is to support existing businesses and find new businesses. They identified the need for a specific business in Eureka and are working together in the beginning stages toward their goal.

The third group that became further established was the Park Rangers. It was originally identified as Beautification, but to prevent confusion with the already long-existing Eureka Community Beautification Company, they chose a name to reflect their goals. Since their purpose is to maintain recreational areas they will work with the city council as they develop their plan of action.

A bit about Empower. It is a program offered through Dakota Resources that supplies a highly trained individual to the community to facilitate. Paula Jensen is the person who comes to Eureka. She does not make decisions or steer participants to specific conclusions. She keeps the conversation flowing and lets those who attend come up with their own ideas, then gives them the help they need to find answers. Because she attends monthly meetings, she is in direct contact with those who have chosen to be a part of Empower. She also keeps in contact between those meetings with email messages.

Each Initiative Team is able to meet whenever they want to meet, in addition to the monthly meetings.

The next meeting for all teams has been set for Wednesday, January 24 at 7:00 PM at the school lunchroom.

Wanda Jundt